

ANTHONY THOMAS'
RHYTHM NATION
EXPERIENCE
25

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Anthony Thomas to Revive “Rhythm Nation” with RocketHub-Funded Dance Tour

Janet Jackson’s “Rhythm Nation 1814” choreographer has launched a crowdfunding campaign to support a new dance tribute to the pop star’s iconic album

Los Angeles, February 27, 2015 – On the 25th anniversary of Janet Jackson’s record-breaking “Rhythm Nation 1814” tour, choreographer [Anthony Thomas](#) has announced his plan to pay homage to Jackson’s pop masterpiece with a new dance-and-music experience. A dance visionary, Thomas revolutionized hip-hop with his award-winning choreography for the album’s tour and music videos, including his pioneering work for the “Rhythm Nation” video, which introduced the infusion of “popping and locking” for the first time to millions of viewers around the world. Twenty-five years after his work inspired a generation of dance and music enthusiasts, Thomas has launched a [RocketHub campaign](#) to fund a new dance tour inspired by his history-making collaboration with Jackson.

“The idea for the tour came from a performance of ‘Rhythm Nation’ that I did at ‘The Carnival: Choreographer’s Ball’ in 2008. It was the first time I had performed the choreography since 1990, and I was amazed by how enthusiastically and passionately the dancers I worked with responded to it. They shared their experiences of how it had influenced them as dancers, and I was, in turn, inspired by their stories,” says Thomas. “At the end of the performance, Janet came up to me in tears because she was so moved by it. It was a very emotional moment for both of us. I knew then that I had to share what we all felt—the power, strength and urgency of that music—through a new dance concept that would celebrate ‘Rhythm Nation’ and introduce it to a new generation.”

Thomas and a team of creative collaborators have developed “Anthony Thomas’ Rhythm Nation Experience 25 Anniversary World Tour,” a two-hour-long production that will include everything from contemporary dance to hip-hop set to the music of “Rhythm Nation.” The show, which will be cast with world-class dancers and star Thomas, combines his influential work with fresh, new dance pieces. It will also feature dynamic, special lighting effects designed by production co-founder and veteran lighting designer John Featherstone, who collaborated with Thomas on the original “Rhythm Nation” tour.

“The show will integrate dance, theater, music and state-of-the-art production to create a unique, all new experience that will delight dance aficionados, excite fans of Janet’s music and inspire a new generation of fans—in short, it will set a new bar for dance productions,” says Featherstone, who is also the founder and principal designer of Lightswitch, a global lighting design consortium. “More than just a brilliant pop album, ‘Rhythm Nation 1814’ is an anthem for equality and unity. Our new production is a reminder that poetry, music and dance can spread a powerful message of peace and hope. Who wouldn’t want to support that?”

The team has launched a [RocketHub campaign](#) to fund a workshop production of the show that will be presented to producers, promoters and theatrical investors. The campaign will also support numerous production costs, including cast fees, lighting, sound and visual design, studio rental costs, and travel and lodging for performers and technical crews. Additional funding will go towards any other showcases or performances that will lead to securing a fall investment to produce the full production of “Anthony Thomas’ Rhythm Nation Experience 25 Anniversary World Tour.”

For more information or to contribute, please visit www.rockethub.com/projects/54345-anthony-thomas-rhythm-nation-experience-atrne.

Anthony Thomas’ Rhythm Nation Experience
6500 Telephone Rd. Suite 1602, Ventura, CA 93003

About Anthony Thomas:

Anthony was the creative partner, collaborator and award-winning choreographer for Janet Jackson's "Rhythm Nation." Discovered by Janet Jackson in his early 20s, he catapulted to worldwide fame for his groundbreaking choreography on Jackson's, "Rhythm Nation 1814" album. An overnight sensation, Thomas' "Rhythm Nation 1814" won a Grammy Award for Best Long-Form Music Video and MTV's Music Award for Best Choreography. The video is ranked on MTV and VH1's lists of "Greatest 100 Videos" of all time. Thomas' innovative gift of versatility and physical rhythm earned him an honored place in music history when he combined popping and locking for the first time. He has also created choreography for Disney's "A Goofy Movie," Robin Williams' "Toys," Luther Vandross' "Never Let Me Go" world tour, and Wynonna Judd and The Judds' "Power to Change" tour. www.anthonythomasdance.com

About John Featherstone:

John was the lighting director for the "Rhythm Nation" tour, and was deeply involved in the creative process for the project. Born and educated in the United Kingdom, he was theatrically trained at Britain's National Youth Theater. John then moved into concert touring lighting design and spent 10 years as lighting designer and director for some of the biggest names in contemporary concert touring, including Duran Duran, The Pretenders, Van Halen, INXS, Bryan Adams and Janet Jackson. In 1993, he and partner Norm Schwab founded [Lightswitch](http://www.lightswitch.net) to focus on business theater, environmental and architectural projects. The firm's entertainment projects have ranged from TV specials featuring artists such as Celine Dion, Josh Groban, 3 Doors Down, Andrea Bocelli, Bon Jovi and Kenny Chesney, to concert tour lighting and media design for artists as diverse as Garth Brooks, Imagine Dragons, Elton John, John Fogerty, The Judds, John Legend and Kid Rock. www.lightswitch.net

Media Contact

Elizabeth R. Hall
Press and Media Relations
786.566.0009
ehall@lightswitch.net
www.lightswitch.net

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