

Press Contacts:

Jessie Bagley, Director of Marketing and Public Relations | 843.720.1136 | jbagley@spoletousa.org

Jenny Ouellette, Public Relations Manager | 843.720.1137 | jouellette@spoletousa.org

Kellie Lawson, Communications Assistant | 843.720.1135 | klawson@spoletousa.org

Spoletto Festival USA Hosts the Seventh Mary Ramsay Civic Award Luncheon on Friday, April 13

Honoring Wayland H. and Marion Rivers Cato

April 6, 2018 (Charleston, South Carolina) — On April 13 at the Governor Thomas Bennett House, Spoleto Festival USA will present its 2018 Mary Ramsay Civic Award to Mr. Wayland H. Cato, Jr. and Mrs. Marion Rivers Cato, longtime champions of the Festival and the arts. Through remarkable achievements and unyielding support, the Catos have proven a commitment to civic and philanthropic progress in Charleston. During the luncheon, Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr.—a 2016 Mary Ramsay Civic Award recipient—will present the Catos' award. Rt. Rev. Mark J. Lawrence, Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina, will lead the afternoon's invocation.

Recognizing extraordinary contributions of civic and charitable leadership within the Charleston community, the Mary Ramsay Civic Award was established in 2012. It is named after Mary Croghan Ramsay (1921 – 2009), who worked tirelessly to elevate causes including the performing arts, urban development and improvement, higher education, and the welfare of those with special needs. The award celebrates her determination and commitment to improving the Lowcountry and seeks to honor others who follow in her path. Past recipients are John and Norma Palms (2012), Charles S. Way, Jr. (2013), Dr. Raymond S. Greenberg (2014), Martha Rivers Ingram (2015), Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. (2016), and Joseph H. (Peter) and Evelyn (Patti) McGee (2017).

The annual luncheon, sponsored by South State Bank and benefitting Spoleto Festival USA, will take place at the Governor Thomas Bennett House beginning at 12:30pm. Chef John Zucker of Cru Café and Cru Catering will provide the afternoon's fare, and guests will receive a take-home treat from Caroline's Cakes. A limited number of tickets (starting at \$225) are still available and may be purchased online at spoletousa.org or by calling 843.720.1114.

Wayland H. Cato, Jr. and Marion Rivers Cato

A former Commanding Officer of the U.S. Navy during World War II, Wayland H. Cato, Jr. co-founded The Cato Corporation in 1946. Since then, he has served on the boards of numerous educational and cultural organizations. He was treasurer and member of the executive committee on the board of directors at Spoleto Festival USA, a member of the executive committee of the board of directors of the Carolina Art Association (Gibbes Museum of Art), a member of the board of directors of the College of Charleston Foundation, and served on the Hollings Cancer Center advisory board at the Medical University of South Carolina. Both personally and corporately, he has endowed scholarships in 30 institutions of higher learning in North and South Carolina, including the College of Charleston, The Citadel, Charleston Southern University, the Medical University of South Carolina, Trident Technical College, and the American College of Building Arts.

Marion Rivers Cato, a graduate of Ashley Hall and Converse College, is a talented author and dedicated community volunteer. In addition to publishing two books, *Marie Ravenel: From Childhood to China*—an account of a medical missionary in revolutionary China in the 1920s; and *The Story of L. Mendel Rivers*—a biography of her father, Marion has served as a member of the board of trustees of the Historic Charleston Foundation, Converse College, and South Carolina Educational Television, and served on the board of directors of the Gibbes Museum of Art. She is a member of the Colonial Dames of South Carolina and a former member of the Junior League. Marion and Wayland were married in 1998 and reside in the William Alston House (c. 1815), which they restored and have received awards for doing so from the Historic Charleston Foundation and the Preservation Society of Charleston. They have also been recognized for their restoration of a historic 1870s ranch near Sheridan, Wyoming, where they operate a working Black Angus cattle ranch.

Spoleto Festival USA

Founded in 1977, Spoleto Festival USA is an annual 17-day performing arts festival that presents leading artists in classical and popular music, jazz, dance, and theater, contributing to the rich cultural fabric of Charleston, SC. The 2018 season (May 25 – June 10) includes more than 150 ticketed events in a dozen locations on the downtown peninsula. A release outlining the entire 2018 season can be found [HERE](#).

Tickets to the 2018 season of Spoleto Festival USA can be purchased anytime at spoletousa.org or by calling the Festival box office at 843.579.3100 from 10:00am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday and from 10:00am to 2:00pm on Saturdays. Beginning May 1, tickets will be available at the box office as the Charleston Gaillard Center.