



Date: February 26, 2009

MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN ANNOUNCES SUMMER WHITAKER MUSIC FESTIVAL LINEUP

WHAT: Whitaker Music Festival
WHEN: Wednesdays, June 3 through Aug. 5 at 7:30 p.m. Free admission begins at 5 p.m.; last entry at 9 p.m.
WHERE: Cohen Amphitheater, Missouri Botanical Garden, 4344 Shaw Blvd., south St. Louis
COST: FREE
SPONSORS: Whitaker Foundation
INFO: www.mobot.org; (314) 577-9400, 1 (800) 642-8842 toll free

(ST. LOUIS): The popular Whitaker Music Festival returns to the Missouri Botanical Garden this summer, offering 10 weeks of free Wednesday evening concerts under the stars. Enjoy the musical talents of many noted St. Louis-area performers and take advantage of the once-a-year opportunity to picnic on the Garden grounds. The outdoor concerts will be held from June 3 through Aug. 5 at 7:30 p.m.; admission is free. The series is sponsored by the Whitaker Foundation.

University City-native **Peter Martin** kicks off the season with a performance on June 3. A gifted jazz pianist, Martin has performed the world over and is a Grammy Award winner for his collaboration with Dianne Reeves on the movie soundtrack for “Good Night, and Good Luck.” June 10, the **St. Louis Stompers** return to delight crowds with a rousing rendition of their own brand of Dixieland jazz. June 17, clarinetist **Scott Alberici** makes his first solo appearance at the concert series. June 24, the **Mosby Group** will entertain with Todd Mosby’s unique fusion of classical, jazz and rock guitar styles mixed with the Indian sitar.

Dizzy Atmosphere debuts on July 1 with the whirling, incessant rhythms of the American

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ADD ONE: Whitaker Music Festival

Swing era, combining European and American jazz idioms with a hint of gypsy bravado. Back by overwhelming demand, the **Tony Simmons Band** returns on July 8. The blind Simmons has transcended any limitations to become a master of the keyboard and a success in his field. July 5, the trio of **Rogers, Nienhaus and Crawford** recreate the folk-rock era of the 1960s and 70s with acoustic guitar, soaring three-part harmonies, and covers of music from great songwriters that will make fans want to sing along. July 22, **Farshid Etniko** draws on musical and cultural influences from the sands of Persia to the plains of America to create a unique listening experience. July 29, **Ralph Butler** returns to the Whitaker Music Festival after a several year hiatus. The noted nightclub entertainer has been a fixture on the St. Louis scene for over two decades.

The summer concert series draws to a close on Aug. 5 with **Anita Rosamond**. A make-up from last year's rainout, the acclaimed and sought-after performer will showcase her talents as a vocalist, pianist and songwriter with a diverse array of jazz, soulful rhythm and blues, and original compositions.

Whitaker Music Festival concerts will be held outdoors on the lawn of the Cohen Amphitheater, just west of the Climatron® dome on the grounds of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets. The concert series is the only time of year when picnicking is allowed on Garden grounds. Visitors are welcome to bring their own picnic supper, baskets or coolers; no barbecue grills or pets. Picnic fare including brisket sandwiches, hot dogs, cheese and grape plates, sno-cones, chips, cookies, beer, wine and soda are also available for purchase on site. The Garden is a tobacco-free campus; smoking is not allowed anywhere, indoors or outside, and visitors will be asked to extinguish or discard tobacco items. Soliciting is not permitted.

Wednesday evening admission is free after 5 p.m. Music begins at 7:30 p.m. and last entry is at 9 p.m. The Doris I. Schnuck Children's Garden also remains open late until 7 p.m. on Wednesday evenings, with free admission after 5 p.m.

The Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd., easily accessible from Interstate 44 at the Vandeventer exit. Free parking is available on site and at lots two blocks west at the corner of Shaw and Vandeventer. For more information, visit www.mobot.org or call the recorded hotline at (314) 577-9400. In the event of inclement weather, tune in to WSIE-FM 88.7 for concert updates.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is the oldest continually operating botanical garden in the nation, celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2009. *Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years.*

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NOTE: Digital color images available by request. Download media materials at www.mobot.org/press.

The Missouri Botanical Garden's mission is "to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment, in order to preserve and enrich life." Today, 150 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science, conservation, education and horticultural display. *Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years*.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in St. Louis, just south of I-44 at Vandeventer-Kingshighway (exit #287B). Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Dec. 25. Grounds open at 7 a.m. every Wednesday and Saturday. Admission is \$8; free children ages 12 and under and Garden members. St. Louis City and County residents are \$4 and free every Wednesday and Saturday until noon (exception: special admission rate events). Park for free on site and two blocks west at the Shaw-Vandeventer intersection. The Garden is easily accessible by taking the MetroLink commuter rail line to the Central West End station and picking up a Metro bus (www.metrostlouis.org). For general information, log on to www.mobot.org or call the 24-hour recording at (314) 577-9400 or 1-800-642-8842. For membership information, call (314) 577-5118 during weekday business hours. For volunteer opportunities, call (314)-577-5187 or visit www.mobot.org/volunteer. The Missouri Botanical Garden is a tobacco-free environment.

(Note: A section of the I-64/U.S. 40 highway is under construction through 2009. Before traveling, check www.thenewi64.org for updates or visit www.GetAroundStL.com for other helpful information.)