

PRESS RELEASE

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WACO THEATER CENTER TO HONOR BEYONCÉ KNOWLES-CARTER AND GLORIA CARTER, MOTHER OF JAY-Z, AT 2018 WEARABLE ART GALA IN LOS ANGELES

GALA SUPPORTS NEWLY OPENED WACO THEATER CENTER AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS FOUNDED BY RICHARD LAWSON AND TINA KNOWLES LAWSON

(December 15, 2017 - Los Angeles, CA) The annual Wearable Art Gala benefiting WACO Theater Center will be held on Saturday, March 17, 2018 in Los Angeles. Attending patrons dress in wearable art to attend the Gala which helps raise awareness and money for the newly designed theatrical complex and its mentorship programs, Tina's Angels and Richard's Warriors. WACO (Where Art Can Occur) is founded by actor and master acting teacher, Richard Lawson, and philanthropist, art collector and fashion designer, Tina Knowles Lawson.

GALA AND HONOREES

Kelly Rowland, Solange Knowles, Bianca Lawson and La La Anthony will serve as Honorary Chairpersons for the 2nd annual gala. This year, Beyoncé Knowles-Carter will be honored with WACO Theater Center's Humanitarian Award for providing support to numerous relief efforts throughout the world. Knowles-Carter's humanitarian

causes include Hand in Hand Hurricane Relief, Formation Scholars, and Women Making History to name a few. The programs are funded through her non-profit charitable organization, Beygood. In 2017, BEYGOOD4BURUNDI partnered with UNICEF to bring safe water to the most vulnerable women and children in the heart of Africa.

Mrs. Knowles Carter says of the honorary award, "I'm truly humbled to be the recipient of WACO Theater Center's Humanitarian Award. Through Beygood, we strive to support our fellow man, woman and child in times of need. We assist in the development of resources and foster hope for a brighter future. This mission is one we share with WACO Theater Center. I've experienced their work first hand - from Tina's Angels and Richard's Warriors to the creative talent presented on the WACO stage. Let us continue to inspire one another to improve our world however we can. I'm grateful for this honor."

WACO Theater will also pay tribute to Gloria Carter, mother of Shawn Carter, who will be the gala's inaugural recipient of the *Everyday People Award*. Ms. Carter co-founded the Shawn Carter Foundation with the mission of helping individuals who face socio-economic hardships to further their education at post secondary institutions. Since 2003, the Shawn Carter Foundation has raised over \$4 million for initiatives promoting youth empowerment and communities in need. The foundation hosts an annual college and university tour, offers a scholarship fund, study abroad experiences and counseling initiatives.

The Everyday People Award will be presented to Ms. Carter by JAY-Z, who says of his mother, "She's changed people's lives with education and just being a part of the community and touching it. I'm proud to present my mom with the WACO Theater Center's first Everyday People Award. My mom, like her mother before her, believes in the community. She believes in people - and bringing them together. This was kind of instilled in me."

In 2017, WACO staged its inaugural Wearable Art with presenting sponsor, SheaMoisture, helping to meet the organization's annual fundraising goals. The sold out event was attended by Magic Johnson, Octavia Spencer, Kris Jenner, Arianna Huffington, Samuel L. Jackson, Angela Bassett, Michelle Williams as well as art patron Felicia Horowitz, and head of the Ford Foundation, Darren Walker.

WHERE ART CAN OCCUR

Husband and wife co-founders Richard Lawson and Tina Knowles Lawson created WACO Theater Center to provide a place where an individual's artistic creation and self-expression can be celebrated through theatre, mentorship and art.

The Lawsons have mentored and empowered young people for decades: Richard Lawson through the acting and empowerment academy, RLS Studio; and Tina Knowles-Lawson through her charitable and fine art initiatives. Last spring, they launched their individual programs Tina's Angels and Richard's Warriors to help foster artistic creation, self-expression, and confidence in boys and girls ages 12-14.

"Our purpose is to inspire young people to pursue their dreams no matter who they are or where they came from. It is a well known fact that when you are exposed to the arts, you do better in other areas of life. We want to nourish the minds of our youth - from the arts to life skills - so they clearly see the finest versions of themselves," says Knowles-Lawson.

Lawson adds, "WACO Theater Center gives both professional and non-professional actors, artists and underserved youth a place to celebrate their own talent and artistry." The venue houses Richard Lawson Studios, led by the actor and master class teacher, and a mobile arts theatre unit, which will take theatre, music, and visual arts to communities around the greater Los Angeles Area. WACO Theater Center, which opened its doors last November, is located at 5144 Lankershim Boulevard in North Hollywood's NoHo Arts District. For more information on classes and upcoming productions, visit www.WACOTheaterCenter.com

TICKETS

Tickets to the Wearable Art Gala will include live entertainment, dancing, Creole cuisine, live and silent auctions and the awards ceremony. The \$500 and \$1000 ticket donations for individuals and sponsors respectively will be applied to funding community programs such as Tina's Angels, Richard's Warriors as well as such events as Parent/Child movie date night, Free Dance, Modeling, Painting/Sculpting Workshops, and Children's Open Mike Night. WACO Theater Center is a registered 501 (3)© non-profit organization. For tickets to the Gala, visit <http://wacothatercenter.com/2018-wearable-art-gala-official/>

VENUE

The Wearable Art Gala takes over the City of Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument, the Alexandria Ballroom. Located in the heart of downtown, the city landmark has hosted legendary heads of state such as Winston Churchill and King Edward the VIII as well as such Hollywood luminaries as Charlie Chaplin and Rita Hayworth.

For Sponsorship and Partnership inquiries, please contact Michelle Edgar, ICM Partners MEdgar@icmpartners.com | 310/550-4305

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