

## Theater @ The Wallis

### Cast Announced for The Wallis Production of **BLUES IN THE NIGHT**

Featuring **YVETTE CASON, BRYCE CHARLES,  
PAULETTE IVORY and CHESTER GREGORY**

Conceived and Directed by **SHELDON EPPS**  
Performances Begin April 27 – May 20, 2018

(Beverly Hills, CA March 12) The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts announces the cast for its upcoming production of *Blues in the Night*. Conceived and directed by **Sheldon Epps**, the production will feature **Yvette Cason** (*Shout Sister Shout*, Broadway and film versions of *Dreamgirls*), **Bryce Charles** (*The Book of Mormon*, ABC's "Black-ish"), **Paulette Ivory** (Disney's *Aida* and the West End premieres of *The Lion King* and *Blues in the Night*) and **Chester Gregory** (Broadway's *Motown: The Musical*, *Hairspray* and *Sister Act*). *Blues in the Night* will begin performances April 27 through May 20 in the Lovelace Studio Theater.

"In exploring potential projects with Sheldon, I was drawn to his original production of *Blues in the Night*, which ran in a small Off-Broadway theater in the early 1980s, and at the Donmar Warehouse in London," said The Wallis' Artistic Director Paul Crewes. "I loved the idea of Sheldon coming back to the work, placing it in our Lovelace Theater, and revisiting the intimacy of this wonderful production."

"To return to *Blues in the Night* after so many years feels like visiting an old friend," added director Sheldon Epps. "This production has evolved substantially from its original conception and to now revisit it as it was originally conceived is extremely exciting for me. And I couldn't be more thrilled with this talented cast. I know that they will blow the roof off of The Wallis with their passion and energy combined with the power of the Blues!"

The soul of the blues wails out full and strong in *Blues in the Night*, the scorching Tony and Olivier Award-nominated musical! The 26 hot and torchy numbers - by icons Bessie Smith, Duke Ellington, Johnny Mercer, Harold Arlen and more - tell of the sweet, sexy and sorrowful experiences that three women have with the lying, cheating, snake of a man, who represents the men who do them wrong.

The Wallis is honored to have Los Angeles theater luminary Sheldon Epps return to his breakout hit. Staged in our intimate Lovelace Studio Theater, ***Blues in the Night*** will leave you energized, inspired and ready to wail.

In addition to director Sheldon Epps, the creative team for *Blues in the Night* includes scenic design by John Iacovelli, lighting design by Jared A. Sayeg, costume design by Dana Woods, sound design by Cricket S. Myers and music direction by Abdul Hamid Royal.

Single tickets are now available for \$60 – \$75. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [TheWallis.org/Blues](http://TheWallis.org/Blues), call 310.746.4000, or stop by in person at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Ticket prices subject to change.

The Wallis also offers three different options to subscribe to the 2017/18 season: the Premium Subscription Series; the Design-Your-Own option; and the new 3-show Flex Pass for \$99, created for busy young professionals—39 and younger—giving the most flexibility to join The Wallis family of subscribers. Learn more at [TheWallis.org/Subscribe](http://TheWallis.org/Subscribe).

Audiences are invited to enjoy craft cocktails, a handpicked bottle of wine or draft beer at **The Briskin Bar @ The Wallis** located in the beautiful Jim and Eleanor Randall Grand Hall before and after each performance. Patrons attending evening performances are encouraged to arrive early for Happy Hour featuring special drink prices from 5:30pm – 6:30pm, and all audience members can now enjoy drinks at their seats during the performance.

#### **About the Cast of *Blues in the Night***

**Yvette Cason** (*The Lady From The Road*) recently appeared in *A Miracle on 34th Street* at the Pasadena Playhouse. Her performance as Katie and Mahalia in *Shout Sister Shout* at Pasadena Playhouse earned her an LA Ovation nomination. In addition, Yvette portrayed Lillie Ann in *Barbecue* at the Geffen Playhouse (NAACP Theatre Nomination). Other credits include: *A Night With Janis Joplin*, *Ella The Musical*, *Dreamgirls*, *Play On!* (Ovation Award), *Once On This Island*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *St. Louis Woman*, *Into the Woods* and *Sisterella* (NAACP Theatre Award). Film: *A Wrinkle In Time*, *Dreamgirls* and *Middle of Nowhere*. She has toured with Whitney Houston, Stevie Wonder, David Foster and Babyface. Education: Berklee College of Music.

**Bryce Charles** (*The Girl With A Date*) is thrilled to make her Wallis debut with *Blues in the Night*. She holds her BFA in Musical Theatre from AMDA College and Conservatory. National Tour: *The Book of Mormon*. TV: "Encore!" (ABC), "Fuller House" (Netflix), "Black-ish" (ABC).

**Paulette Ivory** (*The Woman Of The World*) is one of London's acclaimed performers. After originating the role of Nala in *The Lion King* in the West End, she was cast in the title role of Aida in the US national tour of Elton John and Disney's *Aida* (Carbonell Award, Helen Hayes Award nom). Other

theatre credits: *Fela* (Broadway, National Theater UK and world tour; NAACP nom), *Ragtime*, *Blues in the Night* (US & London), *A Woman of No Importance* (Royal Shakespeare Co.), *Baby It's You*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, and *The Hot Mikado*. TV/film credits include: "Criminal Minds," "The Young and the Restless," "Numb3rs," "Girlfriends," "Strong Medicine," "Doctors," "Eastenders" and "Lords of Dogtown." Paulette also opened "The Royal Variety Show" in London and performed at Kensington Palace at the request of Prince Charles. Also, Paulette wrote and starred in the short film *In Destiny's Hands* as well as the web series "My Life Lesson."

**Chester Gregory** (*The Man In The Saloon*) is thrilled to be making his Wallis debut in *Blues In the Night*. Broadway credits include: *Motown the Musical* (Berry Gordy), *Hairspray* (Seaweed), *Sister Act* (Eddie), *Tarzan* (Terk), and *Cry-Baby* (Dupree). National tour: *Motown* (Berry Gordy), *Sister Act* (Eddie), *Dreamgirls* (James "Thunder" Early), and the title role in *The Jackie Wilson Story*. Regional: August Wilson's *Fences* and *Two Trains Running* at the Goodman Theatre and Kansas City Rep, respectively. Television: Performances on "The Daily Show," "The View," and The Tony Awards. Chester is the recipient of numerous accolades including Chicago's Jeff Award, the NAACP Theatre Award, and the key to the city of his hometown of Gary, Indiana, as well as an honorary Doctorate Degree from Columbia College Chicago. He's currently producing his one man show, *The Eve of Jackie Wilson* and has just released two albums.

### **About *Blues in the Night***

The revue originally was staged by Sheldon Epps and Gregory Hines at the off-Broadway Playhouse 46, where it ran for 51 performances between March 26 and May 11, 1980. The Broadway production, also directed by Epps, opened on June 2, 1982 at the Rialto Theatre, and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Musical.

The West End production, staged by Steve Whately, opened on June 9, 1987 at the Donmar Warehouse, where it ran through July 19, 1987. It transferred to the Piccadilly Theatre, opening on September 23 and running through July 28, 1988. The production was nominated for the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Musical. The London cast album was recorded live during the August 25–26 performances at the Donmar Warehouse.

Over the following three decades numerous regional and touring productions have followed, the most recent being a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at The Hippodrome Casino in London.

### **About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts (Producer):**

Since opening its doors in October 2013, The Wallis has produced or presented more than 250 dance, theatre, opera, classical music and family programs to an ever-expanding audience. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Paul Crewes and Managing Director Rachel Fine, The Wallis brings audiences world-class theater, dance and music, performed by many of the world's most talented and sought-after artists. Featuring eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its notability as the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis offers original and revered works from across the U.S. and around the globe.

The mission of The Wallis is to create, present and celebrate unique performing arts events and educational programs that reflect the rich cultural diversity of our community. Nominated for 47 Ovation Awards, four L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards and the recipient of six architectural awards, The Wallis is a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot venue that celebrates the classic and the modern and was designed by Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA of Studio Pali Fekete architects. The building features the restored, original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places) that serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and houses the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater, GRoW at The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education (a gift of Gregory Annenberg Weingarten and Family and the Annenberg Foundation) and the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater. Together, these structures embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike.

The Official Sponsors of The Wallis' 2017/18 Season include: Delta Air Lines (Official Airline Sponsor), Montage Beverly Hills (Preferred Hotel), Mercedes-Benz of Beverly Hills (Official Automotive Sponsor) and Meridith Baer Home (Official Décor Sponsor).

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For more information about The Wallis, please visit: [TheWallis.org](http://TheWallis.org).

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#### **TICKET INFORMATION:**

**What:** *Blues in the Night*

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts  
Lovelace Studio Theater  
9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

**When:** April 27 – May 20, 2018

April 27 – May 1 (Previews)  
May 2 (Opening Night)

Performance Schedule: Tues – Fri at 8pm; Sat & Sun at 2:30pm & 8pm

Recommended for adults and children ages 12+

**Tickets:** Single tickets: \$60 – \$75 (prices subject to change)

Online – [TheWallis.org/Blues](http://TheWallis.org/Blues)

By Phone – 310.746.4000

Box Office – Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services

9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

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