

For immediate release
CENTER THEATRE GROUP NAMES
MICHELLE A. AVAN, WENDY CHANG, NOAH FRANCIS, RON GILLYARD, MAX
GOUSSE, MARSHA TAUBER SALLAI, RICHARD WEITZ AND HATTIE WINSTON
TO ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Center Theatre Group has added eight new members to its Board of Directors over the course of this season, as the organization continues building strong support from across the community throughout the prolonged closures of its theatres as a result of the pandemic, announced Board President Kiki Ramos Gindler. Growing its Board to 50 members, its newest dedicated supporters are **Michelle A. Avan, Wendy Chang, Noah Francis, Ron Gillyard, Max Gousse, Marsha Tauber Sallai, Richard Weitz and Hattie Winston.**

“As theatres continue to face previously unimaginable financial challenges in the face of this pandemic, it’s heartening to know there are so many advocates ready to commit their support to Center Theatre Group. They are helping ensure we will weather the storm and rebuild in inspiring new directions,” said Gindler. “These new members represent some of the pillars of Los Angeles that have helped keep this organization a vital part of the theatre ecosystem in this country for more than 50 years.

“Our Board has also made an important commitment to becoming a better reflection of our community by expanding its representation to include more BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) voices,” added Gindler. “Last year, our Board Leadership voted to adopt a dedicated budget item for equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism for the entire organization. And we created a standing committee on the Board dedicated to this necessary work. This committee’s goals include revising the Board’s workplan to include measurable actionable steps in diversifying its membership and moving towards being an anti-racist organization. We will continue to work at the Board level and with the organization’s leadership to further these goals in the coming months and beyond.”

The newest board members include leaders from the worlds of finance, education, marketing, sales, the arts, the recording industry and the wider entertainment industry.

Michelle A. Avan is the Managing Director, West Division Supervision Executive at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, with a career in the financial services industry spanning more than 25 years and an ongoing commitment to empowering young people, particularly Black women and girls, by helping them realize their full potential through financial acumen, higher education, determination and drive. Among her accomplishments, Avan was a recipient of Bank of America’s Global Diversity & Inclusion award as well as a

member of the company's Black Executive Leadership Council and co-chair of that's group's business initiative.

Wendy Chang is a respected leader in the field of nonprofits and foundations as the director of the Dwight Stuart Youth Fund, a foundation that has been a strong supporter of Center Theatre Group since 2002. Previously, Wendy has held positions including Executive Management Academy Director at the Whitecap Foundation; Director of Training and Advancement at Public Corporation for the Arts; Special Projects/Membership Director for the California Association of Nonprofits; and Director of Consulting Services for CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, Silicon Valley. She has served on several boards and councils, including Lambda Legal, Liberty Hill Foundation, Play Equity Fund, Arts Education Collective Funders Council, Los Angeles Partnership for Early Childhood Investment, OUT Fund and Circle of Change giving circles, East West Players and Asian American Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, among many others.

Noah Francis is a Vice President at JPMorgan Private Bank in Los Angeles, with more than a decade of experience in the financial services industry. Noah works as a Private Banker concentrating on the sports and entertainment industry with a particular focus on building black wealth. Prior to joining the Los Angeles Private Bank, Noah was based in London as the Business Manager supporting the J.P. Morgan Global Corporate Banking franchise in Europe, Middle East & Africa (EMEA). In this role, he developed and executed strategic objectives alongside the head of the EMEA Corporate Bank, as well as the senior Country Heads managing emerging market locations in the region, as well as the Multinational Corporates business.

Ron Gillyard is a partner and Chief Growth Officer of Quantasy + Associates, an award-winning full-service marketing and advertising agency in Los Angeles, having previously worked at Motown Records, Bad Boy Entertainment, J Records and Interscope Records. While in these positions he oversaw the A&R, marketing and sales of more than 100 million albums. In 2011, Gillyard was awarded a Grammy award for his work as a producer on Bebe & Cece Winans' album "Still" in the category of Best Contemporary R&B Gospel Album. He is also a producer of the musical "Born For This," featuring music by BeBe Winans and book by Charles Randolph-Wright.

Max Gousse is co-founder & Chairman of Artistry Collective (www.artistry-collective.com). Max's work in the A&R arena dates back to the mid-90s, having worked with Adina Howard on the now-classic, "Freak Like Me." Another milestone was his A&R work with Beyonce on the albums "B' Day" and "I Am...Sasha Fierce," as well as the "Dreamgirls" soundtrack. Max has also worked with B2K, Solange, Kelly Rowland and Sunshine Anderson, all while working at a litany of music companies including East West, Epic, Universal Music Publishing, Mathew Knowles' Music World and Island Def Jam.

Marsha Tauber Sallai is the President of Royal Accessories, LLC., a multi-faceted Luxury Gift Line business specializing in custom designs. Utilizing her management consulting experience, the company went from a start-up to an established account base of national and international presence in over 600 boutiques, luxury hotels, retailers, online stores and special commissions for the Smithsonian, Field and Cummer Museum. An avid volunteer, she is the President of the Center Theatre Group Affiliates, a women's volunteer organization founded in 1971 by Dorothy Buffum Chandler, and the longest standing volunteer organization supporting CTG.

Richard Weitz is a partner at William Morris Endeavor (WME), with clients including creators, producers, showrunners and directors such as Tina Fey, Robert Carlock, Ricky Gervais, LL Cool J, John Legend and Josh Groban. After joining Endeavor in 1997, Weitz was promoted to partner in April 2002 and served as the head of the agency’s television packaging and literary department which he helped start. Richard and his daughter Demi have been hosting RWQuarantunes—celebrity filled fundraiser Zoom events—during the recent pandemic and have raised over \$18 million for charities including more than \$700,000 for Center Theatre Group through his virtual benefit in January.

Hattie Winston has worked extensively across stage, television and film. Perhaps best known for her television work on “Becker” and “The Electric Company,” she began her career in the theatre, as a founding member of the world-renowned Negro Ensemble Company. Her Broadway credits include “Hair,” “The Me Nobody Knows,” “Two Gentlemen of Verona,” and “The Tap Dance Kid.” She has received two Obie Awards, two Drama-Logue Awards, CEBA Awards and an Audelco Award for her contributions to the world of theatre. Winston served as the national co-chair for the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists Equal Employment Opportunities Committee and donated a collection of writings entitled the Hattie Winston African American Scripts and Screenplays Collection to the University of Louisville.

They join a group of philanthropic leaders on Center Theatre Group’s Board, including Chairman William H. Ahmanson, President Kiki Ramos Gindler, Executive Vice President Brindell Roberts Gottlieb, Vice President William R. Lindsay, Secretary Amy R. Forbes, Treasurer David Quigg and members Harry Abrams, Jonathan Axel, Pamela Beck, Thom Beers, Miles Benickes, Gail Berman-Masters, Jana Bezdek, Betsy Borns, Diana Buckhantz, Dannielle Campos Ramirez, Jill Chozen, Christine Cronin-Hurst, Bradford W. Edgerton, MD, Gary Frischling, Rebecca George, Patricia Glaser, Manuela Cerri Goren, Robert Greenblatt, Jason Grode, Aliza Karney Guren, Stanley Iezman, Paul James, Jody Lippman, Louise Moriarty, Kari L. Nakama, Philip Pavel, Meghan Pressman, Michael Ritchie, Laura Rosenwald, Bruce L. Ross, Donna Schweers, Elliott Sernel, Glenn A. Sonnenberg, Sandra Stern, Bonnie Vitti and Matthew Walden.

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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