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Thursday, 05 November 2009

Esperanza Spalding at the Orange County Performing Arts Center 11/6-7

Written by Ronaldo Oregano
Wednesday, 04 November 2009

"Whether exploding into vocalese or making her bass solo sound like a horn, she's a spark plug who dances as she grooves through a funk-ed-up and rocked-out repertoire."—*Billboard*



Esperanza Spalding © Andrea Canter

Bassist-vocalist-composer Esperanza Spalding has captivated audiences with her compelling vocals, unmatched instrumental ability, and charismatic stage presence. Spalding will perform at the Samueli Theater of the Orange County Performing Arts Center on Friday, November 6th and Saturday, November 7th with shows at 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. each night. With a beguiling blend of Brazilian melodies, Afro-Caribbean grooves, post-bop harmonies and lilting vocals, 25-year-old bassist Esperanza Spalding combines the imaginative flights of a serious improviser with the musical accessibility of a pop star. At 20, the Portland, Oregon native became the second youngest musician ever hired as a professor at Boston's Berklee College of Music (second only to Pat Metheny who was 19 when he was appointed). She landed that gig after graduating from the school in 2005.

By the time Spalding was five, she had taught herself to play the violin and was playing with the Chamber Music Society of Oregon. Spalding stayed with the Chamber Music Society of Oregon until she was fifteen and left as concertmaster. Due to a lengthy illness when she was child, Spalding spent much of her elementary school years being homeschooled, but also attended King Elementary School in Northeast Portland. During this time she also found the opportunity to pick up instruction in music by listening to her mother's college teacher instruct her mother in guitar. According to Spalding, when she was about 8 her mother briefly studied jazz guitar in college; Spalding says, "Going with her to her class, I would sit under the piano. Then I would come home and I would be playing her stuff that her teacher had been playing." Spalding also played oboe and clarinet before discovering the bass in high school.

Now, Esperanza Spalding has already racked up an impressive array of credits (Stanley Clarke, Pat Metheny, Joe Lovano), but Spalding's infectious bandstand charisma, huge sound and superb sense of time are best experienced with her own stylistically flexible band. In demand around the world, she has twice appeared in command performances at the White House. And her second album, *Esperanza*, was released last year on the Heads Up label, featuring vocals sung in English, Spanish and Portuguese.



Esperanza Spalding © Andrea Canter

"The coolest person we've ever had on the show. Beautiful!" David Letterman "One of the brightest new voices in jazz"

Tickets are \$43 and can be purchased at the Orange County Performing Arts Center website: www.ocpac.org

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- Esperanza Spalding at the Orange County Performing Arts Center 11/6-7
- Classic Movie Cable Channel to Premier New Johnny Mercer Documentary on November 4th
- LA Beat:Vibraphonist Nick Mancini Quartet at Lighthouse Café
- LA Beat:Guitarist Phenom Graham Dechter: CD Release at Steamers
- Glenn Cashman, "Southland Big Band" (2009, Primrose Lane Music)
- Jazz Vocalists of Minnesota: November Showcase and Member Gigs
- Roger James Quartet, CD Release at the Artists Quarter, November 5th

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