



Contact: Lisa Lance, PR Manager  
410.986.4016  
llance@centerstage.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Baltimore Center Stage Presents *Twisted Melodies*

**Baltimore—March 15, 2017.** Baltimore Center Stage is pleased to present, in association with Congo Square Theatre Company, *Twisted Melodies*. This powerful one-man show is based on the life of '70s soul singer and composer Donny Hathaway, perhaps best known for his duets with Roberta Flack, "The Closer I Get to You" and "Where is the Love?" *Twisted Melodies* is an immersive and crushing play about the brilliant musician's compelling inner struggle. Torn between the muses that inspire him and the mental illness that torments him, Hathaway evaluates the choices in his life in a gripping performance by Kelvin Roston Jr.

"This play first got on my radar during its run at Chicago's Congo Square Theatre, where Kelvin is an Artistic Associate," said Baltimore Center Stage Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah. "When we brought Kelvin to Baltimore and he ran through the show for us in the bare rehearsal space, he lit up the room. In this piece, Kelvin channels Donny Hathaway in a most honest and epic portrayal of a man whose story—let alone mind—eludes us all. People familiar with Donny Hathaway and his impact on American music understand the importance of getting this right."

Kelvin Roston Jr. is an actor/singer/musician from St. Louis, Mo. based in Chicago, Ill. He is also the playwright of *Twisted Melodies*, which began its journey 10 years ago in St. Louis as a play called *Psychology of a Genius*, an imagination of the last day of Donny Hathaway.

After moving to Chicago and becoming an Artistic Associate of Congo Square Theatre Company, Roston adapted the piece into *Twisted Melodies*, taking a closer look at mental illness through the eyes of Donny Hathaway. The show has enjoyed two runs in Chicago directed by Congo Square's Sam Roberson, and one in St. Louis directed by The Black Rep's Ron Himes.

The cast includes **Kelvin Roston Jr.\*** (Donny Hathaway). Roston is also the Playwright and Music Director for the production. Other members of the artistic team include **Derrick Sanders** (Director), **Courtney O'Neill** (Scenic Designer), **Dede Ayite** (Costume Designer), **Alan C. Edwards** (Lighting Designer), **Mike Tutaj** (Projection Designer), **Christopher M. LaPorte** (Sound Designer), **Hana S. Sharif** (Production Dramaturg), **Wendell Etherly** (Dramaturg), **Gavin Witt** (Dramaturg), **Deanie Vallone** (Dramaturg), **Tiffany Fulson** (Assistant Director), **Katrina Herrmann\*** (Stage Manager) and **Anthony O. Bullock\*** (Assistant Stage Manager).

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association.

*Twisted Melodies* opens Friday, March 24, with previews March 17-23, and closes Sunday, April 16. For more information, visit [www.centerstage.org](http://www.centerstage.org) or call the box office at 410.332.0033. Press night is Friday, March 24.

*Twisted Melodies* is made possible by Kramon & Graham PA Attorneys at Law. The *Twisted Melodies* media partner is Maryland Public Television. Baltimore Center Stage is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. An agency of the Department of Business and Economic Development, the MSAC provides financial support and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations, units of government, colleges and universities for arts activities. Funding for the MSAC is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, and the Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences. Center Stage's 2016/17 Season is made possible by The Shubert Foundation and the Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences.

#### **About Baltimore Center Stage**

Baltimore Center Stage is a professional, nonprofit institution committed to entertaining, engaging and enriching audiences through bold, innovative and thought-provoking classical and contemporary theater.

Named the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage has steadily grown as a leader in the national regional theater scene. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE and Managing Director Michael Ross, Baltimore Center Stage is committed to creating and presenting a diverse array of world premieres and exhilarating interpretations of established works.

Baltimore Center Stage believes in access for all—creating a welcoming environment for everyone who enters its theater doors and, at the same time, striving to meet audiences where they are. In addition to its Mainstage, Off Center and Family Series productions in the historic Mount Vernon neighborhood, Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations among a global audience through digital initiatives, which explore how technology and the arts intersect. The theater also nurtures the next generation of artists and theater-goers through the Young Playwrights Festival, Student Matinee Series and many other educational programs for students, families and professionals.

#### **About Congo Square Theatre Company**

Congo Square Theatre Company is a Chicago-based ensemble dedicated to artistic excellence. Their vision for their role within the theater landscape is to champion the Black experience via transformative theater that entertains, educates, and inspires. They are proud to produce definitive and transformative theater, spawned from the African Diaspora, with themes universal to all world cultures.

###