

*“I felt like I was listening to the soundtrack of a beautiful movie”*  
– Howie Mandel, America’s Got Talent



# II *Acte*

Opera duo, ACTE II, was suddenly launched into the national spotlight after delivering a captivating performance on NBC’s #1 summer show *America’s Got Talent*. The duo received a standing ovation by the celebrity judges who then selected the duo as one of 10 acts to perform live at Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

Since their time on *America’s Got Talent* the ladies have performed to high acclaim in some of America’s largest cities and internationally.

**Ashley Renée Watkins & Olanna Goudeau**

# II *Acte*

## *Who is in ACTE II?*

ACTE II is comprised of Sopranos Ashley Renée Watkins and Olanna Goudeau. They are southern belles from New Orleans and Port Arthur, TX respectively.

## *How did ACTE II meet?*

ACTE II met while first attending college in New Orleans at Dillard University. Olanna completed her degree at Dillard and went on to graduate school at the University of Oklahoma. The pair had an unlikely reunion when hurricane Katrina struck Ashley Renée's hometown of New Orleans. They reunited at OU where the pair became friends.

## *What inspired ACTE II to become a duo?*

ACTE II originally came about when Olanna and Ashley Renée decided to combine forces to raise money in benefit concerts so that they could each individually travel to Europe to pursue solo careers in opera. The pair quickly realized after their debut concert in Harlem, NY that there was something special about their work together. They quickly shifted from pursuing solo careers to strengthening their presence as an opera duo.

## *What does ACTE II mean?*

The "ACTE" refers to the theater term *acte* and "II" implies a 2nd *acte* or phase. Both Olanna and Ashley Renée were pursuing the 2nd phase of their careers following their studies when the duo formed. In addition to this, the pair was also given a 2nd chance at their friendship after some years apart. These factors all made ACTE II the perfect name!

## *What is Afro Opera?*

The African American presence in opera is not widely known but Ashley Renée and Olanna are proud afro donning ambassadors for an art form not known by many. They embrace their African American heritage and their relationship with opera.

