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A Night With Janis Joplin Begins Rehearsals in Seattle at The 5th Avenue Theatre

March 25 – April 17, 2016

*Created, Written and Directed by Randy Johnson
Choreography by Patricia Wilcox;
Musical Supervision by Michael J. Moritz Jr.*

(Tuesday, March 8, 2016 – SEATTLE, WA) Starting rehearsals at The 5th Avenue Theatre this week is the critically-acclaimed Broadway musical, ***A Night With Janis Joplin***. This production features Broadway original cast member **Kacee Clanton** as the Queen of Rock 'n' Roll herself, Janis Joplin, with **Kristin Piacentile** playing the role at alternating performances. **Aurianna Tuttle**, **Sylvia MacCalla**, **Nova Paytron** and **Yvette Cason** join the cast as the Joplinaires who also portray the legendary performers who influenced Joplin. Conceived, written, and directed by **Randy Johnson**, the rock musical features choreography by **Patricia Wilcox** and musical supervision by **Michael J. Moritz Jr.**

“This incredible high energy hit will transport you back in time and let you experience what it was like to be in the presence of the Queen of Rock ‘n’ Roll at the height of her fame,” said **5th Avenue Theatre Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong**. “However, this show is not just a concert. It features all of her greatest hits, but it will also take you inside her mind and her experience, and bring onto the stage many of the incredible women who influenced her as a singer and an artist.”

A Night With Janis Joplin runs **March 25 – April 17, 2016** (press night Thursday, March 31, 2016) at **The 5th Avenue Theatre** (1308 5th Avenue, Seattle). For single tickets (starting at \$24) and information, please visit www.5thavenue.org, call the Box Office at (206) 625-1900 or visit the Box Office at 1308 5th Avenue in Downtown Seattle. Tickets may also be purchased at (888) 5TH-4TIX. Group ticket buyers (10 or more) may call (888) 625-1418.

The show is a musical journey celebrating Janis Joplin and her biggest musical influences—trailblazers like Aretha Franklin, Etta James, Odetta, Nina Simone and Bessie Smith, all of whom inspired Joplin to become one of Rock 'n' Roll's greatest legends. Like a comet that burns far too brightly to last, Joplin exploded onto the music scene in 1967 and, almost overnight, became the Queen of Rock 'n' Roll. Her unmistakable voice, filled with raw

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emotion and tinged with Southern Comfort, made Joplin a must-see headliner from Monterey to Woodstock. Audiences will enjoy Joplin's favorites, including "Piece of My Heart," "Cry Baby" and "Me and Bobby McGee," among many others. *The New York Times* raved that ***A Night With Janis Joplin*** "rocks the house" and *Variety* called it "electrifying." *New York 1* cheered, "This will rock your socks off!" The show was hailed by the *Washington Post* as "a remarkable, exhilarating portrait of a singer in love with the cleansing embrace of the crowd."

This production is co-produced by **Todd Gershwin, Daniel Chilewich** and **Michael Cohl** in association with **The Estate of Janis Joplin** and **Jeffrey Jampol for JAM, Inc.**

About The Cast

Kacee Clanton appears for the first time at The 5th Avenue Theatre as Janis Joplin. She rocked Broadway in *A Night With Janis Joplin* in alternating performances as the Queen of Rock 'n' Roll. Her regional work includes *Breaking Through* (Pasadena Playhouse); *A Night With Janis Joplin* (Pasadena Playhouse, ZACH Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre); *Love, Janis* (San Diego Repertory, Kansas City Repertory, Downstairs Cabaret Theatre); *Your Town Follies*, and *a Cirque Comique* (El Portal Theatre). Her work in film, TV and recorded soundtracks includes *The Tooth Fairy, Kinsey, Brothers and Sisters, Fox Sports, Cribs, Open House New York, 18 to Life, The Guiding Light, Star Search* and *Thirty Something*. She also toured as a vocalist with Joe Cocker, Luis Miguel and Big Brother & the Holding Co.

Kristin Piacentile joins the cast as Janis in alternating performances in her 5th Avenue debut. Her regional credits include roles at Ars Nova, the Public Theater, Theater for New York City, the Eugene O'Neill Theatre and Lake Dillon Theatre. A graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, Piacentile also studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts and performed in multiple NYU shows such as *Gone Missing* (NYU Playwrights Horizons), *A New Brain* (NYU Steinhardt), *Songs For A New World* (GAP Production), *All's Well That Ends Well* (RADA), several original pieces, and several student films.

Joining the cast as the Joplinaires are **Yvette Cason, Sylvia MacCalla, Nova Payton** and **Aurianna Tuttle**. In addition, these four power house performers will break out as the various trailblazers and blues icons that inspired Joplin including Aretha Franklin, Etta James, Odetta, Nina Simone and Bessie Smith.

Yvette Cason is thrilled to reprise her roles in *A Night With Janis Joplin* after performing in the show at the Pasadena Playhouse. Her other credits include *Ella The Musical, Dreamgirls*, the Ovation Award-winning *Play On!*, *Once On This Island, Ain't Misbehavin', St. Louis Woman, Into The Woods* and NAACP Theatre Award-winning *Sisterella*. Her film credits include *Dreamgirls* and *Middle of Nowhere*. Cason has toured with Whitney Houston, Stevie Wonder, David Foster and Babyface.

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Sylvia MacCalla returns to *A Night With Janis Joplin* after the show's 2015 run at Pasadena Playhouse. MacCalla appeared in the original Angel Company of *RENT* (Joanne) on Broadway and the first national tour of *Hairspray* (Motormouth Mable/Lorraine). Other highlights include *They're Playing Our Song* starring Stephanie J. Block and Jason Alexander, *South Pacific* at the Hollywood Bowl starring Reba McIntyre and Brian Stokes Mitchell, the award-winning *Ray Charles LIVE* and *Beehive* where she played Aretha Franklin. Her TV credits include the *Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *The Wayne Brady Show* and *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* as a back-up singer for various artists. She has also guest starred on *Scrubs* and appeared in the movie adaptation of *RENT*.

Nova Payton is a Washington D.C. native whose credits include many roles at Signature Theatre as well as Imagination Stage, Ford's Theatre, Olney Theatre Center, Washington Savoyards, Adventure Theatre and Shakespeare Theatre. Her regional credits include Milwaukee Rep and *Dreamgirls* at Prince Music Theatre. She was seen on the national tour of *3 Mo' Divas* (PBS Special) and *Smokey Joe's Café*.

Aurianna Tuttle is a native of Southern California and new to the Seattle theatre scene. Tuttle's credits include the Off Broadway show *Sistas The Musical* and regional *Dreamgirls*, *RENT*, *Hairspray*, *Rumors and Dreams*, *South Pacific*, *Show Boat* and many more.

About the Director

Randy Johnson heads this production as creator, writer and director of the 2014 Tony Award® Nominated production of *A Night With Janis Joplin*. A graduate of the USC School of Dramatic Arts in Los Angeles, Johnson's work has been seen on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in regional theatres across the United States and Canada, London's West End, including Radio City Music Hall, Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall, The Grand Ole Opry and the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Wembley Arena and O2 arena in the United Kingdom, the Universal Amphitheater in Los Angeles and L'Olympia in Paris. Johnson was recently nominated for Best Director of a Musical for the 2014 NAACP Theatre Awards for his work on *A Night With Janis Joplin*. He is a recipient of the 2014 DC Metro Theatre Arts "Best of the Best" as Best Director for his work on *Smokey Joe's Café* at Arena Stage in Washington DC. His next production is *Shout, Sister, Shout*, a new musical chronicling the untold story of gospel, swing, and rock and roll legend Sister Rosetta Tharpe.

About the Choreographer

Patricia Wilcox's work on Broadway includes *Motown the Musical* (for which she won a Fred Astaire Award for Best Choreography on Broadway) and *A Night With Janis Joplin*. Her Off Broadway and national tours include *Little Shop of Horrors* at Encores/City Center starring Jake Gyllenhaal, *Children's Letters to God*, *Bowfire*, *Blues in the Night* (NAACP Image Award nominated), *Seussical* and *A Marvelous Party* (LA Drama Critics Circle Award winner). Her regional work has been seen at the Kennedy Center, The Old Globe, Arizona Theatre Company, Pasadena Playhouse and Paper Mill Playhouse. Wilcox's choreography was represented at the 2006, 2010 and 2014 Winter Olympics in ice dancing.

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About the Music Arranger

Michael J. Moritz Jr. is a two-time Tony® and Grammy® award-nominated theatrical producer, record producer and music director from Youngstown, Ohio. His Broadway credits include *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *Big Fish*, *A Night With Janis Joplin*, *On The Town*, and *The Velocity of Autumn*. Moritz has musically directed over 200 theatrical productions throughout the world. He is known for his music direction, coaching and performance piano work in both Broadway and Pop arenas. Moritz's piano performance work is featured on hundreds of recordings internationally and his record producing credits include *Peter Pan Live* (Executive Producer), *The Wiz Live* (Executive Producer), *Matilda* (Associate Producer), *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* (Producer), and *On The Town—Broadway Revival* (Producer).

About the Creative Team

The production features original scenic and lighting design by **Justin Townsend** and original costume design by **Amy Clark**. The design team also includes sound designer **Ben Selke**, hair, makeup and wig designer **Leah Loukas** and video and projection designer **Darel Maloney**. Additional staff includes associate director **Tyler Rhodes**, dance supervisor **Jonathan Warren** and associate lighting designer **Dan Ozminkowski**. The production features music by Janis Joplin. **Jeffrey K. Hanson** is the production stage manager with assistant stage manager **Lisa Armstrong**.

About The 5th Avenue Theatre

The nonprofit 5th Avenue Theatre is acclaimed as one of the nation's leading musical theater companies and is especially renowned for its production and development of new works. Since 2001, the Seattle-based company has produced 17 new musicals. To date, nine (including the sensational hit *Disney's Aladdin*) have moved on to Broadway premieres, earning a combined 15 Tony Awards, including two for Best Musical (*Hairspray* and *Memphis*). The 5th Avenue Theatre is also known for its world class, critically acclaimed productions of musicals chosen from both the contemporary canon and the Golden Age of Broadway.

Unique in its Chinese-inspired design, this exquisite theater opened in 1926 as a venue for vaudeville and film. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong, Managing Director Bernadine C. Griffin and Producing Artistic Director Bill Berry, this nonprofit theater company attracts an annual attendance of more than 300,000, including over 25,000 subscribers – one of the largest theater subscriptions in North America.

In addition to its main stage productions, The 5th Avenue Theatre is also committed to encouraging the next generation of theatergoers through its extensive educational outreach programs. For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

WHAT: Like a comet that burns far too brightly to last, Janis Joplin exploded onto the music scene in 1967 and, almost overnight, became the Queen of Rock 'n' Roll. Her unmistakable voice, filled with raw emotion and tinged with Southern Comfort, made Janis a must-see headliner from Monterey to Woodstock. **A Night With Janis Joplin** explores the legend's influences and successes in a thrilling musical experience unlike any other. Audiences will step into an electrifying 1970s concert featuring Janis, joined by the powerhouse women who inspired her infamous blues-rock sound: Nina Simone, Aretha Franklin, Etta James and more. In a celebration of one of America's greatest music legends, audiences will rock out to hits like "Piece of My Heart", "Me and Bobby McGee" and "Cry Baby" in a celebration of the blues, rock and soul.

This fiercely talented cast is headlined by **Kacee Clanton** who played Janis in the recent Broadway production of the show. **Kristin Piacentile** plays Janis in alternating performances. Also joining the cast are **Aurianna Tuttle**, **Sylvia MacCalla**, **Yvette Cason** and **Nova Payton** who portray The Joplinaires as well as a plethora of blues icons. This production is co-produced by Todd Gershwin, Daniel Chilewich and Michael Cohl in association with The Estate of Janis Joplin and Jeffrey Jampol for JAM, Inc.

WHEN: *Previews Begin: March 25, 2016*
Opening Night: Thursday, March 31, 2016 (press night)
Closing Performance: Sunday, April 17, 2016
Performance times vary. Please visit www.5thavenue.org for details.

WHERE: **The 5th Avenue Theatre** (1308 5th Avenue, Seattle)

TICKETS: Please visit www.5thavenue.org or call the Box Office at (206) 625-1900. Tickets (starting at \$24) may also be purchased at (888) 5TH-4TIX.

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