

SEPT 19 - OCT 13, 2024

WORLD PREMIERE



From the Mind of BET's The Miss Pat Show!
Baltimore Center Stage Prepares for World Premiere of
Jordan E. Cooper's
OH HAPPY DAY!
A New Play With Music
Original Songs by Donald Lawrence
Directed by Stevie Walker-Webb
In Association with The Public Theater

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Baltimore, MD – Baltimore Center Stage opens its 2024/25 season with the highly anticipated world premiere of two-time Tony Nominee **Jordan E. Cooper's** new play with music, ***OH HAPPY DAY!*** This production, in association with New York's **The Public Theatre**, features original songs by **Donald Lawrence** and reunites Cooper with BCS Artistic Director **Stevie Walker-Webb** for the first time since their collaboration on Broadway's *Ain't No Mo'*. The show runs for a strictly limited engagement, **September 19 through October 13, 2024.**

"It's incredible that BCS will be the home to the world premiere of *OH HAPPY DAY!*, written by my good friend, Jordan E. Cooper," said Walker-Webb. "Audiences should come to see this hilarious new play, featuring new music by the iconic Donald Lawrence, to be entertained and uplifted and to see things familiar and wholly unexpected."

An impending flood is the least of one family's troubles in this outrageous reimagining of Noah's Ark. *OH HAPPY DAY!*, written by and starring Cooper, begins in Laurel, Mississippi at a Birthday BBQ for Lewis, the patriarch of the family. When his estranged son Keyshawn (played by Cooper) makes a surprise appearance, family secrets unravel on a day that will change their world forever.

The show features new original music by gospel legend Donald Lawrence, best known for his Grammy Award-nominated songs "The Blessing of Abraham" and "Encourage Yourself". Lawrence has received multiple Grammy and Stellar Award honors and served as vocal coach to the R&B group En Vogue, was the musical director for Stephanie Mills, songwriter for The Clark Sisters, and collaborator with a host of artists including Peabo Bryson, Kirk Franklin, Karen Clark Sheard, Donnie McClurkin, and Mary J. Blige.

Cooper's first play, the jubilantly disruptive *Ain't No Mo'*, was directed by Walker-Webb on Broadway. Their acclaimed partnership was rewarded with six Tony nominations, including Best Play and Best Director, plus winning the Obie Award for Best Play. Baltimore Center Stage proudly reunites Cooper and Walker-Webb for the world premiere of their newest collaboration.

Listed in this year's *Forbes* 30 Under 30, Cooper has been hailed as one of the most illuminating and groundbreaking new voices of the American theater. He is currently the youngest Black American playwright in the history of Broadway, as well as the youngest Black showrunner in television history. *Ain't No Mo'* originally debuted to a sold out run at The Public Theater in 2019 and in December 2022 opened on Broadway to resounding acclaim, marking Jordan's Broadway debut both off stage and on – starring as the hilarious and bossy flight attendant "Peaches."

In addition, Jordan co-created, executive produces and directs the Emmy-nominated "The Ms. Pat Show," which is hailed by critics as "one of the most radical sitcoms of the modern era." The hit, multi-cam series returns to BET+ for its third season this February. Jordan was also featured on the final season of FX's groundbreaking series "Pose" as "MC Tyrone" and has his own production company, Cookout Entertainment.

The cast includes Jordan as "Keyshawn," James T. Alfred as "Lewis," Tamika Lawrence as "Niecy," Justin Sturgis as "Kevin," and Latrice Pace, Courtney Monet and Tiya Askia as "The Divines".

The production's creative team includes Walker-Webb as Director, Antwan L. Hawkins, Jr. (aka Greeyo) as Assistant Director, Daniel Rudin as Music Director, Charlique C. Rolle as Choreographer, Luciana Steconi as Scenic Designer, Celeste Jennings as Costume Designer, Adam Honoré as Lighting Designer, Taylor J. Williams as Sound Designer, Jack Golden as Assistant Scenic Designer, Channing Tucker as Assistant Costume Designer, Shannon Clarke as Associate Lighting Designer, Jakob W. Plummer

as Production Stage Manager, Monét Thibou as Assistant Stage Manager, and Sharon Zheng as Production Assistant.

Ticketing Information

Single tickets can be purchased at centerstage.org or by calling 410.332.0033. Patrons can also visit the box office, located at 700 North Calvert Street.

Community Night Hosted by Lena Waithe

BCS will welcome Primetime Emmy Award winner **Lena Waithe** to host the production's September 20 Community Night performance. Community Nights are special nights at BCS, where tickets to plays are just \$5 with the promo code BCSCOMMUNITYNIGHTS.

Reviewing press are invited to the 7:30PM performance on September 27, or any performance afterwards. Please contact bryan@bryanbuttlermediarelations.com for details.

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About Baltimore Center Stage

Designated the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage provides the highest quality theater and programming for all members of our communities, including youth and families, under the leadership of Artistic Director Stevie Walker-Webb and Managing Director Adam Frank. Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations and imaginations by producing an eclectic season of professional productions across two mainstages, through engaging community programs, and with inspiring education programs. Everything we do at Baltimore Center Stage is led by our core values—chief among them being Access For All. Our mission is heavily rooted in providing active and open accessibility for everyone, regardless of any and all barriers, to our Mainstage performances, education initiatives, and community programming.