

You Definitely Don't Want to Miss Michael W. Smith's Movie That Comes Out Friday

Singer-songwriter Michael W. Smith steps in front of the cameras once again in the new film *Beautifully Broken*, releasing this weekend in theaters around the country. Just as he previously appeared in films such as *The Second Chance* and *90 Minutes in Heaven*, the Grammy-award winner may have found himself typecast into a very familiar role once again.

"I play a pastor," he said. "I'm the pastor of a church in Nashville where a beautiful human being from Rwanda shows up and we take him in."

Smith is offered many more film roles that he accepts, he says, and it takes a special story to entice him into a project. *Beautifully Broken*, which he says is "remarkable," is such a story, because of its mission focus and a tie-in from one of Smith's longtime charities, Compassion International.

"I gravitated toward this story because it's a true story about a family from Rwanda who barely escaped the genocide, and ended up in Nashville, Tennessee," he said. "Then you see this family somehow get intertwined with a family from here in America and a Compassion child sponsored is a part of that."

Smith played a significant role in last year's breakout success *I Can Only Imagine*, although that film featured him as a character with an actor portraying the real-life artist. In that movie, Smith meets Bart Millard for the first time backstage before a big concert.

"That was a little surreal," Smith observed. "I do remember Bart being a bit giddy and, and me meeting this kid for the first time. Sometimes when somebody kind of gushes over you,

you don't really just don't know what to say, just say, 'Thank you.' And Amy Grant and I were both a bit amused by how starstruck Bart was."

On the day we spoke, only moments earlier, news agencies had reported that legendary vocalist Aretha Franklin had passed. Although the two never met, Smith said, "I was always a huge fan, because there was nobody like her. My thoughts and prayers go to her family and those who really loved her and knew her well."

Currently, the artist is spending hours in prayer and preparation for "Surrounded," a special night of worship happening in his hometown of Nashville on Aug. 30. He said every night, he's waking from sleep and receiving "downloads" from God about the event, which he believes, "might be the most significant event thing I've ever done in my life."

"Could this be a trigger? Could this be the beginning of a new 'Great Awakening'? I think so," he said. "There's always been something about Nashville that I've always felt like there was something very strategic about this city. There was a prophetic word that was spoken long time ago. There was a 'shot heard all around the world,' and that shot came out of Nashville."

The worship event will feature special guests and also include prayer for the city, the nation and the world. Trinity Broadcasting Network will also be recording to air as a special event in the future.

Beautifully Broken, directed by Eric Welch and Brad Allen, Chuck Howard and Martin Michael (*I Am Not Ashamed*), along with Mark McCann, opens in theaters Aug. 24. In addition to Smith and an appearance by TobyMac, it also stars Scott William Winters (*Lethal Weapon, Good Will Hunting*), Benjamin Onyango (*God's Not Dead, Inception*), Emily Hahn (*Toy Story 3, Fresh Off The Boat*), Eric Roberts (*The Dark Knight, The*

Expendables), Jessica Obilom (*Trafficked*), Caitlin Nicol-Thomas (*Nashville*), Alan Powell (*Quantico*), Eugene Khumbanyiwa (*District 9*), Tammi Arender (*Pitch Perfect 2*), and Thomasina "Goo Goo" Atkins ("Mary Mary").

One final piece of advice Smith has for viewers before they file into theaters?

"You might want to bring your Kleenex," he said. "I think audiences are going to love it."

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