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CONTACT: Jane Cox

708-207-1361

EMAIL: jcox1@govst.edu

www.CenterTickets.net

**CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS RETURNS TO LIVE CONCERTS THIS FALL
MESSAGES OF HOPE BENEFIT STREAMING JUNE 5 – JULY 3**

Chicago Jazz Stars Orbert Davis, Howard Levy, Dee Alexander, and Maggie Brown
Share Musical Messages of Hope

In times of crisis music provides joy, reflection, and refuge. As Governors State University Center for Performing Arts gets ready to return to live performance in the fall, their 25th Anniversary celebrations continue with **Messages of Hope**. The virtual benefit features intimate, musical reflections from Chicago's brightest jazz artists including Grammy-award winning harmonica player and pianist **Howard Levy**, beloved vocalists **Maggie Brown**, **Dee Alexander**, **Rodrick Dixon** and **Alfreda Burke**. Also featured are guitarist **John McLean**, pianist **Richard D. Johnson**, and saxophonist and clarinetist **Sharel Cassity**.

Messages of Hope is an intimate and moving introduction to some of the artists who will perform in the Center's November 13, 2021 live concert **Forward Momentum**. It includes instrumental music and vocals with each artist offering perspective (from the comfort of their homes) on surviving and thriving through the past 14 months of the pandemic. Themes include Navigating Change, Reestablishing Traditions, as well as Resilience and Persistence. Maggie and Africa Brown share words of wisdom from their father Oscar Brown, Jr. while Orbert Davis and Howard Levy perform 'Survival of the Saints' a tribute to the resilience and strength of the people of New Orleans following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

Orbert Davis says, "In 2008, in the aftermath of events surrounding Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans residents found themselves coping with death, extreme loss and an urgency to rebuild. The present COVID-19 pandemic has forced us all to cope with similar circumstances. May we find comfort and strength as we follow the example of the people of New Orleans to survive today and strive for a better tomorrow."

Messages of Hope premieres Saturday, June 5 on the Center's [YouTube channel](#) and will be available on demand until July 3. Tickets start at \$25 and patrons who donate \$125+ receive special thank you gifts. All ticket proceeds benefit the Center's 25th Anniversary Fund: supporting local artists, international touring productions, social justice and arts in education programming, summer theater camp, venue improvements, and so much more, ensuring the Center's continued impact on the Southland for the next 25 years and beyond. For tickets and more information, go to Centertickets.net.

In conjunction with the streaming concert, the Center will host an online Auction June 5-15. "We are so fortunate to have the support of local businesses, artists, and organizations to offer unique and exciting dining and entertainment experiences and original pieces of art. An auction is a creative way for us to serve the community and raise funds for cultural programs," says Executive Director Lana Rogachevskaya, "We are also partnering with Steve Fine Sports and Memorabilia for one of a kind items that include autographed guitars from Van Halen and Taylor Swift, photos autographed by Paul McCartney, and the Rolling Stones, a boxing shoe autographed by Muhammad Ali, and more. All auction proceeds support the 25th Anniversary Fund."

This is the Center's fourth collaboration with Orbert Davis' Chicago Jazz Philharmonic. Their first collaboration began in 2013 with 'DuSable to Obama: Chicago's Black Metropolis', followed in 2014 with 'Mardi Gras Carnival' featuring the world premiere of Orbert Davis' original piece 'Survival of the Saints', and more recently, 'The Monk Meets the First Lady' in 2017.

Messages of Hope is proudly sponsored by First Midwest Bank and WDCB 90.9FM: Chicago's Home for Jazz and Blues with support from the Illinois Arts Council. With additional support from Information Plus and Figaro Services.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit CenterTickets.net

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