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M E D I A R E L E A S E

VOCAL DYNAMO SUGARAY RAYFORD, ELOISE LAWS OF LAWS FAMILY FAME, CO-CREATOR MISSISSIPPI CHARLES BEVEL AND AN ELECTRIC CAST OF BLUES AND BROADWAY ALL-STARS HEAT UP THE STAGE IN IT AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT THE BLUES AT PORTLAND CENTER STAGE

April 27, 2012 – PORTLAND, ORE. Casting is complete and the rehearsal room will soon be rockin' for Portland Center Stage's production of *It Ain't Nothin' but the Blues* by Charles Bevel, Lita Gaithers, Randal Myler, Ron Taylor and Dan Wheetman; based on an original idea by Ron Taylor. The production begins preview performances on Tuesday, May 22, opens on **Friday, May 25** and runs Tuesday through Sunday through **June 24, 2012**. Tickets **start at \$39**, with student and under-30 discounted tickets available for \$25. Rush tickets are \$20.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, with 2 p.m. matinees on Saturdays and Sundays and matinees at noon on select Thursdays. See the show calendar at www.pcs.org/blues/ for the complete performance schedule. Tickets can be purchased online at www.pcs.org, by phone at 503.445.3700 or by visiting the box office located at 128 NW Eleventh Avenue.

The foot-stompin' retrospective musical stars some of the brightest names in the contemporary Blues landscape. Lead singer of [The Mannish Boys](#), [Sugaray Rayford](#) brings his gospel-infused powerhouse vocals to the production. [Eloise Laws](#), of the legendary Laws Family (and a member of the original Broadway cast for *Blues*) and Broadway and cabaret veterans [Jennifer Leigh Warren](#) and [Sally Mayes](#) make up the electric trio of Blues chanteuses. Seasoned Blues favorites, [Mississippi Charles Bevel](#) (also a co-creator of the show) and [Chic Street Man](#) (last seen at PCS as the composer/performer in *Spunk*) are joining the cast along with newcomer **Trevor Wheetman**.

From African chants and Delta spirituals to the urban electricity of a Chicago nightclub, from dusty backroads bluegrass to the twang of a country juke joint, *It Ain't Nothin' but the Blues* is a stirring retrospective of blues classics that summons the soul of American music. Over two dozen musical numbers are included, among them "I'm Your Hoochie-Coochie Man," "Goodnight, Irene," "Fever," "Walkin' After Midnight," "The Thrill Is Gone" and "Let the Good Times Roll." *It Ain't Nothin' but the Blues* was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Musical, and has played to rave reviews all over the country. Through the music that is cherished as an original American art form, the standout group of musicians and singers on stage share a moving American story of troubles and triumph.

The show is directed by one of the originators of the production, **Randal Myler**. Scenic design is by **Robin Stanford Roberts** with lighting design by **Don Darnutzer** and projections designed by **Jeff Cady**. Costumes are designed by **Jeff Cone**. Sound Designer **Casi Pacilio** and Stage Manager **Emily Wells** round out the creative team.

Additional support for this production has been provided by **Stoel Rives, LLP, John Taylor & Barbara West** and **24 Hour Fitness**. Portland Center Stage's 2011/12 season is funded in part by **Umpqua Private Bank**, our lead corporate champion; the **Regional Arts & Culture Council** and **Work for Art**; the **Oregon Arts Commission**; the **Paul G. Allen Family Foundation**; and **Tim & Mary Boyle**. The Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner for Portland Center Stage.

[PORTLAND CENTER STAGE](#) inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palate of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from six to 106, including discussions, classes, workshops and partnerships with organizations throughout the Portland metro area.

THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY houses a 599-seat Main Stage and the 200-seat black box Ellyn Bye Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification.

The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on Oct. 1, 2006. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub for community artistic activity continues.

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