IRMA THOMAS, THE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA, AND THE PRESERVATION HALL LEGACY QUINTET BRING THEIR PROGRAM “THE HEART AND SOUL QUEEN OF NEW ORLEANS” TO THE SYMPHONY CENTER PRESENTS JAZZ SERIES

Friday, October 27, at 8 p.m.

CHICAGO—The 2017/18 Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Jazz series continues with a performance featuring legendary soul singer Irma Thomas, The Blind Boys of Alabama and The Preservation Hall Legacy Quintet on Friday, October 27, at 8 p.m. Thomas and her fellow musicians showcase the lasting traditions of the French Quarter’s musical scene with their program titled “The Heart and Soul Queen of New Orleans.”

After more than a decade of collaborations among these three musical powerhouses, these artists are touring together for the first time. The longtime performers from the venerable Preservation Hall concert venue along with the Crescent City’s “Soul Queen” Irma Thomas and the gospel singers of The Blind Boys of Alabama bring a program that combines soul, blues, gospel and traditional jazz in new selections alongside traditional standards.

Irma Thomas is a Grammy Award-winning singer with a rich musical history. Her first single in 1960 reached the Billboard R&B charts, and from there she recorded for many labels including Chess and Rounder Records. Her soul-drenched voice can be heard on the Allen Toussaint-produced track “It’s Raining,” which was featured in Jim Jarmusch’s cult classic “Down By Law.” In 2005, Hurricane Katrina flooded her home, destroying all her possessions and her nightclub, The Lion’s Den. Her album “After the Rain”—inspired by the events of Katrina—won Thomas a Grammy Award, as well as a Blues Music Award for Soul-Blues Album of the Year. She was inducted into the Louisiana Music Hall of Fame in 2007, featured on the poster of the world-famous New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival in 2008, and inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame in 2009.
The Blind Boys of Alabama have the rare distinction of being recognized around the world as both living legends and modern-day innovators. These six-time Grammy Award winners are not just gospel singers borrowing from old traditions; the group helped to define those traditions in the 20th century and have created a new gospel sound for the 21st. Since the original members first sang together as children in the late 1930s, the band has become one of the most recognized and decorated roots music groups in the world. In 2005, they released “Down in the New Orleans,” which won a Grammy Award for Best Traditional Soul Gospel Album. Apart from their Grammy Awards, the Blind Boys have received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, and have been inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

The Preservation Hall Legacy Quintet represents a tradition that started in 1961, when Preservation Hall first opened in the French Quarter. The band is composed of some of the most revered alumni of the Preservation Hall Jazz Band — Joe Lastie Jr., drums; Chris Vaughn, piano; Freddie Lonzo, trombone; Gregg Stafford, trumpet; and Calvin Johnson, saxophone. As the world-renowned Preservation Hall Jazz Band continues its exploration of the boundaries of New Orleans jazz, The Preservation Hall Legacy Quintet has formed to help maintain a connection with the traditional aspects of the Hall’s musical legacy.

Tickets for all Symphony Center Presents Jazz series concerts can be purchased by phone at 800-223-7114 or 312-294-3000, online at cso.org, or at the Symphony Center box office: 220 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604.

Discounted student tickets for select concerts can be purchased, subject to availability, online in advance or at the box office on the day of the concert. For group rates, please call 312-294-3040.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

The Symphony Center Presents Jazz series is sponsored by Exelon.

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**Symphony Center Presents Jazz**

**Friday, October 28, 2017, 8 p.m.**

Irma Thomas, The Blind Boys of Alabama, and The Preservation Hall Legacy Quintet

*Program to be announced from the stage.*

Irma Thomas, vocals

The Blind Boys of Alabama

The Preservation Hall Legacy Quintet

Tickets: $28 - $74
Featured Artists for this Performance:
Irma Thomas
The Blind Boys of Alabama
The Preservation Hall Legacy Quintet

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra: [www.cso.org](http://www.cso.org) and [www.csosoundsandstories.org](http://www.csosoundsandstories.org)

Founded in 1891, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world. Since 2010, the pre-eminent conductor Riccardo Muti has served as its 10th music director. Yo-Yo Ma is the CSO's Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant, and Samuel Adams and Elizabeth Ogonek are its Mead Composers-in-Residence.

From baroque through contemporary music, the CSO commands a vast repertoire. Its renowned musicians annually perform more than 150 concerts, most at Symphony Center in Chicago and, each summer, at the suburban Ravinia Festival. They regularly tour nationally and internationally. Since 1892, the CSO has made 59 international tours, performing in 29 countries on five continents.

People around the globe listen to weekly radio broadcasts of CSO concerts and recordings on the WFMT radio network and online at cso.org/radio. Recordings by the CSO have earned 62 Grammy Awards, including two in 2011 for Muti's recording with the CSO and Chorus of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* (Muti's first of eight releases with the CSO to date). Find details on these and many other CSO recordings at [www.cso.org/resound](http://www.cso.org/resound).

The CSO is part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, which also includes the Chicago Symphony Chorus (Duain Wolfe, Director and Conductor) and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, a training ensemble for emerging professionals. Through its prestigious Symphony Center Presents series, the CSOA presents guest artists and ensembles from a variety of genres—classical, jazz, world, and contemporary.

The Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO offers community and education programs that annually engage more than 200,000 people of diverse ages and backgrounds. Through the Institute and other activities, including a free annual concert led by Muti, the CSO is committed to using the power of music to create connections and build community.

The CSO is supported by thousands of patrons, volunteers and institutional and individual donors. Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the CSO. The CSO’s music director position is endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from the Zell Family Foundation. The Negaunee Foundation provides generous support in perpetuity for the work of the Negaunee Music Institute.