

For Immediate Release

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**STERN GROVE FESTIVAL'S "OPENING DAY"
ANNUAL BENEFIT *THE BIG PICNIC*
FEATURES PEABO BRYSON & JEFFREY OSBORNE
TO KICK OFF 81ST SEASON OF ADMISSION-FREE CONCERTS
AT SAN FRANCISCO'S INIMITABLE OUTDOOR CONCERT VENUE**

San Francisco, Calif. — **Friday, March 16, 2018** – Stern Grove Festival Association embarks on its 81st Season with *The Big Picnic*, the organization's annual fundraiser, on **Sunday, June 17, 2018**, at Sigmund Stern Grove, located at 19th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard in San Francisco.

Annually, Stern Grove Festival raises upwards of \$3 million in donations from individuals, foundations, members, and corporations, to sustain its ambitious admission-free programming. Stern Grove Festival's iconic fundraising event, *The Big Picnic*, raises nearly \$600,000 each year and kicks off the Festival's summer season of free concerts and arts education programs.

The Big Picnic Party is a ticketed, private event taking place at 11:30 a.m. before the concert at Stern Grove Festival. Ticket-holders receive parking and reserved picnic table seating in the meadow for the concert. *The Big Picnic Concert* inaugurates the Festival's 81st Season with a free performance at 2 p.m. featuring two of America's most lauded R&B/soul sensations, **Peabo Bryson & Jeffrey Osborne**. The concert is admission-free and open to the public with concert meadow lawn seating available on a first-come, first-served basis. For tickets to *The Big Picnic Party* and more information, please visit: www.sterngrove.org/thebigpicnic.

To help plan *The Big Picnic* this year, the Festival is pleased to welcome **Ilana Vasconcelos** as the organization's new Director of Development. Mrs. Vasconcelos joins the Stern Grove Festival team after spearheading for four years the de Young Museum's largest annual fundraiser, *Bouquets to Art*. She has previously served in various administrative roles at prestigious San Francisco non-profits including Presidio Trust, Contemporary Jewish Museum and the Asian Art Museum.

Mrs. Vasconcelos' initial work with Stern Grove Festival is to elevate its annual fundraiser, *The Big Picnic*. She says, "*The Big Picnic* is a day where the Festival's board, donors, sponsors, performers, staff, and patrons should be celebrated—we should all feel good about what the Festival has provided to the community for FREE, year after year!"

Admission-free concerts at Stern Grove Festival occur every Sunday at 2 p.m. for 10 consecutive weeks from June 17 - August 19, 2018. Stern Grove Festival announces the complete 81st Season artist lineup on May 1, 2018.

In addition to the free concerts, the Festival presents a series of free arts education programs for Bay Area children. Registration is now open for Stern Grove Festival's free interactive arts workshops, ***Kids Days***, for children ages 4-11. For more information, please visit: sterngrove.org/kidsdays.

Information regarding admission, facilities, and access to Stern Grove Festival is available at sterngrove.org or call (415) 252-6252.

To view Stern Grove Festival's online Press Kit, please visit: sterngrove.org/presskit.html

About Peabo Bryson & Jeffrey Osborne

Peabo Bryson has established a career as one of the premier male vocalists in contemporary music over the last quarter century. Possessing a beautifully rich voice, this GRAMMY® Award-winner has been called the "Pavarotti of soul singers" by *The New York Times* music critic Jon Pareles. With 20 albums to his credit, Peabo Bryson has enjoyed an unprecedented level of international success with the distinction of being the first artist to have separate records topping four different charts. His famous duets with Natalie Cole ("What You Won't Do for Love") and Roberta Flack ("Tonight, I Celebrate My Love") earned Bryson the tag "King of Balladeers." His songs for Disney animated films "Beauty and the Beast" with Celine Dion and "A Whole New World (Aladdin's Theme)" with Regina Belle earned Peabo two GRAMMY® Awards.

Jeffrey Osborne's solo career has brought him four GRAMMY® Award nominations, and five gold and platinum albums. After more than a decade with the band Love Men Ltd., Osborne produced such Top 40 hits as "Really Don't Need No Light," "Don't You Get So Mad," "Stay With Me Tonight," "You Should Be Mine (The Woo Woo Song)," and a duet with Dionne Warwick, "Love Power." His latest project entitled *Worth It All* (Artistry Music) is inspired by the late great George Duke and takes Osborne back to his deep R&B roots.

About Stern Grove Festival

Stern Grove Festival Association is a non-profit organization with an eight-decade legacy of providing the people of the Bay Area with admission-free access to diverse performing arts. Every year since 1938, the organization presents Stern Grove Festival, an admission-free performing arts series, in Sigmund Stern Grove, a beautiful outdoor amphitheater located at 19th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard in San Francisco. Stern Grove was purchased by Rosalie M. Stern and given as a gift to the City of San Francisco in 1931, in memory of her husband Sigmund, a prominent civic leader. Stern Grove itself is still owned and operated by the City of San Francisco, and Mrs. Stern's descendants remain actively involved. Stern Grove Festival is truly a community service, raising nearly \$3 million each year to fund admission-free concerts and outreach programs.

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