



For Immediate Release

Will Downing Rebounds to Make First Public Appearances Via Intimate Fan Speaking Engagement Tour

The beloved singer triumphantly faces his public for speaking engagement tour, announces a new single and a guest appearance on Gerald Albright's Stax tribute CD

Proceeds from the upcoming tour to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association

On April 22nd, Will Downing - "*the prince of sophisticated soul*" - will begin a series of one-on-one speaking engagements / listening parties in various markets throughout the U.S. These events will mark his first public appearances since being diagnosed with Polymyositis at the end of 2006. Downing will sit down for an intimate conversation which will explore his current illness, his faith and family's support, his musical career (including his new CD, *After Tonight*), and his exciting upcoming touring plans. A meet and greet will close out the evening.

Downing has been making milestone strides on personal and musical fronts. Thanks to hard work, faith and family, Will has made miraculous progress in his battle with the muscle disease Polymyositis. Where at one point he was not able to lift his head, let alone leave his bed without assistance, Will is now able to get up and walk on his own with the aid of a walker - a major development!

Taking advantage of his improving condition, Downing is embarking on an exclusive tour of one-on-one speaking engagements in which he will rekindle his relationships with fans in Chicago, Detroit, Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Atlanta. In each city, the event will be held in an upscale social center and hosted by a prominent local media personality. Because Downing is still in recovery he will not be performing, but he will field questions directly from fans in an intimate setting, sign autographs and possibly pose for photos if time permits - once again going the extra distance to stay close to those who love and admire his artistry. In conjunction with Peak Records, local chapters of prominent African American are invited to co-promote these fundraising events with proceeds to benefit the **Muscular Dystrophy Association**. Corporate sponsors / partners for the speaking engagements / listening events include: **Ambassador Magazine, Heart & Soul Magazine, Soul Tracks.com, Soul Music.com and Urban Music Scene.com.**

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Will's latest album **After Tonight** - his first for Peak Records and thirteenth overall - is his fastest selling to date since its October 2007 release, and will continue to do so with the release to Urban AC radio of its second single, "**Fantasy (Spending Time With You)**" - a Corvette cool love man's groove produced by **Rex Rideout** and featuring the soulful guitar of **Randy Bowland**. In addition, Will just recorded a performance to be featured on saxophonist **Gerald Albright's** June 24-slated salute to Stax Records project, **Sax for Stax**, singing a version of "**Never Can Say Goodbye**" inspired by the classic 1971 rendition from **Isaac Hayes'** seminal double-album, **Black Moses**. Plus Will is optimistically pushing himself to be ready for a concert tour by fall of 2008!

Chalk it all up to the sheer "Force of Will" of a man who refuses to let adversity keep him from living the life he intends to live. "My doctors gave me a very accurate diagnosis," Downing shares in regards to Polymyositis. "They said that for a year I was going to 'catch hell,' but after that I'd be able to do things that I wasn't able to do before. And sure enough, within a month after the first year, I was able to get up. And every week after that, I could do something else I wasn't able to do."

"For a minute, I thought my new title was going to have to be The 'Ironsides' of Soul," Will concludes in characteristic good humor, referring to the wheelchair-bound TV detective of old. "But through the grace of God, my wife, daughter, family and friends, every day I get closer to the Will I really am. It's been an enlightening experience..."

Now, Mr. Downing will use this experience - as well as his art - to enlighten others.



A One on One Conversation with "The Prince of Sophisticated Soul"

Tuesday, April 22nd - Chicago
Thursday, April 24th - Detroit
Tuesday, April 29th - Washington, D.C.
Thursday, May 1st - Baltimore
Wednesday, May 7th - Atlanta
Showtimes: 6:30pm

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