

For immediate release.

**INAUGURAL EPISODE OF NOT A MOMENT, BUT A MOVEMENT FEATURES
ANGELICA CHÉRI'S PLAY "CROWNDATION; I WILL NOT LIE TO DAVID"
PAIRED WITH THE VISUAL ART OF KENYATTA A.C. HINKLE
AND THE MUSIC OF JESSICA LÁ REL
IN A UNIQUE EVENT THAT AMPLIFIES ALL THREE ARTISTS
AVAILABLE ON DEMAND BEGINNING JANUARY 21, 2021**

**A SPECIAL SNEAK PEEK OF NOT A MOMENT, BUT A MOVEMENT LAUNCHES
WITH A PANEL "THE FORUM: AMPLIFYING THE ROOTS OF THE MOVEMENT"
FOLLOWED BY AN EARLY STREAMING OF THE PROGRAM ON
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY, JANUARY 18, 2021**

**ADDITIONAL SPECIAL VIDEO DRAWS ON 21 ARTISTS AND ARTS LEADERS TO
RECITE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR'S LEGENDARY I HAVE A DREAM SPEECH**

**Preshow Panel Discussion Moderated by Erin Michelle Washington Will Feature
Woodie King Jr., Rhodessa Jones and Nancy Cheryll Davis-Bellamy**

Center Theatre Group launches **Not a Moment, But a Movement**, a series of events that amplify and center Black artists. The first episode, premiering on demand beginning January 21 at 5 pm Pacific, and available through March 22, 2021, is introduced by **Vanessa Williams**, hosted by **Bruce A. Lemon Jr.** and features a reading of **Angelica Chéri's** one-person play "**Crowndation; I Will Not Lie to David**" paired with the music of **Jessica Lá Rel** and the work of visual artist **Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle**. The video will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters and \$10 for all others – except on Martin Luther King Day January 18, 2021, when the event will be offered free to the public in a sneak peek streaming at 6 pm Pacific. **Not a Moment, But a Movement** will be available at www.CTGLA.org/NotAMoment.

Also on January 18, Center Theatre Group will hold a preshow panel discussion at 4pm Pacific. Part of **The Forum**, a series of deep and uplifting discussions with artists and creators as we move American Theatre forward, the discussion titled "**The Forum: Amplifying the Roots of the Movement**" will be moderated by SoulCenter founder **Erin Michelle Washington** and features three influential Black theatre practitioners **Woodie King Jr., Rhodessa Jones** and **Nancy Cheryll Davis-Bellamy**. The discussion will also be available on demand at www.CTGLA.org/NotAMoment.

In addition, a special video was created in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Twenty one artists and arts leaders including **Keith Josef Adkins, Stori Ayers, Jozben Barrett, Freedom Bradley-Ballentine, Wren T. Brown, Pj "Tru" Bucknor, Andi Chapman, Paige Hernandez, Isaiah Jaay, Jerrie Johnson, Daniel Alexander Jones, Lakisha May, Roberto Antonio Martin, Courtney Peck, Larry Powell, Brandon Rainey, Nikkole Salter, Michael Wayne Turner III, Akilah A. Walker, Chris Webb and Tobie Windham**, recite Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legendary I Have A Dream speech. That video, titled "**I Have A Dream: His Words, Our Voices**" is available at www.YouTube.com/CTGLA.

Directed by **Cezar Williams** and performed by **Sheria Irving**, "Crowndation" is a one-woman show following 29-year-old Fatima Seed. Now the same age as her mother when she died of breast cancer, Fatima battles her inner-contradictions, yanked in multiple directions by her faith, her sexuality, her purpose and a secret she discovers about her father, all in pursuit of becoming whole before her time runs out.

Presented in conjunction with Watts Village Theater Company and The Fire This Time Festival, Not a Moment, But a Movement events feature a host who guides the audience through the work of a visual artist, a musician and a theatre artist. Each event is paired with a panel discussion to create a uniquely comprehensive cultural experience.

"I am excited to be partnering with The Fire This Time Festival and Watts Village Theater Company to create and curate this series that amplifies, centers and celebrates Black voices," said Center Theatre Group Associate Artistic Director Tyrone Davis. "There is so much insightful, inspiring and illuminating work for us to choose from that it would be impossible to fully represent the breadth of Black artists but I feel that these three women, expressing and exploring their own unique voices and experiences, offer an excellent start to the countless conversations that our theatre and our community needs to have."

Angelica Chéri is a playwright, musical theatre bookwriter, lyricist, screenwriter and poet. The plays of her Prophet's Cycle Trilogy include "The Seeds of Abraham" (Signature Theatre, Billie Holiday Theatre, mentored by Lynn Nottage), "The Sting of White Roses" (North Carolina Black Repertory Company, National Black Theatre Festival) and "Crowndation; I Will Not Lie to David" (National Black Theatre-I AM SOUL Residency). Other plays include "Berta, Berta" (World Premiere at CATF), "Slow Gin Fits" (Fire This Time Festival) and "Learn to Speak Doll" (Peppercorn Theatre Commission), a children's play. Chéri is one of six playwrights selected for the inaugural Writers' Room at the Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles. She served as Master Playwright in the Frank Silvera Writer's Workshop Inaugural 3in3 Playwright Festival and has written for the Obie-Award-Winning 48 Hours in Harlem Festival.

Chéri and collaborator Ross Baum received the prestigious Richard Rodgers Award for their musical "Gun & Powder," which has also been selected for the 30th annual NAMT Festival of New Musicals. "Gun & Powder" has been developed at Goodspeed Musicals, Two River Theater, the NYU Center for New Musicals, the 2017 SigWorks Lab and the NEXT Festival at Theatre Latté Da. Other public presentations include Broadway's Future Songbook concert series at Lincoln Center and the Drama League's 2018 DirectorFest. Also with Baum, Chéri was commissioned by Diverging Elements Theatre Company to write the short children's play "A Letter to Auntie Rosa" as well as

the official anthem of the National Children's Theater of South Africa. Her TV pilot "Derailed" was a semi-finalist in both Showtime's Tony Cox Episodic Screenplay Competition and the Episodic Comedy Colony in conjunction with the 2017 Nantucket Film Festival. A proud member of The Dramatists' Guild and the New Play Exchange, Chéri received her BA in Theatre from UCLA, MFA in Playwriting from Columbia University and MFA in Musical Theatre Writing from NYU.

Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle is an interdisciplinary visual artist, writer and performer. Her practice fluctuates between collaborations and participatory projects with alternative gallery spaces within various communities to projects that are intimate and based upon her private experiences in relationship to historical events and contexts. A term that has become a mantra for her practice is the "Historical Present," as she examines the residue of history and how it affects our contemporary world perspective.

Her artwork and experimental writing has been exhibited and performed at The Studio Museum in Harlem, Project Row Houses, The Hammer Museum, The Museum of Art at The University of New Hampshire, The Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) in San Francisco, The Made in LA 2012 Biennial and The BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. Hinkle's work has been reviewed by the Los Angeles Times, LA Weekly, Artforum, Hyperallergic, The Huffington Post, The Washington Post and The New York Times. She is also the recipient of several awards including: The Cultural Center for Innovation's Investing in Artists Grant, Social Practice in Art (SPart-LA), Jacob K Javits Fellowship for Graduate Study, The Fulbright Student Fellowship, and The Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artists Award.

Her writing has appeared in Not That But This, Obsidian Journal, Among Margins: Critical & Lyrical Writing on Aesthetics and she has a forthcoming first book called "SIR," a reflection on naming as a tool for undefining the defined, that will be published with Litmus Press. Jessica Lá Rel is an award-winning recording artist, songwriter, and storyteller from Chicago by way of the Bay Area. Her "cinematic soul" sound likens her music to an orchestra traveling from the south side of Chicago to Ghana. Her 2016 debut EP, Four Freedoms, ranked #12 on the UK Soul Charts, and landed her opportunities to perform for Oprah Winfrey, Sterling K. Brown, US. Rep John Lewis, Civil Rights Freedom Rider Rip Patton, and Rev. Jesse Jackson. Garnering 1 million views on YouTube, Lá Rel's voice & vision is clear. Lá Rel's music videos have gained national attention as they inspire empathy around the issues of police brutality, Black women's liberation, and representation in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). Huffington Post commented on Lá Rel's work, stating Lá Rel "uses her song and video to provide an anthem for the contemporary movement for Black rights. She is a rising superstar with incredible potential, an artist who inspires, and someone that we should all be looking out for."

Lá Rel has been featured in The Root and Buzzfeed as an "artist to watch," and she has opened for Melanie Fiona, Luke James, Omarion, and Angelique Kidjo. In 2018, Lá Rel toured the country, hosting intimate concerts in a series she called The Sit In, invoking the historic legacy of intimate demonstrations in the Civil Rights Movement. Following the tour, Jessica released her debut album, "War Love," having teamed up with long-standing musical partner, Tyler "Eaglebabe!" Brooks of The Outsiders and Troy Miller, platinum selling producer behind "The Dreaming Room" by Laura Mvula and

“Liquid Spirit” by Gregory Porter. Her song, “Here Comes The Sun” was named Best R&B Song at the 2019 Independent Music Awards. Jessica Lá Rel is a powerhouse vocalist, dynamic writer, and arts activist dedicated to matters of life, love and justice.

Center Theatre Group’s Digital Stage is presented by American Express. As presenting sponsor of The Digital Stage, American Express Card Members enjoy special opportunities on the Digital Stage, including: presales and early access for limited-release premium events, invitations to private pre- or post-show meet and greets and access to exclusive content curated especially for Card Members.

Bank of America is Center Theatre Group’s Season Sponsor, including Digital Stage programming. For more than 20 years, Bank of America has partnered with Center Theatre Group to provide innovative Education and Community Partnerships programs as well as present world-class productions at the Ahmanson Theatre and Mark Taper Forum. Their generous support now extends online to the Digital Stage.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under the leadership of Artistic Director Michael Ritchie, Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, 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.

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January 15, 2021