



**ARTIST  
SERIES**

**Dee Dee Bridgewater  
And The Memphis Soulphany**

**Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018**

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Dee Dee Bridgewater and The Memphis Soulphany perform selections from her album “Memphis... Yes, I'm Ready,” as well as other songs.

Every picture tells a story; every journey begins differently. The story of Dee Dee Bridgewater's stunning new album, “Memphis... Yes, I'm Ready,” begins in that city, where she was born at Collins Chapel Hospital, located not far from where the album was recorded at Producer Willie Mitchell's historic Royal Studios. Dee Dee's father, a trumpet player also affectionately known as “Matt the Platter Cat” was a DJ at WDIA, the top Memphis radio station. Even when the family moved to neighboring Flint, Michigan, as a young girl Dee Dee would listen to the great sounds of the Memphis music scene by tuning-in late night from across state lines. And oh what a music scene it was!

“Even as a young girl the music moved me, inspired me, made me dance with joy and cry with emotion. My life journey may have started in Mali, West Africa, as a descendent of the Peul tribe and the Fulani of Nigeria, but it certainly was nurtured by my childhood in the South and all of the amazing music that I was being exposed to.”

Dee Dee was also determined to recapture the same magic and history of the blues, R&B and soul classics that she takes on as repertoire, and that were originally made in/associated with Memphis. “I wanted people to be able to recall the original versions, but I also wanted them to have a more modern feeling while respecting those originals.”

Said Bridgewater, “I want to honor this city, Memphis, which we call Soulsville, which has brought so much joy to so many people around the world. It has always been a part of me and the proof is the more I come back, the more at home I feel and the more logical it begins to feel that eventually I will move back here. Much of my heart and soul are here.”

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# About the Performer

Over the course of a multifaceted career spanning four decades, Grammy and Tony Award-winning jazz giant Dee Dee Bridgewater has ascended to the upper echelon of vocalists, putting her unique spin on standards, as well as taking intrepid leaps of faith in re-envisioning jazz classics. Ever the fearless voyager, pioneer and keeper of tradition, the three-time Grammy winner most recently won the Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal Album for “Eleanora Fagan (1915–1959): To Billie With Love From Dee Dee.”

Bridgewater’s career has always bridged musical genres. She earned her first professional experience as a member of the legendary Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band, and throughout the 1970s she performed with such jazz notables as Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon and Dizzy Gillespie. After a foray into the pop world during the 1980s, she relocated to Paris and began to turn her attention back to jazz. Bridgewater began self-producing with her 1993 album “Keeping Tradition” (Polydor/Verve) and created DDB records in 2006 when she signed with the Universal Music Group as a producer. Bridgewater now produces all of her own critically acclaimed CDs, all but one of which have received Grammy nominations. Artist Theo Croker is signed to DDB Records and in 2014 the label released a collaboration between Bridgewater and Irvin Mayfield and the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra.

Bridgewater has also pursued a parallel career in musical theater, winning a Tony Award for her role as Glinda in “The Wiz” in 1975. Having recently completed a run as the lead role of Billie Holiday in the off-Broadway production of “Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill,” her other theatrical credits include “Sophisticated Ladies,” “Black Ballad,” “Carmen,” “Cabaret” and the off-Broadway and West End Productions of “Lady Day,” for which Bridgewater received the British Laurence Olivier Nomination for Best Actress in a Musical.

As a Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Bridgewater continues to appeal for international solidarity to finance global grassroots projects in the fight against world hunger. She is currently on tour worldwide in support of “Memphis... Yes, I’m Ready,” and in April of 2017 was the recipient of an NEA Jazz Masters Fellows Award with honors bestowed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.



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