

BRETT SINGER & ASSOCIATES, LLC

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PRESS CONTACT: Brett Singer (212) 307-7181 – PLEASE NOTE NEW PHONE NUMBER

EXTENDED! Now Through Sunday, November 21st!

Attention Listings Editors: Equity Off-Broadway Engagement

Classical Theater of Harlem Presents

AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE

A NATURAL DEATH

Book, Music and Lyrics by Melvin Van Peebles

Directed by Alfred Preisser

At the HSA Theatre, 645 St. Nicholas Ave. (near 141st Street)

October 25, 2004

The OBIE and Drama Desk Award-winning Classical Theater of Harlem (CTH) is pleased to announce the extension of their latest production, the musical *AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE A NATURAL DEATH*. Performances at the HSA Theater (645 St. Nicholas Avenue) will continue through Sunday, November 21st.

A totally unique fiction form, *AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE A NATURAL DEATH* is a gutsy, lusty narrative of Black street life that explores every aspect of ghetto agony. Peopled by junkies, whores, pimps, lesbians, drag queens, sweating workers, crooked cops, prisoners, lovers, and dreamers, Van Peebles' play is considered a tradition shattering and trend setting work which spawned the choreopoem, spoken word, and rap music. *AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE* was a huge hit on Broadway in its original inception, where it was nominated for seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical. The score has been re-visited by Mr. Van Peebles and William "Spaceman" Patterson, who has worked with Mr. Van Peebles many times in the past and will serve as music director.

Reviewing the show for the *The Village Voice*, David Finkle wrote that CTH's revival of *AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE* showed that the piece was "still vital...explosively directed [by] Alfred Preisser" and praised the "Outstanding cast." *Time Out New York* has included the show in their "Don't Miss" column for the past two weeks; reviewer David Cote wrote that "the work as a whole remains startlingly fresh," and that "CTH reconfirms itself as one of the gutsiest and physically fearless groups around."

The cast for *AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE A NATURAL DEATH* includes a number of CTH regulars as well as notable newcomers. Carmen Barika, Shamika Cotton, Neil Dawson, Rashaad Ernesto Green, Tracy Jack (*Trojan Women*), Ty Jones (*Macbeth*, OBIE-winner for *The Blacks*), J. Kyle Manzay (OBIE-winner for *The Blacks*), Yusef Miller, Simone Moore, Nyambi Nyambi, Ron Simons (*The Blacks*, *Trojan Women*), Glenn Turner, Althea Vyfhius, Kendra Ware, and Robyn Landiss Walker.

The Classical Theatre of Harlem is a dynamic and unique theatre company dedicated to producing the classics for a new, young, and culturally diverse audience. Since 1999, CTH has presented numerous classic plays, garnered 5 AUDELCO Awards (41 nominations) for Excellence in Black Theatre, and won five OBIE Awards, off-Broadway's most prestigious honor. This year the company won a Special Drama Desk Award for their work.

AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE A NATURAL DEATH began performances on Wednesday, September 29th, and will now continue through Sunday, November 21st. Performances will now be Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8pm, and Sundays at 3pm. Tickets will be \$25 and may be purchased by calling Smarttix at (212) 868-4444, or online at www.smarttix.com. Photos are available for download at www.brettsinger.com/clients/cth2004.html.

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