**ARETHA FRANKLIN, LYLE LOVETT,**

**PASTOR SHIRLEY CAESAR, TAMELA MANN, EMMYLOU HARRIS**

**AND MORE HEADLINE PBS GOSPEL MUSIC SPECIAL**

*— Latest from* ***Emmy Award-Nominated “In Performance at the White House” Series***

***Also Features Bishop Rance Allen, Rodney Crowell****, Rhiannon Giddens,* ***Darlene Love,***

***the Morgan State University Choir and Michelle Williams***

*Airing June 26 on PBS —*

“The Gospel Tradition: In Performance at the White House” showcases an evening of celebration with President and Mrs. Obama at the White House in honor of gospel music and its profound influence on American music. The concert broadcast premieres **Friday, June 26 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS** stations nationwide (check local listings) and will also be simulcast on cable channel TV One. The evening includes performances by Bishop Rance Allen, Pastor Shirley Caesar, Rodney Crowell, Aretha Franklin, Rhiannon Giddens, Emmylou Harris, Darlene Love, Lyle Lovett, Tamela Mann, the Morgan State University Choir and Michelle Williams — with T Bone Burnett as executive music director, Bill Maxwell as music director and Robin Roberts as program host. The hour-long program, taped on April 14, 2015, is part of the Emmy Award-nominated “In Performance at the White House” series, is the fifty-fourth production in the series’ thirty-seven year history.

“The Gospel Tradition: In Performance at the White House” showcases a canon of American music that cuts across the boundaries of race and class to provide comfort and inspiration to its listeners. Gospel music has also been a foundation upon which popular music — from the blues, soul, rhythm and blues, and rock and roll — has been built.

“It is a great privilege to join the White House in honoring the gospel tradition and its extraordinary contributions to our nation’s rich musical history,” said Sharon Percy Rockefeller, president and CEO of WETA. “Through our long-running series ‘In Performance at the White House,’ we are committed to showcasing the vibrant cultural life of the nation on behalf of the American people.”

“‘In Performance at the White House’ has brought some of the greatest performers of our time to a national stage, providing viewers a front row seat to extraordinary music,” said Paula Kerger, PBS president and CEO. “I am especially excited about this concert, which will celebrate a genre with rich roots and multifaceted history in this country. This presentation is part of PBS’ ongoing commitment to bring the best in arts and performances to our viewers.”

“CPB is proud to support a program celebrating American gospel music with roots in the black oral tradition,” said Patricia Harrison, president and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). “‘In Performance at the White House’ is a true example of how public media affirms entertainment that inspires, uplifts and connects in meaningful ways to every American.”

“The gospel tradition, which has its roots in the African-American community, has lifted up so many, promising hope whether through the everyday travails of life or some of our nation’s most turbulent times,” noted Brad Siegel, president of TV One. “We’re proud to be partners with WETA and public broadcasting in celebrating this uniquely American institution at the White House and with the American public.”

**“In Performance at the White House” Series**

“The Gospel Tradition: In Performance at the White House” will be the fourteenth “In Performance at the White House” program during President Barack Obama’s administration. From February 2009 to the most recent broadcast in November 2014, “In Performance at the White House” events have honored the musical genius of Stevie Wonder, Sir Paul McCartney, Burt Bacharach, Hal David and Carole King; celebrated Hispanic musical heritage during Hispanic Heritage Month; marked Black History Month with events featuring the music of Motown, Memphis Soul, the Blues, and the Civil Rights Movement; explored the rich roots of Country music; and spotlighted Broadway and the unique spirit of the American musical. The star-studded line-ups have included Marc Anthony, Tony Bennett, Elvis Costello, Sheryl Crow, Bob Dylan, Jamie Foxx, José Feliciano, Dave Grohl, Buddy Guy, Herbie Hancock, Faith Hill, Jennifer Hudson, Mick Jagger, Jonas Brothers, B.B. King, Alison Krauss, Nathan Lane, John Legend, Eva Longoria, Audra McDonald, Idina Menzel, Sam Moore, Mike Myers, Willie Nelson, Smokey Robinson, Darius Rucker, Seal, Jerry Seinfeld, Esperanza Spalding, Elaine Stritch, James Taylor, Justin Timberlake and Jack White.

“In Performance at the White House” has been produced by WETA since 1978 and spans every administration since President Carter’s. The series began with an East Room recital by the legendary pianist Vladimir Horowitz. Since then, “In Performance at the White House” has embraced virtually every genre of American performance: pop, country, gospel, jazz, theatre and dance among them.  The series was created to showcase the rich fabric of American culture in the setting of the nation’s most famous home.  Past programs have showcased such talent as cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, dancer/choreographer Mikhail Baryshnikov, the United States Marine Band, soul and jazz singers Natalie Cole and Anita Baker, leading Broadway performers, and the Dance Theatre of Harlem.

**“The Gospel Tradition: In Performance at the White House” Production**

The television program “The Gospel Tradition: In Performance at the White House” is a production of WETA Washington, D.C.; TV One; CoMedia; Mark Krantz Productions; Cappy Productions; and Black and White TV Inc. Executive producers are Dalton Delan, David S. Thompson, Bob Kaminsky, Peter Kaminsky, Mark Krantz and Cappy McGarr. The producer is Eileen Bernstein. Robert Santelli is executive director of the GRAMMY Museum®. Geovanni Brewer is consulting producer. The director is Leon Knoles. The executive music director is T Bone Burnett and the music director is Bill Maxwell. The “In Performance at the White House” series was created by WETA Washington, D.C. The series producer is Jackson Frost. Corporate funding for the program is provided by PepsiCo. Foundation support is provided by The Annenberg Foundation. Major funding is also provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS and public television viewers. Air travel is generously provided by American Airlines.

For more information about “The Gospel Tradition: In Performance at the White House” visit [*pbs.org/whitehouse*](http://www.pbs.org/inperformanceatthewhitehouse/home/). An electronic press kit, including downloadable talent photos for promotional use, is available at [*pressroom.pbs.org*](http://pressroom.pbs.org/). To follow “In Performance at the White House” on Twitter, use hashtag #PBSipwh.

WETA Washington, D.C., is one of the largest-producing stations of new content for public television and serves Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia with educational initiatives and with high-quality programming on four digital television channels. Other WETA productions and co-productions include “PBS NewsHour,” “The Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize” and documentaries by filmmaker Ken Burns, including “The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*”* and more recently, “Ken Burns Presents Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies A Film by Barak Goodman.” More information on WETA and its programs and services is available at [*weta.org*](file:///C:\Users\ckougias\AppData\Local\Temp\fcctemp\www.weta.org).

Mark Krantz, Bob Kaminsky, Peter Kaminsky, and Cappy McGarr created “The Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize for American Humor,” which has honored a litany of comedy legends including Richard Pryor, Jonathan Winters, George Carlin, Tina Fey and Carol Burnett and is now in its eighteenthyear. Krantz, the Kaminskys and McGarr, with Dalton Delan of WETA, also created “The Gershwin Prize for Popular Song,” in whichsimilarly all-star casts have honored Stevie Wonder, Paul Simon, Paul McCartney, Carole King and the team of Bacharach/David. Among this team’s production credits for awards ceremonies and television shows (many of them head writing credits as well) are: “The Grammy’s”;“Farm Aid” (with Willie Nelson, Bob Dylan and The Grateful Dead); the “MTV Video Music Awards” (the VMA’s); “VH-1 Hard Rock Live”; the “Montreal Comedy Festival” (HBO and Showtime); *People* magazine’s“20th Birthday” (ABC); *Spy* magazine’s “How To Be Famous” starring Jerry Seinfeld; *Spy* magazine’s “Hit List” with Julia-Louis Dreyfus (NBC); the Carnegie Hall Tributes to Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and Carol Burnett; the Museum of the Moving Image tributes to Steven Spielberg and Robin Williams; “The Songwriter’s Hall of Fame” (with James Brown, Brian Wilson, Paul McCartney, Carole King and James Taylor); “The Toyota New York Comedy Festival”; “The New Yorker Magazine Festival”; and The President’s Summit For America’s Future(with Presidents Clinton, Ford, George H.W. Bush, Carter, Nancy Reagan and Colin Powell).

The GRAMMY Museum® pays tribute to music’s rich cultural history. This one-of-a-kind, 21st-century museum explores and celebrates the enduring legacies of all forms of music, the creative process, the art and technology of the recording process, and the history of the premier recognition of excellence in recorded music — the GRAMMY Award. The GRAMMY Museum® features 30,000 square feet of interactive and multimedia exhibits located within L.A. LIVE, the downtown Los Angeles sports, entertainment and residential district. Through thought-provoking and dynamic public and educational programs and exhibits, guests experience music from a never-before-seen insider perspective that only The GRAMMY Museum® can deliver. More information is available at [*grammymuseum.org*](file:///C:\Users\ckougias\AppData\Local\Temp\fcctemp\www.grammymuseum.org).

Launched in January 2004, TV One (*tvone.tv*) serves 57 million households, offering a broad range of real-life and entertainment-focused original programming, classic series, movies and music designed to entertain and inform a diverse audience of adult black viewers. The network is the exclusive home of “News One Now,” the only live daily news program targeting black viewers.  In December 2008, the company launched TV One High Def, which now serves 14 million households. TV One is owned by Radio One *(*[*radio-one.com*](http://www.radio-one.com/)), the largest radio company that primarily serves black and urban listeners, and Comcast Corporation, one of the nation’s leading providers of entertainment, information and communications products and services.

PBS, with its over 350 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and online content. Each month, PBS reaches nearly 103 million people through television and over 33 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’ broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. PBS’ premier children’s TV programming and its website, [*pbskids.org*](http://pbskids.org/)*,* are parents’ and teachers’ most trusted partners in inspiring and nurturing curiosity and love of learning in children. More information about PBS is available at [*pbs.org*](http://www.pbs.org/), one of the leading dot-org websites on the Internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook or through apps for mobile devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at[*pbs.org/pressroom*](http://pbs.org/pressroom) or by following [PBS PressRoom on Twitter](http://www.twitter.com/pbspressroom).

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government’s investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,400 locally-owned and -operated public television and radio stations nationwide, and CPB is the largest single source of funding for research, technology, and program development for public radio, television and related online services. More information about CPB is available at [*cpb.org*](file:///C:\Users\ckougias\AppData\Local\Temp\fcctemp\www.cpb.org).

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