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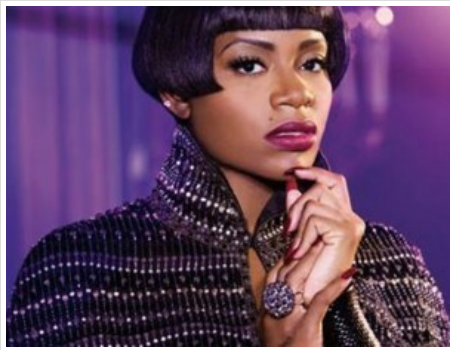
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‘American Idol’ Winner to Perform in the Grove

Fantasia, the 2004 champion, comes to UM for Welcome Week 2015

AUGUST 26, 2015 BY NATHAN WEBER

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Fantasia

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi’s Student Activities Association welcomes “American Idol”-winning artist Fantasia to the Grove at 9 p.m. Friday (Aug. 28).

“Fantasia was originally scheduled to perform at the **Ford Center** during Black Alumni Reunion in March. Due to adverse weather conditions, the show was postponed,” said Nathan Darce, UM coordinator of student activities. “The Student Activities Association worked with the **Ole Miss Alumni Association** and the Ford Center to bring Fantasia to campus for Welcome Week.”

A native of North Carolina and a member of a musical family, Fantasia began singing at age 5. Her first cousins are the R&B duo K-Ci and JoJo, which scored a No. 1 single with “All My Life.” Her uncles were also part of the 1970s R&B band The Barrino Brothers.

Fantasia rose to fame after winning season three of “American Idol.” Her debut album, “Free Yourself,” went platinum following its release in 2004. She has released three subsequent albums. Her most recent effort, “Side Effect of You,” came out in 2013 and reached No. 1 on Billboard’s Top R&B/Hip Hop Albums Chart.

“The Student Activities Association is extremely excited to welcome Fantasia to campus,” Darce said. “We believe that she will provide students, their families and the greater university community with a wonderful performance.”

Fantasia has sold more than 3 million records and has received numerous awards and honors. She has won a Grammy Award, three Billboard Music Awards, three NAACP Image Awards and two American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers Awards.

Her personal demons were well-documented in her memoir, “Life Is Not a Fairy Tale,” which became a New York Times bestseller and chronicled her struggle with illiteracy and a violent assault in her youth.

The concert should provide a rousing end to Welcome Week, Darce said.

“I believe that this concert, like all concerts sponsored by SAA, is our best effort to provide students and the community with top musical acts from all genres,” he said. “We strive to bring artists that provide world-class entertainment and give students an opportunity to enjoy the outdoor space on campus that can sometimes be taken for granted.”

For more information or for assistance related to a disability, contact the **Ole Miss Student Union** at 662-915-1044 or union@olemiss.edu.

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