



AB+DM

Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 7:30pm  
Zellerbach Hall

## Samara Joy

with

Connor Rohrer, *piano*

Paul Sikivie, *bass*

David Mason, *alto saxophone, flute*

Kendric McCallister, *tenor saxophone*

Jason Charos, *trumpet*

Donavan Austin, *trombone*

Evan Sherman, *drums*

*This evening's program will be announced from the stage  
and will last approximately 90 minutes.  
There will be no intermission.*

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one that honors our venues as places of respite, openness, and respect.  
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Few figures in jazz history have experienced the kind of success that vocalist **Samara Joy** has, especially at such a young age. Still only 25 years old, she leads a career that can safely be described as sensational.

A native of the Bronx, Joy became entranced by classic R&B as a child and cut her teeth as a singer in her church's gospel choir. And while her family history is deeply musical—her grandparents helmed the Philadelphia gospel group the Savettes, and her father, the musician and songwriter Antonio McLendon, has produced, composed and arranged his own astounding original work—she didn't begin exploring the jazz tradition until college at SUNY Purchase. During her studies there she won the 2019 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, which introduced her to the larger jazz scene as a rising star to watch. Audiences and critics alike immediately recognized Joy as a masterful interpreter of jazz standards and a rightful heiress of the

sound, technique, and charisma that defined her jazz heroines—including Vaughan, Betty Carter, Abbey Lincoln, and Carmen McRae.

Joy released her self-titled debut on the Whirlwind label in 2021, followed a year later by *Linger Awhile*, her breakout Verve debut, of which *DownBeat* said, “With this beautiful recording, a silky-voiced star is born.” The album earned her a Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal Album in addition to a headline-making win for Best New Artist. A deluxe edition of the album was released, as well as the EP *A Joyful Holiday*. Her new Verve album, *Portrait*, which Joy co-produced with the veteran trumpeter/bandleader, and multi-Grammy winner Brian Lynch, showcases the intimate, soulful chemistry she's developed with her touring band. *Portrait* also spotlights her burgeoning gifts as a lyricist, in ingenious arrangements that meld her thoughtful words with music by Charles Mingus, Sun Ra, and her late mentor Barry Harris.