

Lincoln Center's

February–May 2017

American Songbook

Lead Support provided by PGIM

The Program

Friday, February 24, 2017, at 8:30 pm

William Bell

With special guest **John Leventhal**

Tabitha Fair, Catherine Russell, Vocals

Larry Etkin, Trumpet

Rick Depofi, Tenor Saxophone

Stan Harrison, Baritone Saxophone

Bryn Roberts, Keyboards

Andy Hess, Bass

Dan Reiser, Drums

This evening's program is approximately 75 minutes long and will be performed without intermission.

Please make certain all your electronic devices are switched off.

Major support for Lincoln Center's American Songbook is provided by Amy & Joseph Perella.

Endowment support provided by Bank of America

This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.

The Appel Room

Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall

Additional support for Lincoln Center's American Songbook is provided by Meg and Bennett Goodman, Rita J. and Stanley H. Kaplan Family Foundation, Inc., The DuBose and Dorothy Heyward Memorial Fund, Jill & Irwin B. Cohen, The Shubert Foundation, Great Performers Circle, Chairman's Council, and Friends of Lincoln Center.

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UPCOMING AMERICAN SONGBOOK EVENTS IN THE APPEL ROOM:

Saturday, February 25, at 8:30 pm

Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder

Wednesday, March 8, at 8:30 pm

The Songs of Elizabeth Swados

featuring Taylor Mac, Grace McLean, Josie de Guzman, Utkarsh Ambudkar, Shaina Taub, and others

Thursday, March 9, at 8:30 pm

Tanya Tagaq

Friday, March 10, at 8:30 pm

José González

Saturday, March 11, at 8:30 pm

An Evening with Kristen & Bobby Lopez

IN THE STANLEY H. KAPLAN PENTHOUSE:

Wednesday, March 22, at 8:00 pm

Joan Shelley

Thursday, March 23, at 8:00 pm

Julian & Leon Fleisher: The Man I Love

The Appel Room is located in Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall.

The Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse is located at 165 West 65th Street, 10th floor.

For tickets, call (212) 721-6500 or visit AmericanSongbook.org. Call the Lincoln Center Info Request Line at (212) 875-5766 or visit AmericanSongbook.org for complete program information.

Join the conversation: #LCSongbook

We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces. Flash photography and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.

The Sound of a Legendary Soul Label

By Rob Bowman

The old adage “truth is stranger than fiction” has perhaps never been more apt than in the case of Stax Records. Started in the late 1950s by Jim Stewart, a white country fiddler who, by his own admission, knew virtually nothing about black music, by mid-decade Stax had developed a readily identifiable sound that would come to define the very essence of black soul music. The influence of the “Stax sound” was such that late ‘60s soul recordings by non-Stax artists such as Aretha Franklin and Clarence Carter are, in essence, examples of the sound of Stax being filtered through non-Stax hands.

This evening’s performer, William Bell, was a seminal member of the Stax family virtually from the beginning. His 1961 recording, “You Don’t Miss Your Water,” helped to define the very essence of country-soul; his duet with July Clay, “Private Number,” was instrumental in the resurrection of Stax in the fall of 1968; and his 1969 hit “I Forgot to Be Your Lover” was one of the greatest records the company ever issued.

While undeniably involved in the production and distribution of black culture, from its inception Stax was an integrated company in the studio, in the front office and, by the late ‘60s, at the level of ownership. In this respect the company was the living manifestation of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s dream where blacks and whites came together, not because they were forced to do so, but organically to achieve a collective goal. Paradoxically, all of this occurred in Memphis, Tennessee, a city deeply segregated throughout the 1960s.

The sound of Stax was the result of a number of factors. First and foremost, from 1962 through 1969, virtually every record issued by the company on Stax or its subsidiary label, Volt, featured the same set of musicians—Booker T. and the MG’s often augmented by second keyboardist Isaac Hayes and the Mar-Keys horns. Whether the featured artist was Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, William Bell, Rufus Thomas, Carla Thomas, Eddie Floyd or Johnnie Taylor, the basic sound of the record was a product of the aesthetics and proclivities of the same handful of integrated musicians.

The Stax studio itself, housed in a former movie theater in Memphis, played a significant role in the company’s patented sound. Due to economic considerations, Stewart elected not to level the floor, thereby creating a wholly unique recording environment that was cavernous (at its highest point the ceiling was upwards of 40 feet high) and had absolutely no parallel surfaces where sound waves would cancel themselves out. Consequently, Stax recordings tend to have a large reverberant sound that can be readily detected by a discerning ear within a few bars. Finally, virtually all of the sessions held at the company in the 1960s were engineered by either Stewart or guitarist Steve Cropper. Both men shared an aesthetic that emphasized a strong bass sound, prominent horns, and a vocal that was positioned quite a ways back in the mix.

In the late 1960s everything changed at Stax, including its sound. In December 1967 Otis Redding died tragically in a plane crash. In many respects, Redding had been the heart and soul of the company in the 1960s. Five months later, Stax severed its distribution agreement with Atlantic Records. To the company's horror, it found that its contractual agreements with Atlantic meant that the New York company retained Stax's second most important artist, Sam and Dave, as well as the entire Stax catalogue released up to this point.

For all intents and purposes, Stax Records was forced to start once again from scratch. At this point, black promotion man Al Bell (no relation to William Bell) acquired a piece of the company. A year later, his share was 50 percent and by October 1972, he owned the company outright. He wrought large-scale changes at Stax, bringing in non-Memphis producers, engineers and artists in an attempt to broaden the company's sales potential beyond the South and Midwest. Among the new artists he signed were Chicago's Staple Singers, the Emotions and, from Detroit, the Dramatics. He also allowed Stax songwriter Isaac Hayes to record solo records in a hybrid style that fused elements of soul, rock, classical, and jazz. The resulting albums, *Hot Buttered Soul*, *The Isaac Hayes Movement*, and *To Be Continued*, demonstrated unequivocally that, despite industry wisdom, black artists were capable of generating massive album sales. Up to this point, virtually all energy and money within the black music industry was centered around the seven-inch 45, the logic being that the black consumer could not afford to buy significant numbers of LPs. Hayes's work at Stax paved the way for ground-breaking full-length albums by Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, and Funkadelic. When Hayes wrote and recorded the soundtrack for the movie *Shaft* in 1971, he once again broke barriers, effectively creating the phenomenon of the black soundtrack.

Al Bell's vision for Stax seemingly had no limits. He expanded the company's recording activities to include pop, rock, jazz, country, gospel, and comedy, and with the Staple Singers he produced what are probably the first soul promotion videos ever. In 1972 he staged the Wattstax festival and created Stax Films to produce the subsequent Wattstax documentary. In the process Bell expanded the company from a mom-and-pop organization in the mid-60s to a 200-employee soul powerhouse by the early 1970s.

Although Stax went bankrupt in December 1975, its legacy lives on over a quarter century later via numerous pop and R&B covers as well as rap samples of the company's innumerable hits. In 2003 this legacy was further honored with the opening of the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, located on the very same Memphis property that once proudly housed the company's fabled studio.

Rob Bowman is a Grammy Award-winning professor of music at York University in Toronto. His book, Soulsville U.S.A.: The Story of Stax Records, was inducted in the Blues Hall of Fame in 2013.

William Bell



GINETTE CALLAWAY

William Bell was an early signing by Stax Records, the legendary label that later released recordings by Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, Isaac Hayes, and the Staple Singers. His 1961 solo debut for Stax, “You Don’t Miss Your Water,” became one of the fledgling label’s first major hits. The song is now considered one of the finest early examples of soul music and has been covered by Redding, The Byrds, and many

other artists. In 1967 came Mr. Bell’s first full-length album, *The Soul of a Bell*, which included the Top 20 single “Everybody Loves a Winner.” His other hits include “Born Under a Bad Sign” (covered by cultural icons from Jimi Hendrix to Homer Simpson), “Any Other Way,” “A Tribute to a King” (written on the death of Redding, his friend), “I Forgot to Be Your Lover” (later covered by Billy Idol), and “Every Day Will Be Like a Holiday.”

After moving to Atlanta, where he is still based today, Mr. Bell struck again with the 1977 hit “Tryin’ to Love Two” on Mercury Records. He has continued to enjoy a distinguished career as a singer, songwriter, and producer, and his songs have been recorded by such diverse stars as Linda Ronstadt, Rod Stewart, and Etta James. Mr. Bell’s recordings have been sampled by hip-hop and R&B artists such as Kanye West, Ludacris, and Jaheim. In 2016 he returned to the revived Stax Records to release his first major label album in over 30 years: *This Is Where I Live*, produced by Grammy winner John Leventhal (Rosanne Cash, Rodney Crowell, Shawn Colvin).

Mr. Bell has received the R&B Foundation Pioneer Award, the W.C. Handy Heritage Award from the Memphis Music Foundation, and the BMI Songwriter’s Award. He is a member of the Georgia Music Hall of Fame and the Memphis Music Hall of Fame, and is featured prominently in the Stax Museum of American Soul Music. Recent live performance highlights include the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Billboard Live in Tokyo, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, and at the White House for the PBS broadcast of *In Performance at the White House: Memphis Soul*.

John Leventhal



WES BENDER

John Leventhal is a multi-Grammy-winning musician, songwriter, record producer, and recording engineer. Over the course of a 30-year recording career, he has produced or arranged albums that have been nominated for a total of 17 Grammy Awards. As a songwriter, he has had over 150 songs recorded by artists such as Rosanne Cash, Shawn Colvin, Marc Cohn, William Bell, George Strait, Tedeschi Trucks Band, Joe Cocker, Michelle Branch, Jim

Lauderdale, and many others. In 2015 Mr. Leventhal received the Americana Music Association's award for Instrumentalist of the Year. He considers co-writing and producing Bell's *This Is Where I Live* a career highlight.

Tabitha Fair

Tabitha Fair (vocals) has written, performed, and toured with some of the music industry's finest artists. She began her career touring with Amy Grant and singing on many country and gospel records in Nashville. She has performed with Faith Hill, Wynonna Judd, Lee Ann Womack, Third Day, and CeCe Winans. Ms. Fair has also been featured on stage and in the studio with Sting, Sam Moore, Beyoncé, James Taylor, Fall Out Boy, U2, Rosanne Cash, Bette Midler, Citizen Cope, Lenny Kravitz, Bruce Springsteen, John Legend, The Roots, Jennifer Hudson, Michael McDonald, Elton John, Lady Gaga, Celine Dion, Mary J. Blige, and Snoop Dog. Shortly after touring with Grant, Ms. Fair continued to explore her gospel roots and co-founded Avalon, a contemporary Christian group. She has written and recorded with Carole King, co-writing "If We Get Through This," which was featured in the movie *Sum of All Fears* starring Ben Affleck and Morgan Freeman. Her most recent tours include Idina Menzel, Rascal Flatts, Rita Wilson and Chicago, and Melissa Etheridge.

Catherine Russell

Catherine Russell (vocals) is a native New Yorker whose father, Luis, was Louis Armstrong's longtime musical director and whose mother, Carline Ray, was a pioneering vocalist, guitarist, and bassist. A graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Ms. Russell has performed with Carrie Smith, Steely Dan, David Bowie, Cyndi Lauper, Paul Simon, and Rosanne Cash, among others, and can be heard on more than 200 albums. Last fall she released her sixth solo album, *Harlem on My Mind* (Jazz Village), which has received a 2017 Grammy Award nomination for Best Jazz Vocal Album. Her other albums

include *Bring It Back* (2014) and *Strictly Romancin'* (2012), which was awarded the Prix du Jazz Vocal by France's Académie du Jazz and a Bistro Award for Outstanding Recording. Ms. Russell is featured on the Grammy Award-winning soundtrack album for HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*. She has also appeared at such jazz festivals as Monterey, Newport, North Sea, Bern, and Tanglewood, and on television and radio.

Larry Etkin

Larry Etkin (trumpet) has toured and recorded with a veritable who's who of musical legends. As both an independent musician and a member of the famed Uptown Horns, he has recorded with Billy Joel, James Brown, John Mayer, David Byrne, Coldplay, Wilson Pickett, and Bob Dylan. He has toured with Joel, The J. Geils Band, Bette Midler, Sam Moore, Robert Palmer, and Buster Poindexter, and has performed with Sting, Ray Charles, Joe Cocker, and the Allman Brothers, to name just a few. Mr. Etkin played lead trumpet in the Broadway production of *Hairspray* and also performed with the Royal Shakespeare Company in its New York production of *Good*.

Rick Depofi

Rick Depofi (tenor saxophone) is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, arranger, music producer, and recording engineer who has worked with artists such as Paul McCartney, Rosanne Cash, Shawn Colvin, Marc Cohn, Diana Ross, Michelle Branch, Joan Osborne, Cyndi Lauper, Rodney Crowell, Elvis Costello, Kris Kristofferson, Loudon Wainwright III, Charlie Haden, Sidiki Conde, Kelly Clarkson, and others. Based in New York City, Mr. Depofi performs on saxophone, clarinet, flute, and other woodwinds, as well as keyboards, guitar, bass, and percussion. He graduated from Berklee College of Music with a degree in arranging and performance (saxophone), and is the co-leader of the cult band Mojo Mancini.

Stan Harrison

Stan Harrison (baritone saxophone) is a multi-woodwind player and composer who has traveled the globe playing and recording with Serge Gainsbourg, David Bowie, Radiohead, Talking Heads, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Duran Duran, Bruce Springsteen, Mick Jagger, Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, Steven Van Zandt, They Might Be Giants, and many others. He is also the cofounder, along with Steve Elson and Lenny Pickett, of the Borneo Horns, a saxophone trio that performs Pickett's music. Mr. Harrison studied saxophone with Joe Allard, composition with Dennis Sandole, Robert Moevs, and Huang Ruo, and orchestration and conducting with Rudolph Palmer. In addition to arranging horns for artists such as Bowie, Gainsbourg, and They Might Be Giants, he has written music for television and film, and has composed a string quartet, an electro-acoustic composition for Heidi Latsky Dance, and an extended work for cello, marimba,

and tenor saxophone. His most recent project is the Mud Music Ensemble, a chamber group performing original works for saxophone, string quartet, and rhythm section.

Bryn Roberts

Bryn Roberts (keyboards) is a pianist, keyboardist, and composer who has performed and recorded extensively as both a leader and sideman. He is a mainstay at NYC jazz clubs like Smalls, Mezzrow, The Jazz Gallery, and the 55 Bar. Mr. Roberts has toured widely with his own groups, making festival, radio, and club appearances across the U.S., U.K., Canada, Spain, and Japan. He has four acclaimed albums out featuring his own music, the most recent being *Nightsong*, a duo album with guitarist Lage Lund. He is also an original member of the band Nonet, led by Grammy nominee Alan Ferber. In addition to his work in jazz and improvised music, Mr. Roberts continues to perform and collaborate with celebrated artists in the singer-songwriter world, including Dar Williams and Rosanne Cash.

Andy Hess

Andy Hess (bass) has been active on the NYC music scene for over 25 years and has toured and recorded with a wide variety of artists that include John Scofield, Joan Osborne, Rosanne Cash, David Byrne, Freedy Johnston, Robben Ford, Tina Turner, and many others. He has also toured the world as a member of the Black Crowes and Gov't Mule.

Dan Reiser

Dan Reiser (drums) was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, and attended Berklee College of Music. He has been a part of the NYC music scene for 25 years, and has performed and recorded with Norah Jones, Rosanne Cash, Valerie June, Smokey Hormel, Marcy Playground, Luciana Souza, Chris Lightcap's Superette, Two Ton Boa, and many others.

American Songbook

In 1998, Lincoln Center launched American Songbook, dedicated to the celebration of popular American song. Designed to highlight and affirm the creative mastery of America's songwriters from their emergence at the turn of the 19th century up through the present, American Songbook spans all styles and genres, from the form's early roots in Tin Pan Alley and Broadway to the eclecticism of today's singer-songwriters. American Songbook also showcases the outstanding interpreters of popular song, including established and emerging concert, cabaret, theater, and songwriter performers.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community relations, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. A presenter of more than 3,000 free and ticketed events, performances, tours, and educational activities annually, LCPA offers 15 programs, series, and festivals including American Songbook, Great Performers, Lincoln Center Festival, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Midsummer Night Swing, the Mostly Mozart Festival, and the White Light Festival, as well as the Emmy Award-winning *Live From Lincoln Center*, which airs nationally on PBS. As manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and the 11 resident organizations. In addition, LCPA led a \$1.2 billion campus renovation, completed in October 2012.

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For American Songbook

Rocky Noel, *Lighting Design*

Scott Stauffer, *Sound Design*

Janet Rucker, *Company Manager*

Rocky Noel

Lighting designer Rocky Noel returns to Lincoln Center's American Songbook after recently completing two weeks on Broadway with Kristin Chenoweth in *My Love Letter to Broadway*. Mr. Noel calls New York City home and has worked extensively with artists such as Liza Minnelli, Barbra Streisand, Alan Cumming, Chita Rivera, Christine Ebersole, Elaine Paige, Stephanie J. Block, and Joel Grey, among countless others.

Scott Stauffer

Scott Stauffer has been the sound designer for Lincoln Center's American Songbook since 1999. His Broadway design credits include *A Free Man of Color*, *The Rivals*, *Contact* (also in London and Tokyo), *Marie Christine*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Jekyll & Hyde*. Off-Broadway Mr. Stauffer has worked on *Subverted*, *Promises, Hereafter*, *A Minister's Wife*, *Bernarda Alba*, *Third*, *Belle Epoque*, *Big Bill*, *Elegies*, *Hello Again*, *The Spitfire Grill*, *Pageant*, and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. His regional credits include productions at the Capitol Repertory Theatre, University of Michigan, Hanger Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and Alley Theatre. His concert credits include many Lincoln Center galas, as well as the Actors Fund concerts of *Frank Loesser*, *Broadway 101*, *Hair*, and *On the Twentieth Century*. At Carnegie Hall he has worked with Chita Rivera and Brian Stokes Mitchell. As a sound engineer, Mr. Stauffer has worked on *The Lion King*, *Juan Darién*, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, *Carousel*, *Once on This Island*, and the original *Little Shop of Horrors*.