

# '44: THE MUSICAL' ARRIVES IN WASHINGTON, DC

*Critically acclaimed production chronicling Obama's rise and first term is a joyful romp; Performances begin April 23 at Shakespeare Theatre Company*

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Though the Obama years may feel long ago, 44: The Musical brings the first couple, an effervescent Biden and a pack of bold names from the other side of the aisle back to Washington for an energetic show of laughs and nostalgia.



T.J. Wilkins as Obama in 44: The Musical

Following record-breaking runs in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York, the acclaimed production commemorating the nascent Obama White House years in all of its groundbreaking glory is now playing at Shakespeare Theatre Company's Klein Theatre, where it officially opens to the public on Thursday, April 23, 2026.

“

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*Eli Bauman, Show Creator*

Preview audiences have embraced the show with enthusiasm, filling the theater with laughter, applause, and a sense of shared recognition that feels uniquely Washington. Critics have echoed that response across the country, with the Chicago Tribune calling it “smart, sophisticated satire ... a hilarious spoof R&B musical stocked with top-drawer talent and Broadway-caliber

singing,” and The Washington Post praising it as “a surprisingly enjoyable and affectionate tribute.”

Part concert, part comedy, part cultural time capsule, 44 is a playful reimagining of a defining era, brought to life through music, humor, and dancing.

“This has always been the city we built this moment for,” says creator Eli Bauman, a onetime Obama campaign staffer and television writer, who decided to write this the day after Donald

Trump was first elected to the presidency. "To see audiences here respond the way they are, with that mix of joy, memory, and connection, has been incredibly meaningful. Washington understands this show in a way no other city can."

The production blends R&B, gospel, and pop with sharp satire and dynamic choreography, featuring 24 original musical numbers performed by a powerhouse cast and live band. The result is an experience that invites audiences to laugh, remember, and reconnect.

For lead producer Monica Saunders-Weinberg, the Washington engagement marks a defining chapter for the production.

"We have brought this show to incredible cities, but arriving in Washington feels different," she says. "There is an immediacy here, a recognition, and a sense of community that makes the experience more powerful. This is exactly where 44 belongs."

As the production enters its opening week, 44: The Musical stands as both a theatrical event and a cultural moment, one that transforms recent history into a night of shared joy.

#### TICKETS & INFORMATION

Opening Night: Thursday, April 23, 2026

Shakespeare Theatre Company: Klein Theatre

450 7th St NW, Washington, D.C.

Tickets: [44theobamamusical.com](https://www.44theobamamusical.com)

ABOUT ELI BAUMAN (Writer, Composer, Director, Lead Producer) is a Los Angeles-based writer, composer, and director whose career has spanned political organizing, scripted television, and variety. A Columbia University graduate, Eli organized for Barack Obama's 2008 presidential



T.J. Wilkins and Shanice play Barack and Michelle Obama in 44: The Musical



44: The Musical is an uplifting musical that relives the Obama years.

campaign in Nevada and later coordinated Veterans' Affairs for the 2009 Inaugural Committee. He went on to write for FX's Lights Out and NBC's Prime Suspect before earning a Writers Guild Award nomination for Maya & Marty with Maya Rudolph and Martin Short.

ABOUT MONICA SAUNDERS-WEINBERG (Lead Producer) Driven by purpose, connection and joy, Monica's portfolio spans business, residential development, commercial real estate, investment, philanthropy and the Arts. Monica is currently Co-Owner and Joint Deputy Vice-Chair of Terrace TowerGroup (TTG) - a global real estate and investment conglomerate operating out of Sydney, New York and Portland. Through her production company Hana Black Productions, she has developed projects for film and television, recently becoming a shareholder in fellow Australian, Bruna Papandrea's, renowned production company, Made Up Stories. In addition to her business and artistic endeavours, Monica has furthered the philanthropic legacy of her late father, John Saunders, supporting numerous charities both as an individual and through The Saunders Family Foundation, for which she has served as Chair and Executive Director for the last 26 years. She is a founding partner of The Growth Project, which connects business leaders with charities to help maximise their impact on the world, as well as a Founding Angel and dedicated board member of Feel The Magic, a charity that supports grieving kids and families.

ABOUT ANTHONY "BREW" BREWSTER (Music Director) is a Grammy-nominated producer, music director, and keyboardist whose work spans soul, R&B, and rock. Raised in Venice, California, his credits include Telly Award-winning commercial work through Beacon Street Studios, music direction for the ESPY Awards, and collaborations with artists including Ant Clemons, De La Soul, and Citizen Cope.

ABOUT MISS JAMES ALSOP (Choreographer) is one of the most sought-after choreographers working in film, television, and live performance today. Her credits include Beyoncé's Renaissance World Tour, the Whitney Houston biopic I Wanna Dance With Somebody, the Peacock series Girls5eva, the No. 1 Netflix series Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story, and the upcoming season of Emily in Paris. She began her career as co-choreographer on Beyoncé's Who Run the World (Girls) campaign and has since worked across NBC, Netflix, Showtime, and major live stages worldwide.

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