

BET Will 'Raise the Praise' On Sunday, January 25 at 8:00 p.m.* With the 9th Annual 'CELEBRATION OF GOSPEL'

Mary Mary, LL Cool J, Louis Gossett Jr., Kirk Franklin, Donnie McClurkin, Vickie Winans and More Take the Stage with Funnyman and Host Steve Harvey

LOS ANGELES, Jan 12, 2009 -- Taking the spirit to new heights, BET's CELEBRATION OF GOSPEL is a soulful two-hour celebration with moving performances of worship by both gospel and mainstream greats. In his ninth year, veteran comedian, actor and popular syndicated radio personality Steve Harvey again hosts the popular religious telecast, which premieres Sunday, January 25 at 8:00 p.m.* on BET.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070716/BETNETWORKSLOGO>)

Led by the world-renowned musical director Ray Chew and his 24-piece orchestra, gospel supernovas Mary Mary and hip-hop legend LL Cool J passionately performed their new hit collaboration "We Gonna Make It" to a packed house at downtown Los Angeles' Orpheum Theatre. Kirk Franklin, Isaac Carree, Lowell Pye and Rance Allen also blessed the crowd with a soul-moving performance of "Lil Boy", followed by Smokie Norful and Heather Headley's rendition of "Jesus is Love." Oscar winner Louis Gossett Jr. and actor Terry Crews performed beautiful spoken word segments, while Trin-i-tee 5:7 and 21:03 hit the stage and gave young gospel listeners something to stand up and dance to with "I'll Take You There."

Marvin Sapp, Pastor Shirley Caesar and Pastor Dorothy Glass, Dr. Bobby Jones with the Nashville Super Choir, Karen Clark-Sheard, Donnie McClurkin, Vickie Winans, Hezekiah Walker & LFC, Kurt Carr & The Kurt Carr Singers, as well as Christian artists Muiywa & Riversongz direct from the United Kingdom, round out the mega-list of awe-inspiring performances at BET's CELEBRATION OF GOSPEL '09.

CELEBRATION OF GOSPEL is produced by BET: Stephen Hill (President of Programming), Lynne Harris Taylor (Vice President of Specials) and Marilyn Gill.

*All times ET/PT

About BET Networks

BET Networks, a division of Viacom Inc. (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), is the nation's leading provider of quality entertainment, music, news and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel reaches more than 98 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and sub-Saharan Africa. BET is the dominant African-American consumer brand with a diverse group of businesses extensions: BET.com, a leading Internet destination for Black entertainment, music, culture, and news; BET Digital Networks - BET J, BET Gospel and BET Hip Hop, attractive alternatives for cutting-edge entertainment tastes; BET Home Entertainment, a collection of BET-branded offerings for the home environment including DVDs and video-on-demand; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, which operates BET in the United Kingdom and oversees the extension of BET network programming for global distribution.

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