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Jody Watley Dazzles in ‘Loving the Silent Tears’

Star-studded benefit show with a meaningful message

Jody Watley fit her role in “Loving the Silent Tears” so beautifully, representing the majestic African culture in a queenly costume as well as her naturally regal demeanor. The Grammy-winning icon and “Pop’s Fashionista Godmother” was one of the stars in “Loving the Silent Tears,” the new musical about finding one’s peace that was held for one sold-out night on October 27 at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. The venue that hosted the Oscars found itself an equally dazzling red carpet event with this musical’s premiere that was directed by Tony-nominated **Vincent Paterson** (acclaimed director/choreographer of Michael Jackson’s “Bad” and Madonna’s “Blond Ambition” world tours) and choreographed by Emmy-winning **Bonnie Story** (“High School Musical” 1, 2, 3).

Also starring were 2-time Grammy winner **Jon Secada**, Grammy-winning Jamaican reggae legends **Black Uhuru**, and Broadway stars: Tony winners **Debbie Gravitte** and **Kiril Kulish**, Tony nominee **Patti Cohenour**, and Emmy winner and Tony nominee **Liz Callaway**.

Also adding their unique voices were top international musicians: Grammy-winning reggae legends **Black Uhuru**, Arab singer **Camellia Abou-Odah**, French singer **Flo Ankah**, actor **Junior Case**, award-winning actor **Luke Eberl**, Vietnamese pop star **Hồ Quỳnh Hương**, Italian tenor **Mark Janicello**, Korean pop star **Brian Joo**, award-winning Israeli singer **Liel Kolet**, Irish soprano **Katie McMahon**, Korean singer **Heather Park**, award-winning Brazilian singer **Fabiana Passoni**, Persian superstar **Siavash Shams**, and Chinese platinum pop star **Kay Tse**.

“Being a part of this prestigious global cast of diverse artists, stellar production team, not to mention a meaningful musical event was one of the great experiences I’ve enjoyed in my career,” said Jody Watley. She added, *“I think we all made lifelong friends with each other.”*

Award-winning playwrights **Cynthia Ferrell** and **Frank Evans** worked on the book for “Loving the Silent Tears,” which told the story of an older, bereaved woman named Joy (played by Patti Cohenour from Broadway’s original “The Phantom of the Opera”) and an ambitious young man named Pete (played by Luke Eberl from “Planet of the Apes”). Both are struggling in ways we all could relate to.

“The musical’s message is faith, compassion, gratitude, finding your way out of despair, and finding your inner peace and joy,” said Jody Watley.

The two characters go on magical train ride through various countries, where they encounter the singers of each distinct culture who express an aspect of their inner journeys. When the train stops in Africa, Jody Watley emerges with members of the acclaimed Lula Washington Dance Theatre to perform “A Real Fool,” with music is by Grammy winner **Nan Schwartz** (“Harry

Potter”). The lyrics are based on “Silent Tears,” a poetry collection that had been written by **Supreme Master Ching Hai**, world-renowned spiritual teacher, humanitarian, poet and artist.

Two-time Oscar-winning composer **Al Kasha** was inspired to create “Loving the Silent Tears” musical based on poems by Supreme Master Ching Hai. The poetry was set to music by Mr. Kasha, Ms. Schwartz, and other award-winning Broadway/Hollywood composers: 6-time Grammy winner and 2-time Oscar nominee **Jorge Calandrelli** (“Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon), Emmy winner **Doug Katsaros** (Footloose), 2-time Grammy winner and Oscar nominee **Henry Krieger** (Dreamgirls), Tony and Emmy winner **Don Pippin** (Oliver!), Grammy winner **Nan Schwartz** (Harry Potter), and Oscar and 2-time Grammy winner **David Shire** (Saturday Night Fever).

The event commemorated the 19th Anniversary of Supreme Master Ching Hai Day to honor her worldwide philanthropic work and peace advocacy. California State Senator **Curren Price** conveyed commendatory remarks about Supreme Master Ching Hai’s longstanding humanitarian contributions. Supreme Master Ching Hai was unable to attend but gave a warm video greeting, in which she said, *“To all involved in this musical event, blessed be your dedication to make this world a more enjoyable place, cheering up the mass and giving thanks to Heaven and Earth in this way.”*

In the caring spirit of Supreme Master Ching Hai Day, after the musical the Supreme Master recognized three charity organizations, **Animal Defenders International**, **Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS**, and **Worldwide Veterinary Service**, with generous contributions totaling US\$300,000, made on behalf of all the artists involved in the musical.

In addition, the vegan lifestyle was promoted in alignment with the overall message of peace and cultural understanding. The guest speaker, Academy Award-winning actor **George Chakiris** (“West Side Story”), said during his speech, *“Supreme Master Ching Hai’s message is that all beings...have the right to live in peace and dignity on this beautiful planet; and that each person can do his or her part to save lives, better our planet, and be heroes. And my personal way to be a hero and save these important lives is to be a vegetarian.”*

In addition, the incredible evening was emceed by an enthusiastic group of vegan or vegetarian celebrities: TV host and former Miss USA **Susie Castillo**, award-winning actor **Corey Feldman** (“The Goonies”), actress **Kelly Packard** (“Baywatch”), and 2-time Emmy-winning actor **Kristoff St. John** (“The Young and the Restless”).

The event concluded with the full cast singing a finale song, “Take Each Other’s Hand,” with music by Al Kasha and lyrics based on Supreme Master Ching Hai’s poetry. The audience joined in by waving star-shaped light wands. Al Kasha said, *“The show breaks down boundaries.”*

Ticket holders were also invited to an elaborate pre-show art exhibition of the Master’s creative work. After the event, there was a VIP banquet that was catered with delicious vegan food.

For exclusive video interviews with the stars, photos and more, please visit www.SilentTearsMusical.com.