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For immediate release.

**REHEARSALS HAVE BEGUN FOR RUBEN SANTIAGO-HUDSON'S  
"LACKAWANNA BLUES"  
PLAYING AT THE MARK TAPER FORUM MARCH 5 THROUGH APRIL 21, 2019**

Acclaimed theatre artist **Ruben Santiago-Hudson** has begun rehearsals for his powerful and touching solo play "**Lackawanna Blues**," which will play at the Mark Taper Forum March 5 through April 21 with the opening set for March 13 at 8 p.m. Produced by Center Theatre Group, "**Lackawanna Blues**" is written, performed and directed by Santiago-Hudson with live music performed by Grammy-winning blues guitarist, composer and actor **Chris Thomas King** (who will be replacing formerly announced Bill Sims Jr.).

Original music for the production is composed by **Bill Sims Jr.** with additional music composed by King. The design team includes scenic designer **Michael Carnahan**, costume designer **Karen Perry**, lighting designer **Jen Schriever** and sound designer **Philip G. Allen**. The production stage manager is **David S. Franklin**.

A magical, musical and deeply personal work by Tony Award winner Ruben Santiago-Hudson, "**Lackawanna Blues**" is a reminiscence of his 1950s childhood in a small town on the banks of Lake Erie. Santiago-Hudson takes on more than 20 colorful characters—from would-be philosophers and petty hustlers to lost souls and abandoned lovers—in a brilliant celebration of the eccentric boardinghouse he grew up in. Santiago-Hudson returns to his roots in this tour de force performance accompanied throughout by live blues music.

In his *Variety* review, Charles Isherwood wrote that Ruben Santiago-Hudson "slips into the skins of more than a dozen characters in the course of the evening, and he makes each distinct and pungent with life," adding "the humor, ease and vividness of his writing are continually impressive." The *New York Times*' Bruce Weber said, "Mr. Santiago-Hudson does a virtuoso turn as a performer. Delivering anecdotes and testimonials from Miss Rachel's boarders and friends, the population of a child's world, he passes from one identity to the next so fluidly that you barely notice the flip of the switch."

Tony and Obie Award winner Ruben Santiago-Hudson recently directed the Broadway debut of August Wilson's "**Jitney**" (2017 Tony Award for Best Revival, Tony nomination for Best Direction of a Play) as well as the world premieres of Dominique Morriseau's "**Skeleton Crew**" at the Atlantic Theater and "**Paradise Blue**" at the Williamstown Theatre Festival. Santiago-Hudson won a Tony for his performance in August Wilson's "**Seven Guitars**" on Broadway and later went on to direct the play. Other directing credits include "**The Piano Lesson**," "**The First Breeze of Summer**," "**Cabin in the Sky**" and many more. The multi-award-winning director and actor wrote, executive produced and starred in the HBO film of "**Lackawanna Blues**." It received several honors, including Emmy, Golden Globe, Humanitas, National Board of Review and Christopher Awards. Ruben recently starred alongside Anika Noni Rose in BET's drama "**The Quad**." Santiago-Hudson also recurs on

Showtime’s “Billions” and starred in TNT’s “Public Morals.” He will also recur on OWN’s new “David Makes Man” alongside Phylicia Rashad later this year. The Lackawanna, New York native opened the Ruben Santiago-Hudson Fine Arts Learning Center in 2014 in his hometown.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under Artistic Director Michael Ritchie, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2100-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation’s leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

Tickets are available online at [CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org), by calling Audience Services at (213) 628-2772 or in person at the Center Theatre Group Box Office (at the Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles). Tickets range from \$30 – \$109 (ticket prices are subject to change). The Mark Taper Forum is located at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012.

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February 11, 2019