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RAMSEY LEWIS TO HEADLINE THE CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY GUILD’S 20TH ANNUAL JAZZ UNDER THE STARS BENEFIT CONCERT MAY 4

ATLANTA (March 11, 2013) – Jazz pianist Ramsey Lewis will headline the Clark Atlanta University (CAU) Guild’s 20th annual Jazz Under the Stars Benefit Concert Saturday, May 4, at 7 p.m. on the Harkness Hall Quadrangle on CAU’s campus, 223 James P. Brawley Drive, S.W.

Hosted by the CAU Guild with UPS as the presenting sponsor, the concert will provide scholarships to CAU students in the performing arts and will be held rain or shine. The CAU Jazz Vocal Ensemble and the Jazz Orchestra also will perform. Special tributes will be made to mark this milestone year, and live and silent auctions will take place.

Composer, pianist and jazz legend Ramsey Lewis has been referred to as “the great performer,” a title reflecting his performance style and musical selections, stemming from his early gospel music and classical training, along with his love of jazz and other musical forms.

(more)
A native Chicagoan, born May 27, 1935, Lewis represents the great diversity of music for which Chicago is noted. He first captivated fans with his first album, “Ramsey Lewis And The Gentlemen of Swing,” by the Ramsey Lewis Trio in 1956. By 1965, he was one of the nation’s most successful jazz pianists, topping the charts with “The In Crowd,” “Hang On Sloopy” and “Wade In The Water.” He has three Grammy Awards and seven gold records to his credit. Often called legendary, Lewis concedes, “It’s a high honor when someone says so, but I don’t see myself that way. What keeps me enthusiastic and energizes me is the realization that the more I learn, the more I find there is to know.” He received the industry award for the 2006 Stellar Award for Best Gospel Instrumental Album, “With One Voice,” presented in January 2007. He was also the recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters Award in January 2007. Lewis has received four honorary doctorate degrees and numerous other accolades.

Ramsey Lewis began taking piano lessons at the age of 4, studying the basics and fundamentals. But, “It wasn’t until I started studying with the late Dorothy Mendelsohn that I responded to some of the startling things she was teaching me, such as ‘Listen with your inner ear,’ and ‘Make the piano sing.’ These concepts were revelations!” Soon after, he began learning Bach, Beethoven, Hadyn, Brahms and Chopin, and other basic piano repertoire for the concert pianist.

Since 1992, the CAU Guild, which includes some of Atlanta’s most influential women, has raised nearly $1.8 million in scholarships. Corporate tables and sponsorships are available. Individual tickets are $60 each. A table for 10 is $600. For additional information and tickets, call 404-880-8136.

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