

**SFJAZZ Gala 2020 Honors Mavis Staples
With SFJAZZ Lifetime Achievement Award**

**Thursday, January 30, 2020
SFJAZZ Center, San Francisco, CA**

(San Francisco, CA, July 9, 2019) – SFJAZZ will host the SFJAZZ Gala 2020 honoring **Mavis Staples** with the SFJAZZ Lifetime Achievement Award on Thursday, January 30, 2020. Mick Hellman and Denise Young Smith will serve as Gala Co-Chairs and all proceeds from the SFJAZZ Gala 2020 will support SFJAZZ’s artistic and education programs. Since 1991, SFJAZZ has presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to luminaries including Chucho Valdés, Preservation Hall, Zakir Hussain, Joni Mitchell, Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ahmad Jamal, Mary Stallings, McCoy Tyner, Bobby Hutcherson, and more.

On January 30, 2020, the SFJAZZ Center will fill with cultural and political leaders, celebrities, artists, and music enthusiasts to present Mavis Staples with the SFJAZZ Lifetime Achievement Award to celebrate her artistic vision and contributions to global music over the last 70 years.

VIP Gala supporters will enjoy a lively cocktail hour and seated dinner with featured artists followed by the Gala Concert featuring some of the most exciting names in music – all culminating with the SFJAZZ Gala After Party. Gala-goers and After-partiers will celebrate with an abundant array of the finest cuisine and drinks throughout the evening by Paula LeDuc, with late-night fare from SFJAZZ’s favorite neighborhood spots.

With a professional career spanning nearly seven decades, Mavis Staples is the greatest living gospel and soul singer – a two-time GRAMMY winner, 1999 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee, 2016 Kennedy Center honoree, Blues Hall of Fame inductee, Gospel Music Hall of Fame inductee and recipient of the 2005 GRAMMY Lifetime Achievement Award whose soaring voice turned classic spirituals into declarations of freedom during pivotal moments in American history.

In honoring Ms. Staples with the SFJAZZ Lifetime Achievement Award, we celebrate her as a singular artist who has incorporated the breadth of American music into her work while remaining steadfastly committed to her gospel roots, mirroring the development of the jazz tradition, which has always looked to sacred music as inspiration and a springboard to new areas of expression. We recognize Ms. Staples’ inclusive approach to the roots of American music as a parallel to our mission at SFJAZZ, and we have been fortunate to present her twice in past years, including an October, 2003 performance at San Francisco’s iconic Grace Cathedral during the 21st San Francisco Jazz Festival that paid tribute to her friend and mentor, Mahalia Jackson.

Born in Chicago, Staples made her professional debut at age 10 with her now-legendary family band, The Staple Singers, singing on a succession of timeless

songs that became chart topping hits as well as indelible anthems of the Civil Rights Movement. Her unforgettable performances on “Uncloudy Day,” “Some Truth To Tell,” “Freedom Highway,” “Respect Yourself,” “Why Am I Treated So Bad,” “When Will We Be Paid,” “I’ll Take You There,” “If You’re Ready,” and “Let’s Do It Again” have all become intrinsic parts of the American cultural fabric.

Ms. Staples has recorded 17 albums as a solo artist and led a career that includes a staggering number of highlights, from performing at John F. Kennedy’s inauguration and marching with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to collaborating with Bob Dylan, Prince, The Band, Wilco’s Jeff Tweedy, and countless others. She was the subject of the 2015 documentary film *Mavis!* and was the first musical artist to perform on *The Late Show* with Stephen Colbert, singing Sly Stone’s “Everyday People” during its debut broadcast in 2015. Since 2010’s *You Are Not Alone*, Staples has had a late-career explosion of activity, releasing five albums of new material. Her new ANTI Records release, *We Get By*, was produced by GRAMMY-winning soul/blues singer and multi-instrumentalist Ben Harper. The session is a plea for peace, justice, and sanity in a world of upheaval, and is the latest masterpiece from an ageless artist whose work remains perpetually relevant and forever soulful.

Mavis Staples will also perform with her band at the SFJAZZ Center on Friday, January 31 and Saturday, February 1, 2020. Tickets will go on sale starting July 9, 2019. Tickets for the January 31 and February 1 shows range from \$35 to \$95.

SFJAZZ’s work in education will be on display throughout the Gala. In 2018, SFJAZZ announced expansion of in-school education programs and a commitment to reach every public middle school student in San Francisco and Oakland. More than 23,000 students in 70 schools will benefit from the expansion, which includes school day concerts, standards-based classroom learning residencies, and support of school music ensembles. Over the next few years, the SFJAZZ Education Department will continue to develop and implement these programs with teachers, school administrators, parents, and students to bring jazz into Bay Area classrooms. SFJAZZ has become the world’s leading cultural institution devoted to jazz and related forms of music, presenting over 400 performances each year at the SFJAZZ Center and throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. SFJAZZ welcomes over 200,000 fans and students every year both at the SFJAZZ Center and around the Bay Area.

Tickets and Information

VIP Packages, Luminary, Gala, and After Party tickets are now available via SFJAZZ.org/gala or Emily Everding, 415-283-0342, gala@sfjazz.org.

For Further details on the SFJAZZ Gala 2020 including ticket and sponsorship information, visit www.sfjazz.org/gala.

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