

The Soraya and 88.5 FM Present

Legendary Singer and American Icon Mavis Staples with Special Guest Singer-Songwriter Son Little for One-Night Only Concert!

Thursday, February 13 at 8:00pm

(Los Angeles, CA) January 27, 2020 – The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts and 88.5 FM present American icon and GRAMMY® Award-winner **Mavis Staples** for one-night only on Thursday, February 13 at 8:00pm. Mavis Staples also has the distinction of being in the Blues Hall of Fame and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. GRAMMY® Award-winning producer and singer-songwriter **Son Little** will open for Staples.

Renowned as part of the American gospel and soul singing group The Staple Singers (“Respect Yourself,” “I’ll Take You There”), Mavis Staples has been named “one of America’s defining voices of freedom and peace” by NPR. The GRAMMY® Award-winner brings her roof-raising performance to The Soraya, including songs from her twelfth studio album, *We Get By* (ANTI-Records), a full-length collaboration with artist and producer Ben Harper.

“I’m the messenger,” Mavis Staples said on the eve of her 80th birthday. “That’s my job -- it has been for my whole life -- and I can’t just give up while the struggle’s still alive. We’ve got more work to do, so I’m going to keep on getting stronger and keep on delivering my message every single day.”

That message – a clarion call to love, to faith, to justice, to brotherhood, to joy -- lies at the heart of *We Get By*. Backed by her longtime touring band, Staples breathes extraordinary life into Harper’s compositions on the record, delivering powerhouse performances with both a youthful vigor and a commanding maturity. The arrangements here are spare but weighty, matched by Harper’s suitably lean and thoughtful production, and Staples seizes the opportunity to showcase her remarkable and continued evolution as an artist, one still growing and exploring more than half a century into her storied career.

We Get By is undoubtedly a timely collection, arriving such as it does in the face of deep social divisions and heightened political tensions, but like everything Staples touches, it’s also larger than any particular moment, a timeless appeal to the better angels of our nature that’s universal in its reach and unwavering in its assurance of better things to come.

Rhythm and blues musician Son Little, who will open for the legendary singer, first collaborated with Staples as a producer on her four-song EP, *Your Good Fortune* (ANTI- Records). His work on Staples' "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean" earned him a GRAMMY® Award and a Best Roots Performance Award in 2016.

Single tickets for Mavis Staples with special guest Son Little start at \$36 and are now on sale at The Soraya's ticket office, (818) 677-3000 and at TheSoraya.org.

This performance has been generously sponsored by Carolyn Clark Powers.

About Mavis Staples

Hailed by NPR as "one of America's defining voices of freedom and peace," Mavis Staples is the kind of once-in-a-generation artist whose impact on music and culture would be difficult to overstate. Staples is both a Blues and a Rock and Roll Hall of Famer; a civil rights icon; a GRAMMY® Award-winner; a chart-topping soul/gospel/R&B pioneer; a National Arts Awards Lifetime Achievement recipient; and a Kennedy Center honoree. She marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., performed at John F. Kennedy's inauguration, and sang in Barack Obama's White House. Staples has collaborated with everyone from Prince and Bob Dylan to Arcade Fire and Hozier, blown away countless festivalgoers from Newport Folk and Glastonbury to Lollapalooza and Bonnaroo, performed with The Band at The Last Waltz, and graced the airwaves on Fallon, Colbert, Ellen, Austin City Limits, Jools Holland, the GRAMMYS®, and more.

At a time when most artists begin to wind down, Mavis Staples ramped things up, releasing a trio of critically acclaimed albums in her 70's with Wilco's Jeff Tweedy that prompted *Pitchfork* to rave that "her voice has only gained texture and power over the years" and *People* to proclaim that she "provides the comfort of a higher power." In between records with Tweedy, Staples teamed up with a slew of other younger artists – Bon Iver's Justin Vernon, Nick Cave, Valerie June, tUnE-yArDs, and M. Ward among others – for *Living On A High Note*, an album *The Boston Globe* called "stunningly fresh and cutting edge" and which first introduced her to Harper.

About Son Little

Born Aaron Earl Livingston to a preacher and a teacher in Los Angeles, Little first came to international prominence with his self-titled debut, released in 2015 on ANTI- Records. While Little's collaborations with The Roots and RJD2 had already helped him make a name for himself by that point in his adopted hometown of Philadelphia, critics on both sides of the pond were quick to recognize the unique power of Little's solo recordings, which stripped the past for parts that could be reconstituted into something wholly new and original. NPR hailed Little's "impeccably crafted songs" as "honest and unpretentious," while *The Independent* proclaimed

him “a formidable talent,” and *Vice* declared that he was “dissolving the barrier between R&B and rock 'n' roll one tearjerker at a time.”

Songs from the record racked up roughly 30 million streams on Spotify alone, and the album landed Little dates with everyone from Leon Bridges and Kelis to Shakey Graves and Mumford & Sons alongside festival appearances at Bonnaroo, Newport Folk, and more. Never one to rest on his laurels, Little showed off his production chops the following year, earning a GRAMMY Award for his work helming Mavis Staples’ acclaimed ‘See That My Grave Is Kept Clean,’ and in 2017, he released a critically lauded sophomore album, ‘New Magic,’ which *Paste* said “did for the blues what Sharon Jones did for soul music.”

Calendar Listing for Mavis Staples with Special Guest Son Little

Date: Thursday, February 13 at 8:00pm

Venue: Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

Tickets: **Prices:** Starting at \$36. Prices subject to change.
By Phone: (818) 677-3000
Online: TheSoraya.org

Press Tim Choy and Bernie Fabig, Davidson & Choy Publicity
Contacts: 323-954-7510 | t.choy@dcpublicity.com; bernie@dcpublicity.com
Gary W. Murphy, Public Relations Consultant
310-914-0178 | gmurphypr@gmail.com

Find The Soraya on their new social media pages:

Facebook: [Facebook.com/TheSorayaStage](https://www.facebook.com/TheSorayaStage)

Twitter: [@TheSorayaStage](https://twitter.com/TheSorayaStage)

Instagram: [@TheSorayaStage](https://www.instagram.com/TheSorayaStage)

About Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)

The 2019-20 Season marks the ninth year for the award-winning Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts which has quickly become one of the cultural jewels of the greater Los Angeles region. Under the leadership of Executive Director Thor Steingraber, The Soraya continues to expand its programming and outstanding multidisciplinary performances. The Soraya presents a wide variety of performances that not only include new and original work from the Los Angeles region but also work from around the world appealing to all of LA’s rich and diverse communities.

Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, The Soraya’s season offers a vibrant performance program of nearly 50 classical and popular music, dance, theater, family, and international events that have served to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley, and further establish itself as one of the top arts companies in Southern California. The award-winning, 1,700-seat theatre was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and was recently cited by the Los Angeles Times as “a growing hub for live music, dance, drama and other cultural events.