



SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spoleto Festival USA Auction to Feature Charlton Singleton and Cyrus Chestnut in an Exclusive Private Jazz Concert

Friday, February 1, 7:00pm | Memminger Auditorium

JANUARY 21, 2013 (CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA)—The Spoleto Festival USA annual auction, which takes place on Friday, February 1, at Charleston's Memminger Auditorium, is considered by many to be the unofficial kickoff to the Spoleto season. Exceptional performances are a hallmark of the annual performing arts festival, and recent Spoleto auctions have played to that strength by headlining prominent jazz musicians, a trend that continues in 2013. Pianist Cyrus Chestnut, who performed at Spoleto in 2008, joins the Charlton Singleton Jazz Ensemble to provide the musical portion of the event, lending a jazz club atmosphere to an evening that also features live bidding on a range of exclusive and one-of-a-kind auction items. All proceeds benefit the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra, the Festival's signature orchestra in residence.

Event tickets are available online at spoletousa.org or by calling 843.720.1114. Tickets are \$150 per person or \$1,500 for VIP reserved seating for six. In addition, a separate Spoleto Festival USA online-only auction will run from January 29 to February 10 at spoletoauction.com.

A native of Awendaw, South Carolina, trumpet player Charlton Singleton is the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Charleston Jazz Orchestra, a twenty piece jazz ensemble of some of the finest professional musicians in the Southeast and the resident big band in Charleston. Singleton also leads his own traditional jazz group, The Charlton Singleton Quintet, and a contemporary group, Charlton Singleton Band.

Pianist Cyrus Chestnut spent several years as a sideman for such prominent musicians as Jon Hendricks, Betty Carter, Wynton Marsalis, and Terrance Blanchard and has since performed or recorded with Kathleen Battle, Freddy Cole, Bette Midler, Jimmy Scott, Isaac Hayes, and Kevin Mahogany, among others. Chestnut's leadership and prowess as a soloist have led him to be a first call for the piano chair in many big bands, including the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Dizzy Gillespie Big Band, and the Carnegie Hall Jazz Orchestra.

This year, the Spoleto auction evening commences at 7:00pm with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. During the cocktail hour, guests will be able to use one of several laptops located throughout the room to participate in the associated online auction, where they can bid on a range of items, from Charleston travel packages and upscale fashions, to a walk-on role on Lifetime's hit series *Army Wives*. Afterwards, guests will be seated to enjoy tapas from Cru Catering and the first of two musical sets, followed by a session of live bidding on one-of-a-kind auction items, including an extensive 13-day September, 2013, tour of Tuscany and Umbria with Amber Road Tours; a "Jazz & Juleps" private brunch for 25 with the Quentin Baxter Jazz Ensemble at Spoleto's historic Pinckney Mansion headquarters; an exclusive four-day retreat at the members-only Greenbrier Sporting Club with a round of golf, an escorted horseback trail ride, and other activities; and a deluxe two-week Australian excursion that includes air travel for two on United Airlines, stays at the Intercontinental Hotel Sydney and Hayman Island Resort—both courtesy of Elite Resorts of Asia Pacific—and at a private cottage on Australia's Pacific coast adjoining Coastal National Park. Guests may also bid to sponsor individual members of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra for their residency during the 2013 season. The evening ends with another musical set and a selection of gourmet desserts.

Every year since its inception, the Festival's auction has supported the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra, a diverse group of accomplished young musicians who compete

nationally in rigorous auditions to secure a spot in the renowned ensemble. Providing the musical backbone of the Festival, the orchestra is central to the excellence of performance that Festival audiences experience year after year.

The 37th season of Spoleto Festival USA takes place May 24 to June 9, 2013, in Charleston, SC, and tickets are now on sale. For more information, please visit spoletousa.org or call 843.579.3100.

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