



MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

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I'm Ready Productions Announces 2011 Spring Tour of Box Office Hit Je'Caryous Johnson's "Cheaper to Keep Her" Starring Brian McKnight and Vivica A. Fox

HOUSTON (Feb. 16, 2011) – A spring tour of the hit comedy stage play *Je'Caryous Johnson's Cheaper to Keep Her* begins Thursday, Feb. 17, 2011, at the Sunrise Theater in Ft. Pierce, Florida. The play is produced by Executive Producers Je'Caryous Johnson and Gary Guidry, founders of I'm Ready Productions, Inc., and Foxy Brown Productions in Association with L. Richardson Entertainment. This successful theatre production has been touring for one year from coast to coast and stars R&B crooner Brian McKnight and actress and producer Vivica A. Fox.

The play has garnered critical acclaim during the year. "It [Cheaper to Keep Her] was part stand-up-comedy, part musical, part sitcom, part revival church service, part R&B dance party and part cultural commentary. The way the audience leaped to its feet at the end of the show, he's [Je'Caryous Johnson] obviously got a good thing going," wrote Donald Munro, play critic, The Fresno Bee.

Las Vegas Tribune play critic Sandy Zimmerman wrote, "Cheaper to Keep Her" is a refreshing stage-play about relationships yet it delves much deeper into the emotions of the couple. The story line is beautifully woven around a seemingly happily married couple until we find it was only an illusion. I hope 'Cheaper To Keep Her' encourages you to have increased appreciation for that man or woman who has been with you through it all. I believe you will find a little bit of yourself in the story and maybe even find a solution if you are facing obstacles in life and love. [This play] is universal for people of all races."

WHAT:

Je'Caryous Johnson's "*Cheaper to Keep Her*" romantic comedy stage play

DESCRIPTION:

Cheaper to Keep Her is the story of a seemingly perfect marriage in the midst of collapse. In *Cheaper to Keep Her*, Raymond Mays (Brian McKnight) splits with his wife Morgan Mays (Vivica A. Fox). When Raymond hires his best friend Joey to be his lawyer, and Morgan hires her catty cousin Koren as counsel, a legal boxing match explodes over their divorce. When Morgan walks away with everything, Raymond and Joey scheme to stop paying alimony by getting Morgan hitched again. But did Raymond ever stop loving Morgan? Can he stand to see her with someone else? As ex-husband and ex-love face off with each other, broken hearts will get revenge, karma could kill, and infidelity can become infectious as hearts and marital matrimony collide only to discover whether it's cheaper to keep her.

WHEN:

See attached markets and dates

(more)

TICKETS:

Ticketmaster Outlets or visit www.imreadyproductions.com

STAR CAST:

Brian McKnight, Vivica A. Fox, comedians Jonathan Slocumb and Gary "G-Thang" Johnson, Karen Malina White, perhaps best known for her portrayal of Charmaine Brown on the NBC sitcom *The Cosby Show* and its spin-off series *A Different World*, and Samson Logan, who also starred in Johnson's stage play "Love Overboard"

INFORMATION:

For press passes, interviews, show and talent images, contact Margo E. Williams, MWH Public Relations, 281.213.9554, 832.492.2407 or margo@mwhpublicrelations.com.

ABOUT I'M READY PRODUCTIONS INC.

Founded in 1995, I'm Ready Productions ("I'm Ready") is a national, minority owned, theatre, television, feature film and music production company based in Houston. Owned by 2007 NAACP Trailblazer award winners Je'Caryous Johnson and Gary Guidry, I'm Ready is known for its soul-stirring plays. Breaking box office records, more than two million people in over 50 cities have turned out for I'm Ready plays. From turning bestselling African-American novels into plays, to approaching Hollywood's hottest stars for its productions, I'm Ready's approach is fearless and outside-of-the-box, changing the face of American touring theatre. Visit www.imreadyproductions.com for more information.

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****Cheaper To Keep Her Tour Dates***

Ft Pierce, FL, Sunrise Theater, Feb. 17,
Miami, FL, James L. Knight Center, Feb. 18 – 19
Savannah, GA, Johnny Mercer Theater, Feb.20
New York, NY, Beacon, Mar. 3 – 6
Cleveland, OH, State Theater (Playhouse), Mar 11 – 12
Indianapolis, IN, Murat Theater, Mar 13,
Jackson, MS, Thalia Mara Hall, Mar 18
Memphis, TN, Cannon Center, Mar 19 – 20
Baltimore, MD, Morgan State, Mar 25 – 27
Houston, TX, Hobby Center, May 6 – 8

* Dates and/or cities subject to change

BIOGRAPHIES

Je'Caryous Johnson

Je'Caryous Johnson is executive producer and CEO of I'm Ready Productions, a national, minority owned, theatre, television, feature film and music production company based in Houston. I'm Ready is known for its soul-stirring plays. Breaking box office records, more than two million people in over 50 cities have turned out for I'm Ready plays. Johnson is making his mark in the entertainment arena, becoming one of the most sought-after playwrights in the industry. His entertaining, thought-provoking scripts have attracted some of the biggest names in the business.

Johnson also is the founder of the Je'Caryous Johnson Foundation, a nonprofit organization. The Foundation encompasses the Je'Caryous Johnson Acting Studio, a place for education, entertainment, and entrepreneurship. It brings Hollywood to Houston so that Houston's youth and arts community can experience the magic of theatre, television, and film firsthand and have the skill set and business acumen necessary to better pursue their artistic dreams.

A Houston native, Johnson rose above negative childhood labels to receive many adult accolades and accomplishments, which are indicative of his determined nature. The four-time national championship playwright received the NAACP 2007 Trailblazer Award and is the youngest producer/playwright to garner national media attention. He was the first person to adapt an African-American romance novel into a stage play. He was also the first person to write and produce a novel and a play, simultaneously.

Thirty-two-year-old Johnson was chosen by the estate of Sammy Davis Jr. to write "Sammy Davis Jr. – The World's Greatest Entertainer" (Las Vegas 2007). The distinction gives him another first – the youngest creator of a Vegas show. He will also make history again, with his upcoming collaboration with Brian McKnight to produce a soundtrack, play, and novel.

Johnson has over 14 years of experience in the performing arts, training with such theater masters as Edward Albee, Jose Quintero, and Sir Peter Hall. He has directed some high-profile actors, including Billy Dee Williams, Richard Roundtree and Vivica A. Fox.

Johnson's multimedia empire continues to expand its reach. Up next for Johnson is the release of more books including his nonfiction debut, "I'm a Good Man, You're a Good Woman ... Why Can't We Find Each Other?" "Good Man," published March 2010. True to his never-quit spirit, Johnson is gearing up to shoot I'm Ready's first movie, "The Marrying Kind."

Gary Guidry

Gary Guidry is president and COO of I'm Ready Productions, a national, minority-owned, theatre, television, feature film and music production company based in Houston. In this role, 36-year-old Guidry manages the daily operations of I'm Ready and oversees its musical arrangements.

Guidry, a child music prodigy, combines his love of music with his love of business in the NAACP Trailblazer award-winning company, I'm Ready. At the behest of his nephew and business partner, Je'Caryous Johnson, Guidry left the world of accounting to chart a course with the new entertainment venture.

Guidry has written, arranged, produced, and scored music for multiple theatrical productions, including Heaven's Child, Ain't Misbehavin', Men Cry in the Dark and The Maintenance Man. He has worked with some of the music industry's most successful talents such as Grammy Award winner Regina Belle, Gerald Levert, Syleena Johnson, Christopher Williams, Brian McKnight, Monifa, Rhona Bennet, Tank, Ginuwine and Avant.

Guidry maintains his passion for music by playing drums all over the country and dabbling in other music ventures.

This Houston native holds a bachelor's in Business Administration from Texas Southern University. After graduating, Guidry spent four years as an accountant for a safety supply company. He went on to become a manager for a major energy company before starting I'm Ready.

Brian McKnight

Brian McKnight has earned himself a spot in contemporary music history. He has released 13 albums to date, 7 of them have gone platinum, with several going 2 and 3x platinum, and has sold over 20 Million albums worldwide. He is the recipient of numerous awards including Soul Train Awards and Image Awards, as well as 16 Grammy nominations. Additional nominations include MTV Video Music Awards, BET Awards and American Music Awards.

Brian's current project is his new weekly late night talk show, "The Brian McKnight Show", which premiered in September 2009 in over 200 markets. The show is a one-hour entertainment showcase featuring the hottest celebrities and personalities from the world of sports, acting, popular culture and music. Guests have included Stevie Wonder, Kobe Bryant, Justin Timberlake, Dr. Phil, Smokey Robinson Carmelo Anthony, Jesse Jackson, Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Seth Green, Hill Harper, and Vivica A Fox, just to name a few.

In addition; Brian has co-hosted "The Brian McKnight Morning Show" on KTWV the Wave Smooth Jazz radio station in LA for 2 years. A second radio show launched in 2008, as "The Brian McKnight Show" took to the evening air and is syndicated through Citadel (formerly ABC Radio) in 47 markets coast to coast.

The newest album "Evolution of A Man" released October 2009. The album features the first single "What I've Been Waiting For" which reveals a reggae sound that McKnight has never done before. Upon release it quickly hit #1 on I Tunes R&B, as well as breaking into the top 10 at Urban Contemporary Radio. The album is a treat for McKnight fans; featuring the ballads that he is best known for. "Evolution Of A Man" is distributed on E1 Entertainment (formerly Koch).

With seemingly endless talent; Brian has used his vast industry knowledge as a red carpet host for Extra!, and has seen success in musical theatre. In 2005 McKnight toured with the production of "Cheaters". In 2006 McKnight scored "Daddy's Little Girls" for Tyler Perry, the same year he released the album TEN. In 2007 McKnight stepped back onto Broadway with a run as Billy Flynn in "Chicago

Vivica A. Fox

After completing her second season on HBO's Emmy Nominated hit comedy, Curb Your Enthusiasm, Fox appeared in Lifetime's Drop Dead Diva and Hallmark's Christmas movie, Farewell Mr. Kringle. She is also the voice of Angel Dynamite on Cartoon Network's, New Scooby Doo.

On the comedic film front, Fox co-starred with Jessica Simpson in Private Valentine as well as produced and starred in Three Can Play That Game with Tony Rock. Switching over to dramatic roles, Fox starred as an FBI Agent in the suspense thrillers Junkyard Dogs and a detective in Trapped in Haitian Nites. Fox returned to her action roots in The Hard Corps, with Jean-Claude Van Damme, and also co-starred in Cover, directed by Bill Duke.

In the world of reality, Fox hosted TV Land's, The Cougar, and teamed up with VH1 to executive produce and host, Glam God. Vivica was also a fan favorite on ABC's, Dancing With The Stars and served as a judge alongside Academy Award winner Faye Dunaway on the WB's, The Starlet. In the scripted world, Fox co-executive produced and starred in Lifetime's one hour drama, Missing.

Vivica's other feature credits include Two Can Play That Game, with Morris Chestnut, Quentin Tarantino's Kill Bill, Ella Enchanted, starring Anne Hathaway. Fox also starred in and produced the romantic comedies, The Salon, with Academy Award Nominee Terrence Howard and Getting Played with Bill Bellamy and Carmen Electra. Some of Fox's most memorable characters are also seen in such films as Independence Day, Set It Off, Soul Food, Batman and Robin, Kingdom Come, Why Do Fools Fall In Love, Double Take, Teaching Mrs. Tingle, Juwanna Mann, Boat Trip and Idle Hands. Fox's

television films include Showtime's *Hendrix* and the ABC/Disney movie, *A Sainly Switch* opposite David Alan Grier and Rue McClanahan.

On the Fox Network, Vivica also enjoyed success headlining her own sitcom, *Getting Personal*, opposite Elliot Gould, Jon Cryer and Duane Martin. Fox's numerous television credits include *Alias*, *My Wife & Kids*, *All of Us*, *Eve*, and *Out All Night*,

In 2008, Fox was awarded the prestigious NAACP Spirit Award for starring in and co-producing the hit stage play *Whatever She Wants*. She is now starring in and co-producing *Cheaper to Keep Her*. In 2005 and 2006, Vivica won the NAACP Image Award and the Prism Award for Best Actress in a television series—drama. She was also honored with a Trumpet Award for Outstanding Career Achievements in Film. In 2003 she was honored with the Lady of Soul Lena Horne Career Achievement Award. She and Will Smith also won the MTV Movie Award for Best on Screen Kiss for *Independence Day*. Additionally, Vivica was also voted one of People Magazine's 50 most beautiful people. Currently, Vivica is also busy launching the Vivica Fox wig line collection.

Jonathan Slocumb

In the world of standup comedy, there has only been a select few funny men who could captivate an audience with limitless laughter yet still remain within the boundaries of decency, tastefulness and tact. It almost seems to be a by-gone era for comics like Bill Cosby, Flip Wilson and *Sinbad* who kept crowds engaged in their dialogue and free of any foul language. But the ferociously funny, multi-talented nonconformist *Jonathan Slocumb* has been bringing fun back to the family for more than a decade now. In just a few short years, he went from tearing up clubs across the map to hosting award shows for prestigious organizations like NAACP and Urban League and writing for BET. For the past five years in a row, he has been the main stage host for the *Essence Music Festival* in New Orleans. And he does it all without using any profanity.

"I'm very balanced and very diverse. For years, I was placed in a box and everything was related to gospel and religion," says Slocumb. "But I'm able to perform for the mainstream audience AND the religious. But the main thing is that I'm always clean."

Gary "G-Thang" Johnson

Comedian, Gary "G-Thang" Johnson has been delivering comic styling straight out of St. Louis since before the turn of the millennium. Having developed a loyal fan base by bringing his stand-up to top comedy clubs across the country, G-Thang has graced the stages of major venues from The United Center in Chicago, Illinois to the Universal and Gibson Amphitheater's in Los Angeles, California. During an eight-year career, G-Thang has toured with the likes of Destiny's Child, Keisha Cole, Nelly, Cedric The Entertainer - and in 2000, was a featured opening act on "The Kings Of Comedy" tour.

Up next, G-Thang hits the big screen with a lead role as "Calvin" in "Disaster Movie," a Lionsgate film due in theaters everywhere this summer. Directed by Aaron Seltzer and Jason Friedberg - the comedic-team behind the "Scary Movie" franchise, "Epic Movie" and "Meet The Spartans," - "Disaster Movie" promises to be a comedic hit!

Other recent screen credits include a stint in a recurring role on the ABC sitcom, "In Case of Emergency" opposite David Arquette - in this role G-Thang also had the pleasure of working with Jon Favreau who directed the pilot episode for this series. In 2007, after receiving a personal invite from Ashton Kutcher, G-Thang joined the cast of MTV's hit show "Punk'd" for one season. A bonafide star with the comedy development team at The CW, G-Thang has had recurring and guest starring roles on several of the network's most popular shows including - "Half & Half," "All That," "Girlfriends," "The Game," "Love Inc." and "All Of Us." An upbeat personality, impeccable timing and trademark comedic flair have also made G-Thang a regular with BET - from appearances on the network original series', "Comic View," and "Comin To The Stage" (seasons 1 & 2) to his very own one-hour network special in 2006. Starring in a multitude of television movies and various series, G-Thang has even displayed his range as an actor in a dramatic role on FX's "The Shield."

Recently, G-Thang made his mark in radio as a regular on the 100.3 The Beat's Tom Joyner radio show in the mornings in Los Angeles. This show is syndicated nationally to over eight million listeners. In 2007, G-Thang released "I Got Problems," a comedy album distributed by Universal.

G-Thang is consistently booked for charity events by a host of celebrity fans including: Shaquille O'Neil, Will Smith, Nelly, Marshall Faulk, Tom Joyner and Javon Kearsie to name a few. Most recently G-Thang lent his involvement to a Hurricane Katrina fundraiser in New Orleans. G-Thang currently resides in Los Angeles.

Karen Malina White

Karen Malina White, (B.F.A. HOWARD UNIVERSITY) born and raised in Philadelphia, is most known for her television work on *The Cosby Show*, *A Different World*, *Malcolm & Eddie*, *Fresh Prince of Bel-Aire*, *The Proud Family* and for her work in *Lean On Me*. Her regional theatre credits include west coast premiere of *The Ballad of Emmett Till* (Fountain Theatre), west coast premiere of *Crumbs From the Table of Joy* by Lynn Nottage (originated the role of Ernestine/South Coast Rep), *Permanent Collection*, *Distracted*, *Salt Fish & Bakes* (all @ The Mixed Blood Theatre in Minn, MN), *CHAIN* by Pearl Cleage (one person play/originated the role/produced by The Women's Project & Woodie King Jr. Off Broadway @ Judith Anderson, NYC), *Brown Silk & Magenta Sunsets* and *In Search of Snow* (with RACCA, NYC). This is Karen's fourth production with *I'm Ready*. She also starred in *Cheaters*, *Men Money & Gold Diggers* and *Love Overboard*.