

Thursday, October 30, 2014, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Mavis Staples



Mavis Staples	<i>lead vocals</i>
Yvonne Staples	<i>backing vocals</i>
Rick Holmstrom	<i>guitar</i>
Stephen Hodges	<i>drums</i>
Jeff Turmes	<i>bass guitar</i>
Donny Gerrard	<i>backing vocals</i>
Vicki Randle	<i>backing vocals</i>

Tonight's program will be announced from the stage.

Jazz at Cal Performances is sponsored by Nadine Tang and Bruce Smith.

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THERE ARE FEW living musicians who can lay claim to being the voice of America's conscience, and even fewer who continue to make vital music. For six decades, **Mavis Staples** has been the solid rock of American music. Alongside the family group she is so identified with, the Staple Singers, Ms. Staples has managed to transform herself as she goes, yet never alter.

From the delta-inflected gospel sound she helped create in the 1950s ("Uncloudy Day"), to the engaged protest of the civil rights era ("Freedom Highway"), and then, amazingly, on pop radio in the 1970s with a series of chart hits ("I'll Take You There," "Respect Yourself," "Let's Do It Again")—through all these, Ms. Staples carried on, her warm embrace of a voice the only constant.

On their second collaboration, the Grammy Award-nominated 2013 album *One True Vine*, the legendary singer and her producer, Wilco leader Jeff Tweedy, have crafted a gospel album for the 21st century. On the record, Ms. Staples gives voice to something new in her repertoire, something deeper and more resonant with our times. Where her Stax-era hits spoke for a growing black social consciousness, and her '70s collaborations with The Band gave spiritual weight to the rediscovery of traditional American music, Mr. Tweedy has crafted a pulpit from which Ms. Staples lends her voice to a search for grace.

Ms. Staples is a Rock and Roll Hall of Famer, a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award winner, and a National Heritage Fellowship Award recipient. VH1 named her one of the 100 Greatest Women of Rock and Roll, and *Rolling Stone* listed her as one of the 100 Greatest Singers of All Time. Her previous album, *You Are Not Alone*, produced by Mr. Tweedy, won the Grammy for Best Americana Album in 2011, adding a remarkable new chapter to an already historic career.

From 1969 until patriarch Roebuck "Pops" Staples's death in 2000, the Staple Singers were



configured as a quartet, with Pops and Mavis joined by Cleotha and Yvonne Staples. The clan's musical signatures were Pops's gospel-based songwriting, reedy tenor, and bluesy guitar, Mavis's rich, raspy vocals and precise phrasing, and the supple, ringing harmonies of Cleotha and Yvonne, who also acted as the band's manager.

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This year, UC Berkeley's campuswide **On the Same Page** program focuses on the 50th anniversary of the Free Speech Movement. Students and faculty will read Robert Cohen's *Freedom's Orator*, a biography of Mario Savio, whose role in the Free Speech Movement grew out of his activism for racial equality in the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964. Music was critical to the movement—no group more so than the Staple Singers, whose leader Roebuck "Pops" Staples brought his family's talents to support Dr. King. Today, Mavis Staples carries the musical spirit of the movement for justice and equality forward in her concerts and albums.