

**THE
KENNEDY
CENTER**

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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****MEDIA ALERT****

**The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
announces**



Just Announced:

For Lovers Only: Alice Smith and Bilal

Lean On Me: José James Celebrates Bill Withers

and

Meshell Ndegeocello

~ more ~

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is proud to present four critically-acclaimed artists that continually push the boundaries of form with their eclectic, genre-defying sounds: Alice Smith, Bilal, José James, and Meshell Ndegeocello.

“Each of these artists reflects an important voice in the contemporary canon,” said Simone Eccleston, director of Hip Hop Culture and Contemporary Music. “They demonstrate a fluid mastery of forms, a creative fearlessness that takes listeners to new heights, and an ineffable capacity to touch the human spirit through their artistic honesty and originality.”

Singer, songwriter, producer, and four-octave range vocalist **Alice Smith** and singer, songwriter and Grammy® award-winning vocalist **Bilal** come together for a pre-Valentine’s Day concert entitled *For Lovers Only: Alice Smith and Bilal*. In a dynamic double bill featuring individual sets by each artist, Smith will deliver her artful blend of bluesy, soulful vocals and mid-tempo grooves alongside Bilal’s energetic style that draws from gospel, jazz, soul, blues, and Hip Hop.

Celebrating the 80th birth year of the legendary R&B singer-songwriter Bill Withers, Blue Note recording artist **José James** presents *Lean On Me: José James Celebrates Bill Withers*. The show is an exploration of Withers’ deep musical catalogue that touched millions of hearts and united communities worldwide. Featuring Withers’s top ten hits as well as his soul ballads and rare grooves, James brings both a deep musical appreciation and a contemporary approach to songs such as “Ain’t No Sunshine,” “Hope She’ll Be Happier,” and “Just the Two of Us.” James has assembled an all-star cast of musicians: **Nate Smith** on drums, **Reuben Rodgers** on bass, **James Francies** on keys, and **Brad Allen Williams** on guitar.

After two sold-out performances of her project *Pour Une Âme Souveraine: A Dedication to Nina Simone*, visionary vocalist and bassist **Meshell Ndegeocello**,

returns to the Kennedy Center for two performances in celebration of her new album *Ventriloquism*. Lush, investigative, subversive and sublime, *Ventriloquism*, is an album of imaginative covers that redefines the musical experience as it deconstructs and comments on the narrow expectation of sound and structure for black artists and black music while offering a musical refuge during these uncertain times.

Schedule

For Lovers Only: Alice Smith and Bilal

Saturday, February 10, 2018, 8 p.m., Eisenhower Theater

Lean On Me: José James Celebrates Bill Withers

Saturday, March 3, 2018, 8 p.m., Eisenhower Theater

Meshell Ndegeocello

Thursday, April 26, 2018, 7 p.m. and 9 p.m., Terrace Theater

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets will be available to Kennedy Center Members on Thursday, Nov. 9 at 10:00 a.m. and to the general public on Wednesday, November 15 at 10:00 a.m. Tickets start at \$25 and will be available at the Kennedy Center box office, by calling Instant Charge at (202) 467-4600, or through the Kennedy Center website at www.kennedy-center.org.

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TICKETS & INFORMATION

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