

For Immediate Release

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**STERN GROVE FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES
2018 ARTIST LINEUP FOR ADMISSION-FREE SHOWS
AT SAN FRANCISCO'S INIMITABLE OUTDOOR CONCERT VENUE**

“What could be more relaxing than hearing the San Francisco Symphony under the redwoods, while inhaling the scent of eucalyptus?” -*The New York Times*

“It’s sort of everything we love about the Bay Area, in one admission-free concert series.” -*San Francisco Magazine*

“...you almost think you’re in heaven. It’s like hugging me, this venue is hugging me. I’ve never seen a place like this and I’ve been singing for a long time.” -**Mavis Staples**

San Francisco, Calif. – May 1, 2018 – Stern Grove Festival announced its lineup of free concerts — Sundays at 2:00 pm from **June 17 through August 19, 2018** — at Sigmund Stern Grove, located at 19th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard in San Francisco. This summer’s concert series kicks off with a soulful double-header starring R&B/soul sensations **Peabo Bryson & Jeffrey Osborne** on June 17, and continues with concerts every Sunday through August 19, including performances by **Ziggy Marley, M. Ward, Ronnie Spector and the Ronettes, Anoushka Shankar, Femi Kuti, Mexican Institute of Sound, The Revolution**, and more, as well as the Festival’s classical partners **San Francisco Symphony** and **San Francisco Ballet**.

Since 1938, Stern Grove Festival has fulfilled its long-standing mission to make the arts accessible to all in one of the country’s most beautiful natural settings, completely free of admission. The Festival offers Bay Area locals and visitors a 10-week series of performing arts concerts in a space that encourages all to relax and spend time with friends and family.

As a cherished summer ritual with programming as diverse as the city it calls home, Stern Grove Festival presents a wide range of musical performances to 10,000 people every summer Sunday. For the fourth

season, Stern Grove Festival has commissioned local performers to create original works that will premiere on the Festival stage this summer. The artists performing commissions are noted with a * in the list below.

Stern Grove Festival's 81st Season is made possible with support from Grants for the Arts, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, The Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund, Walter and Elise Haas Fund, Levi Strauss Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, Parkmerced, Kaiser Permanente, The Bernard Osher Foundation, The Koret Foundation, Fairmont Hotel, HARKEN WINES, and media sponsors San Francisco Examiner, SF Weekly, KPIX - CBS 5, and KBCW. Stern Grove Festival is presented in collaboration with the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department and Commission.

ABOUT THE 2018 CONCERTS

June 17 – Peabo Bryson and Jeffrey Osborne

The Big Picnic, An Opening Day Benefit and Concert kicks off the 81st Season with an admission-free concert starring R&B legends Peabo Bryson and Jeffrey Osborne. *The Big Picnic* features a ticketed benefit party at 12 noon followed by the admission-free concert at 2:00 p.m. Tickets for the benefit party are available on Stern Grove Festival's website at www.sterngrove.org/thebigpicnic.

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.

This performance is dedicated to the memory of Rosalie M. Stern, donor of Stern Grove to the City of San Francisco and founder of the Stern Grove Festival Association. The Big Picnic is made possible with support from AT&T, Bulgari, Neiman Marcus, Wells Fargo, Bingham, Osborn & Scarborough, LLC, and Ruben Law Firm.

June 24 – Ziggy Marley and Flavia Coelho

If anybody can incite change through song, it's GRAMMY® and EMMY® Award-winning singer, songwriter, producer, humanitarian, and visionary **Ziggy Marley**. For as much as he upholds a family tradition that began with his father Bob Marley, he's blazed his own trail as an acclaimed artist providing the soundtrack to real revolution. After eight records with The Melody Makers and three GRAMMY® Awards, Ziggy kicked off a legendary solo career in 2003 with *Dragonfly*. He impressively garnered the GRAMMY® Award for "Best Reggae Album" in 2006 (*Love Is My Religion*), 2013 (*In Concert*), 2014 (*Fly Rasta*), and 2016 for the self-titled *Ziggy Marley* – which marked his fourth consecutive debut at #1 on the Billboard Top Reggae Album Chart. Ziggy infuses the spirit of revolution into his seventh full-length solo offering, *Rebellion Rises* (Tuff Gong Worldwide) encouraging people to stand in solidarity together. Ziggy threads together a cohesive vision steeped in reggae tradition, yet markedly progressive and forward-thinking.

Raised in Rio de Janeiro but residing in Paris, **Flavia Coelho** is a buzzy Brazilian singer delivering a summer cocktail of samba, bossa nova, Brazilian rap, reggae and ragga with a playful confidence. The daughter of a hairdresser for drag queens, Flavia discovered her voice by singing songs of Diana Ross, Nina Hagen and the divas of Brazilian pop such as Gal Costa. Growing up and hanging out amidst Rio's favelas, she would cross the breadth of the city singing in bars to hone her idiosyncratic vocals that embrace her home country with inflections of melodies and styles from across the globe. Flavia's latest recording *Sonho Real* glows with hints of forro and ragga, frenzied ska rhythms, and a dub nonchalance. The collection of 14 tracks feature an intoxicating blend of brass instruments, drums, bass, percussion, guitars, keyboards, and accordion while a modern gloss with a vintage feel is executed by the adept mixing skills of Victor-Attila. Flavia's voice and harmonies are at once sensual, joyous, and unforgettable.

Concert sponsored in part by HARKEN WINES.

July 1 – M. Ward and Thao and the Get Down Stay Down

Merge Records recording artist **M. Ward** has released a string of acclaimed solo albums in addition to five LPs with Zooey Deschanel in their duo outfit She & Him. M. Ward's latest album, *More Rain*, is evidence of the lauded singer-songwriter and producer's ability to shine through the soggy gloom of his perennially damp adopted home of Portland, Oregon. Showcasing collaborators R.E.M.'s Peter Buck, Neko Case, k.d. lang, The Secret Sisters, and Joey Spampinato (NRBQ), *More Rain* is a collection of upbeat, sonically ambitious yet canonically familiar songs that both propel Ward's reach and satisfy longtime fans. M. Ward's graveled croon leads the way for him to roam across America's musical past with its slow-burning balladry, breathy harmonies, and countrified indie rock sound on *More Rain*.

Produced by Merrill Garbus of Tune-Yards, **Thao & The Get Down Stay Down**'s latest album *A Man Alive* finds Thao exploring darker and more personal territory than in her earlier songwriting. Much of *A Man Alive* is vibrant and danceable while focusing on the trajectory of her relationship with her father who drifted in and out of her family's lives. Many of the songs are often punctuated by handclaps, sing-along choruses, and soul-shaking beats. While the album's narrative comes from a deeply personal origin, the music has a very buoyant quality ready to get listeners on their feet and dancing. *A Man Alive* giddily jumps from crackling staccato funk and reverb-soaked garage-punk to psych-folk and experimental hip-hop.

July 8 – Mexican Institute of Sound with special guests and Ginkgoa

The Mexican Institute of Sound is the project name of DJ and producer Camilo Lara. A native of Mexico City, Lara is known for his work as a music consultant for the Disney movie, "Coco." Signing as an artist with the indie label Nacional Records, Lara debuted the Mexican Institute of Sound's first album, *Méjico Mámico* (Magic Mexico), in 2006. The Mexican Institute of Sound has gone on to place songs in TV shows such as *Ugly Betty*, *Californication*, as well as FIFA video games. The Mexican Institute of Sound's latest album, *Disco Popular*, is led by the vibrant single "Mi T-Shirt de la NASA." The album features guest artists Calexico, Sly and Robbie, and Toots and the Maytals. At Stern Grove Festival, the Mexican Institute of Sound's perform will have an array of special guest performers such as Latin GRAMMY®-nominated accordionist Celso Piña, vocalist Denise Gutierrez (Hello Seahorse), and guitarist Paco Huidobro (Fobia).

Featuring the duo of Nicolle Rochelle and Antoine Chatenet, **GINKGOA** was discovered at the renowned French festival "Les Francofolies" where the duo won the prize for "Favorite Group." From pop to the swing of old New York with a mix of electro French beats, GINKGOA have only one goal: to make generations of

people dance, sway, and sing. GINKGOA has most recently appeared at the renowned New York City festival Global Fest, and their single “From NY to Paris” became the anthem of the perfume Rochas for the company’s European campaign. Described as a modern version of Caravan Palace and Parov Stelar due to their highly energetic live shows, GINKGOA has quickly risen to the top of the electro-swing genre.

This performance is presented in association with the Mexican Consulate.

July 15 – Anoushka Shankar, Land of Gold and Han Han

Sitar player and composer **Anoushka Shankar** is a singular figure in the Indian classical and progressive global music scenes. Her dynamic and spiritual musicality has garnered several prestigious accolades, including five GRAMMY® Award nominations, recognition as the youngest—and first female—recipient of a British House of Commons Shield, credit as an Asian Hero by *TIME Magazine*, a *Songlines* “Best Artist Award,” and the first Indian artist to perform at the GRAMMY® Awards. Anoushka studied exclusively from the age of nine under her father and guru, the late Ravi Shankar, and made her professional debut as a classical sitarist at 13. Her latest album, *Land of Gold*, is her personal response to the humanitarian trauma of displaced people fleeing conflict and poverty. “Everyone is, in some way or another, searching for their own ‘Land of Gold’: a journey to a place of security, connectedness and tranquility, which they can call home,” says Anoushka Shankar. “This journey also represents the interior quest that we all take to find a sense of inner peace, truth and acceptance—a universal desire that unites humanity.”

A registered nurse by day and hip-hop star by night, Filipina-Canadian **Han Han** raps about her immigrant experience on her self-titled debut album, *HanHan*. Separated from her mother at the age of 7, Han Han reunited with her mom at the age of 21 in Toronto. She has since come to work in the operating room of an Ontario hospital while developing her skills as a self-taught poet and musician. Realizing the power of her own story and immersing herself in the narratives of the Filipino-Canadian diaspora, Han is an empowering figure on the indie music scene. Han collaborated with producers Alexander Junior (Styrofoam Ones, Santa Guerilla) and Rudy Boquila (Thrust, Frank N Dank) on *HanHan*, which was funded by the Ontario Arts Council. Her performance at Stern Grove Festival will be her U.S. debut and will feature a new work in collaboration with local Barangay Dance Company, commissioned by Stern Grove Festival.

Concert media sponsor is KPFA 94.1 FM.

July 22 – San Francisco Symphony

The **San Francisco Symphony** (SFS) returns for its annual summer performance at Stern Grove Festival. Since its inaugural concert in 1938, the San Francisco Symphony has graced the Festival stage offering world-class performances every year for free to the public. An Emmy Award and multi-GRAMMY Award winning orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony is led by Musical Director Michael Tilson Thomas. For the 2018 concert at Stern Grove Festival, the San Francisco Symphony features one of the finest young conductors to emerge from the United States in recent seasons, Jayce Ogren.

A pre-concert Artist Talk will take place at Stern Grove’s Trocadero Clubhouse at 12:00 noon on the day of the concert. Concert sponsored in part by the San Francisco Arts Commission, Save the Redwoods, and Line 39.

July 29 – San Francisco Ballet

Artistic Director Helgi Tomasson

San Francisco Ballet, led by Artistic Director **Helgi Tomasson**, returns to Stern Grove Festival with artists of the Company performing a selection of works from their current repertory. Renowned for its incomparable level of innovation, the San Francisco Ballet is one of the three largest ballet companies, not to mention the longest-running, in the United States. Since its early years under the direction of American dance pioneers and brothers Lew, William, and Harold Christensen, San Francisco Ballet now presents more than 100 performances annually, both locally and internationally.

San Francisco Ballet will be participating in an informative Artist Talk at Stern Grove’s Trocadero Clubhouse at 12:00 noon on the day of the concert. Performance sponsored in part by Line 39.

August 5 – Femi Kuti and The Positive Force and Sol Development

Femi Kuti is the heart and soul of modern Afrobeat. Femi’s father, Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, created the style—a blend of traditional Nigerian drum patterns, the smooth groove of highlife and American soul, funk and R&B—and took it to the world, inspiring people with insistent dance beats and lyrics bristling with political statements. Femi and his band The Positive Force are at the forefront of the movement fighting for justice and freedom. As a spokesperson for UNICEF’s crusade for the rights of children and an advocate for HIV/AIDS education and prevention, Femi is recognized as a standout community leader and an inspiration for African resistance to the remnants of colonial mentality and economic hardship. Femi Kuti’s latest

album, *One People One World* (Knitting Factory Records: February 23, 2018), was mainly recorded in the chaotic Lagos, and features his band and son, Omorinmade Anikulapo-Kuti. *One People, One World* sees Femi returning to the music's African roots with hints of reggae, highlife, soul, R&B and other African, Caribbean and African American flavors adding to Femi's signature sound.

Led by MC, spoken word poet, activist, and educator Karega Bailey, Oakland ensemble **Sol Development** performs a blend of hip-hop, jazz, and soul grooves, crafting a potent soundtrack to the movement for justice and freedom. Sol Development's mission is to undo the centuries of ignorance and hate that precedes them. The ensemble's music, energy as a team and musical identity illustrates a future of unlimited possibilities and a message of hope.

Concert media sponsor is KPFA 94.1 FM.

August 12 – Ronnie Spector and the Ronettes and The Humidors

Only a few artists in history have been capable of defining an entire era in pop music. Ronnie Spector is one of those artists: the embodiment of the heart, soul, and passion of female rock n' roll in the 1960s. And to this day, no one has surpassed Ronnie's powerful trademark vocals and gutsy attitude. For these qualities and more, **Ronnie Spector and the Ronettes** were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame (March 2007). Ronnie Spector and the Ronettes are distinguished across the globe for many classic hits including the international Number One smash, "Be My Baby."

In 2017, "Be My Baby" was named by *Billboard Magazine* as the "#1 Greatest Girl Group Song of All Time," and Spector was presented with the "Legend Award" by The Woman's International Music Network at their "She Rocks Award" ceremony. Also in 2017, Ronnie released "LOVE POWER," her first single recorded with The Ronettes in decades.

Hailing from the Bay Area, the eight-piece funk unit **The Humidors** features Andre Cruz's heartfelt vocals atop greasy soul and vintage R&B rhythms. Having shared the stage with acts such as Dumpstaphunk, The New Mastersounds, The Meters' Leo Nocentelli, Shuggie Otis, and the late, great Bernie Worrell, The Humidors are in their element on stage. Bursts and washes of B3, punchy horns, chugging percussion, thumping bass, and burning guitar leads interweave in an infectious polyrhythmic stew.

Concert sponsored in part by HARKEN WINES.

August 19 – The Revolution and Big Blu Soul Revue

The Revolution—Wendy Melvoin, Lisa Coleman, Bobby Z, BrownMark and Dr. Fink—is most commonly known as the band behind the music icon, Prince. Merging funk, rock n' roll, rhythm and blues, pop and psychedelia genres, the band is considered to be one of the most successful music acts of all time. The Revolution rose to international fame and prominence in the mid-1980s with *Purple Rain*, a rock operatic project centered around Prince that catapulted him and the group to instant stardom. The project consisted of a studio film and an accompanying soundtrack/album. The film was a box office smash hit, while the soundtrack is regarded as one of the best albums in rock n' roll history.

The Revolution has achieved two number-one Billboard 200 albums (*Purple Rain*, *Around the World in a Day*), multiple Top 10 singles on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, and has won three GRAMMY® Awards as well as three American Music Awards. The band officially disbanded in 1986, but The Revolution remained close throughout the years. Following the tragic, sudden passing of Prince in April 2016, The Revolution reunited to honor the musical genius that Prince instilled in them and upon the world. In September 2016, they returned to perform where it all started at Minneapolis' venerable music venue, First Avenue. The core, original members have reunited and pay tribute to Prince in the best way possible, playing the music they helped create with him and with it, heal this new world they now find themselves in without the incomparable, iconic Prince.

Having performed at such famed Bay Area venues as Yoshi's and the Boom Boom Room, **Big Blu Soul Revue** bring the soul of San Francisco to every live performance with their '60s and '70s funk and R&B-inspired sound. Big Blu Soul Revue's latest album, *Tongue & Groovin'*, features the single "Twenty-Five Miles," a fiery remake of the classic Motown hit by Edwin Starr. Formed in 2012 by guitarist/vocalist Jason Movrich (The Mission Players, Jason Movrich & Friends), Big Blu Soul Revue is comprised of many of the Bay Area's premier musicians.

Concert sponsored in part by HARKEN WINES.

All Stern Grove Festival concerts are ADMISSION FREE; no tickets are required. Admittance and seating in the concert meadow is on a first-come, first-served basis. **All concerts begin at 2:00 p.m.** at Sigmund Stern Grove, located at **19th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard** (in San Francisco's Sunset/Parkside district).

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

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

In addition to the 10 Sunday concerts, Stern Grove Festival invites the community to experience an array of admission-free education and outreach programs.

Each week at **KidStage**, from 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. before the concert, teaching artists lead all-ages workshops on making art with nature, an instrument exploration station, and a dance workshop. Please visit the Stern Grove Festival website for the line-up of [KidStage](#) events.

Kids Days are free interactive arts education programs for children ages 4-11 at Sigmund Stern Grove. **Participants must be accompanied by an adult guardian.** Kids Days are open to the public and admission-free; registration is required in advance.

Kids Days with Dholrhythms

Experience high-energy Bhangra dance from Punjab, India.

July 10, 11 or 12, 2018

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

[Sigmund Stern Grove, 19th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard, San Francisco](#)

Kids Days with Aguacero

Explore Bomba music and dance from Puerto Rico.

July 17, 18 or 19, 2018

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

[Sigmund Stern Grove, 19th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard, San Francisco](#)

Kids Days with San Francisco Ballet

Learn about dance and movement from around the world

July 24, 25, or 26, 2018

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

[Sigmund Stern Grove, 19th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard, San Francisco](#)

This summer, Stern Grove Festival also presents **Kids Camps In Residence** in partnership with YMCA Urban Services and the Recreation and Parks Department. Kids Camps are provided free to children participating in the summer programs at these locations. Local teaching artists will provide hands-on, interactive workshops exploring hip-hop music, dance and spoken word with local artist and Festival alum, Kev Choice, and Puerto Rican Bomba music. In 2018, Stern Grove Festival will present three Kids Camps in Residence:

- June 18 - June 22 at Starr King Elementary with [YMCA Urban Services](#)
- June 25 - June 29 at [Joseph Lee Recreation Center](#)
- July 30 - August 3 at [Minnie & Lovie Ward Recreation Center](#)

Informative pre-concert **Artist Talks** with featured Festival artists take place at the Grove's Trocadero Clubhouse on July 22 with San Francisco Symphony and July 29 with San Francisco Ballet. Artist Talks begin at 12:00 noon, unless otherwise announced.

For more information, please visit Stern Grove Festival's [Education and Outreach webpage](#).

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