

HAMMER THEATRE CENTER PRESENTS
RAUL MIDÓN
GRAMMY-NOMINATED BLIND JAZZ
GUITARIST TO STREAM LIVE AS PART OF
“BLACK CAB JAZZ” SERIES

POSTPONED – NEW DATE: 7:00pm, Friday, April 23

SAN JOSE, CA (16 April 2021) – **Hammer Theatre Center** presents a vibrant live stream from Grammy-nominated jazz musician **Raul Midón** as part of the virtual extension of its popular “Black Cab Jazz” series, featuring exclusive performances from today’s hottest jazz artists curated in partnership with internationally renowned arts organization **San Jose Jazz**. Visually impaired since birth, Midón has been dubbed “an eclectic adventurer” by *People* magazine, collaborating with icons such as Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder, and Bill Withers, as well as contributing to recordings by Queen Latifah, Snoop Dogg, and the soundtrack of Spike Lee’s film, “She Hate Me.” He was asked to join *NPR* for one of its first-ever “Tiny Desk (Home) Concerts” introduced shortly after the pandemic began, which earned him rave reviews for his jazz-influenced vocal phrasing backed only by his acoustic guitar as accompaniment. Felix Contreras, host of *NPR*’s “Alt.Latino” music program, called Midón “one of the bright spots on our musical landscape and even more so at this moment.” **Originally scheduled for April 16, Raul Midón will now stream live 7:00pm, Friday, April 23.** For tickets (pay-what-you-can) or more information, the public may visit www.hammertheatre.com.

A New Mexico native, **Raul Midón** studied jazz at the University of Miami before moving to New York City and Maryland, where he now resides. He has released 11 studio albums as a solo artist and earned acclaim worldwide, with a fanbase reaching from San Francisco to Tokyo. *The Guardian* called Midón’s versatile voice “lovely...a beautifully controlled tenor that can express anything from tenderness to passion,” while

The Huffington Post described his magnetic stage presence as “[playing] with such freedom and joy that his hands smile.” His signature combination of silky singing and percussive guitar were introduced on “The Late Show with David Letterman” in 2006, where he stunned audiences into applause mid-song when he showcased his improvisational mouth-horn technique, in which he creates a bebop “trumpet” solo with his lips. Ahead of his “Tiny Desk (Home) Concert,” *NPR* set the stage for his captivating performance by describing Midón as “[living] in a world of sound. [His] interpretation of his surroundings is borderless. He sings with the passion of the best classic soul singers, and his instrumental chops stand alongside the most accomplished jazz musicians.”

Midón’s latest album, “The Mirror,” was released in March 2020. Breaking new ground, the album features two spoken-word pieces (“If I Could See” and “One Day Without War”), as well as collaborations with veteran jazz vibraphonist Joe Locke (“A Certain Café”) and top pianist Gerald Clayton (“Deep Dry Ocean”), and more. “It’s important that I surprise myself and my listeners,” Midón says. “Take the spoken-word pieces, for instance. I grew up listening to artists who were rappers before rap, like Gil Scott-Heron, so I’ve always wanted to take that sort of approach to something. I think hearing me speak the words over the music makes it especially personal.” He also writes song from the heart, aiming to be as true to himself as possible through his lyrics in hopes that it reaches others: “I feel fortunate to have a diverse audience all around the world that cares about hearing me sing and express myself. With this new album, I’m excited to have my listeners go on another ride with me.”

The **Black Cab Jazz** series is named after Hammer Theatre Center’s intimate black box theatre space, where San Jose Jazz partnered with the theater to present performances held in the spirit of classic intimate cabaret shows. This new, virtual extension of the series aims to bring performances from outstanding jazz artists to audience members to enjoy in the comfort of their own homes.

Owned by the City of San Jose and operated by San Jose State University, the **Hammer Theatre Center** is a state-of-the-art performance venue located in the heart of downtown

San Jose at 101 Paseo De San Antonio, between 2nd and 3rd Streets. The Hammer's latest tech innovations, partially crowdfunded by the community, will allow the venue to continue offering its community vibrant productions through streaming now, while large public gatherings are prohibited, as well as in the near future, when only smaller groups may be allowed in the audience. It also offers an alternative for the distant future, when public gatherings may once again be prohibited, and/or to provide accessibility to those unable to attend a live event in person. The 528-seat theatre has presented an array of offerings including outstanding professional productions, community-based works, SJSU shows, and concerts, as well as dance, music, talks, film screenings—even live aerial performances with dancers suspended outside, scaling the sides of the iconic blue building. From jazz performances to mariachi extravaganzas, the popular *National Geographic Live!* speaker series to the acclaimed *National Theatre Live* film screenings, Cinequest film festival presentations, ballet and modern dance shows, kid-friendly performances, live art and more, the Hammer's mission is to serve the community through artistic and educational programming that express the unique characteristics and diverse cultures of Silicon Valley.

For Calendar Editors

WHAT: **Hammer Theatre Center** presents a vibrant live stream from Grammy-nominated jazz musician **Raul Midón** as part of the virtual extension of its popular “Black Cab Jazz” series, featuring exclusive performances from today’s hottest jazz artists curated in partnership with internationally renowned arts organization **San Jose Jazz**. Visually impaired since birth, Midón has been dubbed “an eclectic adventurer” by *People* magazine, collaborating with icons such as Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder, and Bill Withers, as well as contributing to recordings by Queen Latifah, Snoop Dogg, and the soundtrack of Spike Lee’s film, “She Hate Me.” He was asked to join *NPR* for one of its first-ever “Tiny Desk (Home) Concerts” introduced shortly after the pandemic began, which earned him rave reviews for his jazz-influenced vocal phrasing backed only by his acoustic guitar as accompaniment. Felix Contreras, host of *NPR*’s “Alt.Latino” music program, called Midón “one of the bright spots on our musical landscape and even more so at this moment.”

WHERE: View from home – ticket holders are sent a link for viewing.

WHEN: **NEW DATE: 7:00pm, Friday, April 23**

INFO: For tickets (pay-what-you-can), the public may visit www.hammertheatre.com.

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PRESS: Contact Steph Keay, Carla Befera & Co.
(650) 687-7830 | steph@cb-pr.com

PHOTOS: Media may download high-res photos at:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/hammer2021>