



# BLACK ENSEMBLE THEATER

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For Immediate Release

## **DUE TO POPULAR DEMAND BLACK ENSEMBLE THEATER EXTENDS**

*DON'T MAKE ME OVER (In Tribute to Dionne Warwick)*

**NOW THROUGH OCTOBER, 2006**

CHICAGO – Due to the overwhelming success of Black Ensemble Theater's World Premiere musical *Don't Make Me Over (In Tribute to Dionne Warwick)*, founder and creator Jackie Taylor proudly announces that the show, originally slated to run until August 27, has officially been extended through October, 2006.

*Don't Make Me Over (In Tribute to Dionne Warwick)* is written and directed by Black Ensemble Theater Company Founder & Executive Director Jackie Taylor. The "Season of Women" is sponsored by Sara Lee Foundation, Tribune Foundation and LaSalle Bank.

"Phenomenal singer,' 'courageous lady,' and 'living legend' all come to mind when trying to best describe Dionne Warwick," said Ms. Taylor. "As audiences have come to expect from Black Ensemble productions, a super-talented high-energy cast will provide an engaging look into the life of this award-winning performer."

**Dionne Warwick** is a six-time Grammy Award winner and this year celebrates her fortieth year in entertainment. *Don't Make Me Over (In Tribute to Dionne Warwick)* is a historical journey that explores Ms. Warwick's accomplishments over the past four decades and details her musical contributions. *Don't Make Me Over* features 23 of Ms. Warwick's biggest hits including "Walk On By," "Message To Michael," "Alfie" and "I Say A Little Prayer," just to name a few. As Ms. Warwick's voice is no match for one person, there will be *four* fabulous singers performing these musical classics. Three actresses will actually play Dionne Warwick - Paulette Bruce, Carrie, and Alexis Rogers - each one bringing an essence of Dionne to life in a way that you will only experience at the Black Ensemble Theater. A fourth singer, Dawn Mitchell, plays the character of Ms. Divine, a concert singer who performs only Dionne Warwick hits.

This production continues the company's popular "Season of Women" theme, celebrating the achievements of African American women. What was expected to be a single "Season of Women" was launched in 2004 with the smash hit, *Somebody Say Amen (Great Women of Gospel)*. Some two years later – thanks to productions of *At Last: A Tribute to Etta James* and *Nina Simone: The High Priestess Speaks* – *Don't Make Me Over (In Tribute to Dionne Warwick)* marks the fourth original work in this series.

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In addition to the aforementioned talents, *Don't Make Me Over (In Tribute to Dionne Warwick)* features Shay Ames as Burt Bacharach and Barry Manilow, Jacqueline Thomas as Lee Warrick, and Toi Overton as Cissy Houston. Dee Dee Warwick is played by Marquecia Jordan, while Nikita Harris, Dwight Neal and Gemini Wadley play various roles.

Musical Director for the production is Jimmy Tillman (drums), with musical arrangements by Thomas Washington. Other band members include Hank Ford (saxophone), Paul Howard (trumpet), Bill McFarland (trombone), Anderson Edwards (bass), Derrick Bounds (piano) Randell Johnson (piano) and Herb Walker (guitar).

Performances are Friday and Saturday at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 3:00 p.m. Performances NOW continue through October, 2006.

Regular tickets are \$35.00, with discounts available for seniors, students and groups.

All performances will take place at The Black Ensemble Theater, 4520 N. Beacon. Tickets are available by calling the Black Ensemble Theater Box Office at 773-769-4451 or Ticketmaster at 312-902-1500, or online at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).

#### The Black Ensemble Theater Company

The Black Ensemble Theater Company was founded in 1976 by Jackie Taylor, who has written and directed more than 100 productions for the company. In addition to its mainstage productions, the Black Ensemble Theater Company produces 'Plays with a Purpose,' a series of original youth-oriented musicals, designed to teach students positive life lessons and values, as well as several community-based programs that use theater arts to enrich the lives of countless students and families. The mission of the Black Ensemble Theater Company is threefold: to utilize theater to help eradicate racism; to perpetuate the history of the African American people; and to use theater to serve disenfranchised communities.

For more information on the Black Ensemble Theater Company, please visit [www.BlackEnsembleTheater.org](http://www.BlackEnsembleTheater.org) or call 773-769-4451.

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