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CITI PRESENTS LITTLE STEVEN'S UNDERGROUND GARAGE AT THE BASIE; LITTLE STEVEN & THE DISCIPLES OF SOUL TO CELEBRATE THE RELEASE OF SOULFIRE ON SATURDAY, MAY 27 IN RED BANK

Tickets on sale Friday at noon at theBASIE.org

(APRIL 24, 2017 | RED BANK, NJ) Little Steven & The Disciples Of Soul will take the Basie stage for the first time ever when Citi Presents Little Steven's Underground Garage at the Basie on Saturday, May 27, 2017 at 8pm.

Tickets, priced between \$39 and \$89, go on sale this Friday, April 28 at noon via theBASIE.org, phone charge at 732.842.9000 and the Basie box office, located onsite at 99 Monmouth Street in Red Bank. All tickets will include a physical copy of *Soulfire*, Steven Van Zandt's first solo album in nearly two decades.

Citi cardmembers and Count Basie Theatre members will have first access to tickets, including \$150 VIP tickets which include a pre-show meet and greet and photograph with Van Zandt, and a signed copy of *Soulfire*.

"The Basie originally was my local theater growing up, where I saw *A Hard Day's Night*, *The Nutty Professor*, and *Bye Bye Birdie*," Van Zandt says. "Now it's one of my favorite venues."

"Maureen and I were honored to be asked to be on the board, and help with the Basie's transformation into a performing arts and education center, which will include the first Little Steven's Underground Garage club. Citi is our corporate partner and their enthusiasm has been consistently inspiring. It's the perfect place for our *Soulfire* release party, which will probably be our only show in the U.S. until the fall."

Citi Presents Little Steven's Underground Garage at The Basie is a series of public and private concerts at the nonprofit theatre curated by Steven and Maureen Van Zandt, with the mission of delivering both classic and new rock and roll to devoted fans. The series of performances support the nonprofit theatre's \$20 million capital campaign and expansion plan, which looks to break ground as early as this summer.

For more information about this or other Count Basie Theatre events, contact Jonathan Vena at jvena@countbasietheatre.org.

ABOUT THE COUNT BASIE THEATRE

The Count Basie Theatre's primary mission is to serve the people of the State of New Jersey by providing a broad spectrum of quality entertainment and education programs that reflect and celebrate the diversity of the region; foster understanding and appreciation for the ennobling power of the performing arts, creates opportunity for cultural enrichment for people at all economic levels, and honors the memory of Red Bank native and renowned jazz pianist William James "Count" Basie. The Count Basie Theatre has hosted an array of world-class artists, including Bruce Springsteen & The E-Street Band, Jon Bon Jovi, John Legend, Crosby Stills & Nash, Ringo Starr, Tony Bennett and Ariana Grande. Count Basie Theatre programming is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. For more information, visit www.countbasietheatre.org.

LITTLE STEVEN'S SOULFIRE

SOULFIRE will be available on CD, digitally and on vinyl as a double LP. Pre-orders are available now at <https://UMe.lnk.to/LittleStevenSoulfire>, and will be accompanied by an instant grat download of the recently unveiled album track, "Saint Valentine's Day." Additional instant grat downloads will be unveiled in the coming weeks, including the blazing title track, "Soulfire."

SOULFIRE is Stevie Van Zandt's first solo album in close to two decades and without question his purest and most uniquely personal artistic statement thus far. The album sees the Rock & Roll Hall of Famer revisiting songs that span the length of his career as artist, performer, producer, arranger, and songwriter, focusing directly on the hugely influential "soul horns-meet-rock 'n' roll guitars" approach he first pioneered on Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes' classic first three albums.

"I've always been very thematic with my work, very conceptual," Van Zandt says. "I need a big picture, I can't just do a collection of songs, that doesn't work for me. In this case, the concept became *me*. Who am I? I'm kind of my own genre at this point. So I tried to pick material that when you added it all up, really represented me. So there are a couple of covers, a couple of new songs, and some of what I feel are the best songs I've written and co-written over the years. This record is me doing me."

Little Steven and The Disciples of Soul made their long awaited return last October, prompted by a friend's request to perform at London's BluesFest 2016. Van Zandt had only just returned home from The E Street Band's summer stadium run but as luck would have it, his autumn plans already included a trip to the UK to celebrate both his wife's birthday and his friend Bill Wyman's 80th.

"It was perfect circumstances coming together," says Van Zandt.

Little Steven quickly put together a Disciples of Soul for the 21st century, an "ever-changing group of misfits, rogues, and roustabouts" complete with three backing vocalists and a full horn section currently featuring original Asbury Jukes/Miami Horns saxophonists Stan Harrison (tenor) and Eddie Manion (baritone). Stevie and his 15-piece big band crossed the Atlantic and blew the roof off London's indigo at The O2 with what was supposed to be just a "one-night-only" performance highlighted by classic hits like "I Don't Want To Go Home," solo favorites, songs written for other artists, and inventive covers of tracks made famous by Etta James, James Brown, and The Electric Flag.

"I thought, well, we've already learned 22 songs," Van Zandt says. "Maybe we should make an album."

With his usually packed schedule clear until The E Street Band's "Summer '17" tour of Australia/New Zealand, Van Zandt decided to strike while the iron - and his big band - was hot. *SOULFIRE* was arranged and produced by Van Zandt at his own Renegade Studios in New York City, co-produced and recorded by GRAMMY® Award-winner Geoff Sanoff (Fountains of Wayne, Stephen Colbert) and co-produced and music directed by guitarist Marc Ribler - the latter musician recruited by Stevie as Darlene Love's music director for Love's 2015 Van Zandt-produced *INTRODUCING DARLENE LOVE* and then "borrowed back" to serve that same role with The Disciples of Soul. Background vocals on "I Don't Want To Go Home" and "The City Weeps Tonight" come courtesy of renowned a cappella group, The Persuasions. *SOULFIRE* was mixed and mastered by Van Zandt's career-long collaborators and friends Bob Clearmountain (Rolling Stones, David Bowie, The Who, Bryan Adams), and Bob Ludwig (Led Zeppelin, Nirvana, The Band, Sly and the Family Stone).

"This was the most fun I've ever had making a record," Van Zandt says. "We did it quickly, while we still had the fire and energy from the London show. We just took it into the studio and banged it out, six weeks from start to mix. It's one of those strange things, it really seems like it was meant to be."

Each of Van Zandt's prior five solo albums had seen him expressing his utterly personal songwriting through a changing variety of sounds and approaches, an ambitious adventurousness that has fueled much of his creative output these past two decades. He expanded his parameters, as an actor on *The Sopranos* and *Lilyhammer*, as host, historian, and rock 'n'

roll advocate on Sirius XM's one-and-only "Little Steven's Underground Garage" (not to mention creator of Sirius XM's long-running "Outlaw Country" format). Van Zandt kept his skills sharp by composing the score for all three seasons of *Lilyhammer* and continued to work as producer and songwriter, lending his distinctive craft to records from an array of international garage rockers, but couldn't kick a lingering sense of unfinished business.

"I felt a bit guilty about having walked away from Little Steven the artist," he says. "I left that part of myself behind and I shouldn't have done that. I let the material down by not continuing to perform it," he says. "I betrayed the work and I want to fix that. I didn't give up on the material - there were a lot of other factors - but I do have a sense of wanting some redemption for it."

Van Zandt - who will remain a touring and recording member of The E Street Band - is now looking forward to hitting the road with his own big band. Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul will celebrate *SOULFIRE* with an epic international tour schedule. For regular updates and ticket information, please visit <http://littlesteven.com/index.php/tour-dates>.

"I want to take this band to every place that wants to see us," Van Zandt says. "It's tricky with a 15-piece band, but I'm just trying to achieve my lifelong goal of breaking even!"

Six solo albums and countless milestones in, Stevie Van Zandt has fully captured the singular vision he has refined and pushed forward for the length and breadth of his life and already brilliant career. *SOULFIRE* marks the much-needed return of a truly great artist, reenergized and unstoppable.

"I'm back into it," Little Steven says. "And this time I'm going to stay back."

LITTLE STEVEN

SOULFIRE

(Wicked Cool/Big Machine/UMe)

Release Date: Friday, May 19th



TRACK BY TRACK BELOW:

1. "**Soulfire**" (co-written with Anders Bruus of The Breakers) "Doing the radio show keeps you very much in tune with what's going on in the world of rock 'n' roll. It's not the real world, we live in a completely parallel universe, but we've broadcast over 700 new bands in the past 14 years. A lot of them we signed to my Wicked Cool label, like The Breakers, who are a very good band from Denmark. This was a way of exercising my songwriting muscles at that time. I try to live with purpose, and that includes songwriting. I don't get up every day and write a song just to write a song, I have to have a specific reason for it. So if I'm producing a band and I feel they need a little something extra or something specific, I'll write it for them, or in this case, with them. To some extent, that's what kept my songwriting alive over these past years."

2. **"I'm Coming Back"** (Originally found on Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes' 1991 LP, *BETTER DAYS*) "I did their first three albums in 1976, 1977, and 1978 but then we didn't work together for another 15 years. The lyrics were perfect for Southside at that point and they work for me, at this point. It's one of my favorite lyrics that I've ever written."
3. **"The Blues Is My Business"** (Written by Kevin Bowe and Todd Cerney, recorded by Etta James in 2003) "I've never recorded a real urban Southside-of-Chicago blues thing before. I went through a blues period growing up but by the time I got to the recording studio, I'd kind of gone in a different direction. We worked it out for BluesFest and I liked the arrangement so much, we recorded it for the album."
4. **"I Saw The Light"** "I had half-written it for Richie Sambora & Orianthi but the next time I talked to him he had already written 40 songs so I didn't bother finishing it. I came across it as we were making my album and thought, I like this, maybe I'll finish it for me."
5. **"Some Things Just Don't Change"** (Originally found on Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes' 1977 LP, *THIS TIME IT'S FOR REAL*) "One of my favorites. I wrote it with David Ruffin and The Temptations in mind. I was basically trying to write a classic Motown song. It can be an interesting artistic challenge writing for other people. As third generation rock 'n' rollers we grew up post-show business. It was art form by then, very autobiographical. That's one of the reasons for its success as an art form, people relate to rock 'n' roll in a personal way. So part of you wants to write something traditional, something classic, but part of you always wants to keep it very personal."
6. **"Love On The Wrong Side of Town"** (Co-written with Bruce Springsteen and originally found on Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes' 1977 LP, *THIS TIME IT'S FOR REAL*) "Bruce had the riff and I did the rest. When you wrote, arranged, and produced the original versions, it's not always easy to redo them. They become definitive. You did it that first way for a reason. I found it difficult to do much with this one but when we got to the end of the song I found an opportunity to change it up a little bit. I changed little things here and there on all the songs on the album but it definitely took a minute."
7. **"The City Weeps Tonight"** - "It was going to be the first song on my first solo album. I was going to do a chronological history of rock 'n' roll with my own records but the concept changed and I got political. It remained three-quarters finished all these years, but I always liked it. I love doo-wop so this was a great way to get that onto the record."
8. **"Down and Out in New York City"** (Written by Bodie Chandler and Barry De Vorzon and originally recorded on James Brown's 1973 *Black Caesar* soundtrack) "I love the blaxploitation genre - we do a special on the radio show every year, the day after Thanksgiving, we call it 'Blaxploitation Friday.' My favorite has always been James Brown's theme from *Black Caesar*. It has the immediate common ground for me of being about New York City. We did it for BluesFest, came up with a really cool groove and a new horn line and made it our own. It has a bit of a jazzy element, which I explored with my Lilyhammer score, but like the blues song, it's unlike anything I've ever recorded before on a solo album so it was nice to get those genres onto a record."
9. **"Standing in the Line of Fire"** (Co-written with Gary U.S. Bonds and (L.) Anderson and originally found on Gary U.S. Bonds' 1984 *STANDING IN THE LINE OF FIRE*) "Gary U.S. Bonds is somebody you don't want to mess with. The records I did with him are so damn good, I thought, I can't really beat this, I need to really change it somehow. So I added a piece of music I did for Lilyhammer - now it's like Gary U.S. Bonds-meets-Ennio Morricone."
10. **"Saint Valentine's Day"** (Originally found on The Cocktail Slippers' 2009 LP, *SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE*) "I wrote it for Nancy Sinatra but unfortunately never did the session. I recorded it with The Cocktail Slippers, similar to the way I was going to do it with Nancy, and then David Chase liked it so we did a more rock 'n' roll guys' version of it for his movie, *Not Fade Away*. For my version, I added a horn line that I think changes the whole complexion of the song, makes it more of a soul thing."
11. **"I Don't Want To Go Home"** (Originally found on Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes' 1976 debut LP, *I DON'T WANT TO GO HOME*) "It's the first song I ever wrote and I wanted to do it the way I'd originally imagined it. I'd spent five or six years trying to write songs but I was never really happy with them. I decided to go back and really study the roots of rock 'n' roll. To me, the beginning of rock 'n' roll songwriting was Leiber & Stoller, so I decided I'd write a Drifters song. I was on the oldies circuit at the time, playing with The Dovells, and I got to meet all of my fifties and sixties early rock 'n' roll heroes, spend some time with them. I wrote it for Ben E. King but then didn't have the courage to give it to him."

12. **"Ride The Night Away"** (Co-written with Steve Jordan and originally found on Jimmy Barnes' 1985 LP, *FOR THE WORKING CLASS MAN*; later recorded for Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes' 1991 LP, *BETTER DAYS*) "Steve Jordan came over to my house one day and said, 'I've got a Jimmy Barnes session, I promised him a song and I don't have one so I'm not leaving until we write one.' That kind of songwriting-on-a-deadline goes back to Leiber & Stoller as well - I love that whole Brill Building thing, I wish I'd been around for that period."