



GRAMMY MUSEUM® TO HONOR JON BATISTE WITH INAUGURAL RAY CHARLES “ARCHITECT OF SOUND” AWARD AT THE GRAMMY HALL OF FAME® GALA ON MAY 16, WHERE HE WILL ALSO PERFORM

CBS NEWS’ ANTHONY MASON RETURNS AS HOST

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. (April 3, 2025) - Building on its long-standing relationship with the Ray Charles Foundation, the GRAMMY Museum® announces the creation of the Ray Charles “Architect of Sound” Award, an annual honor presented at the Recording Academy® and GRAMMY Museum’s GRAMMY Hall Of Fame® Gala. The inaugural recipient, multi-GRAMMY® Award-winning artist Jon Batiste, will receive the award at the 2025 GRAMMY Hall Of Fame Gala on May 16, 2025, at The Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles.

Inspired by the boundless genius of Charles—whose legacy as a performer, pianist, songwriter, producer, and entrepreneur forever transformed the musical landscape—the “Architect of Sound” Award recognizes an artist whose influence echoes across generations. This award celebrates those who, like Charles, transcend genre, redefine creativity, and leave an indelible mark on music and culture. Whether through innovation in sound, groundbreaking artistry, or an unwavering commitment to musical excellence, the recipient embodies the pioneering spirit of one of music’s greatest architects. A 17-time GRAMMY winner with 10 recordings inducted into the GRAMMY Hall of Fame and a Recording Academy Lifetime Achievement Award honoree, Ray Charles was one of the most influential artists of all time.

Batiste, a visionary artist, composer, and cultural force, will be the first recipient of this prestigious honor, which celebrates an artist whose impact on music echoes the pioneering spirit of Charles. As a genre-defying pianist, singer-songwriter, and bandleader, Batiste’s contributions to music and culture have been both innovative and timeless, making him the perfect artist to receive this inaugural award.

Jon Batiste said, “Ray Charles is a beacon for me, a blueprint. He is a singular example of musical genius, artistic freedom and craft of the highest level that will continue to inspire humanity for generations and stand the test of time. I am honored to receive this award. It is vitally important to me to carry on our cultural legacy of true artistic greatness and lead the way for generations to come.”

Michael Sticka, GRAMMY Museum President/CEO, said, “Ray Charles was a trailblazing artist whose influence knows no bounds, and Jon Batiste is a true reflection of that legacy. Beyond his immense talent, Jon has been a dedicated partner in advancing the GRAMMY Museum’s mission to make music education more accessible. Honoring him with the inaugural Ray Charles ‘Architect of Sound’ Award is not just fitting—it’s a celebration of two artists who have shaped the sound of generations.”



Valerie Ervin, President of The Ray Charles Foundation, said, “Ray Charles was always pushing music forward—blending genres, breaking barriers, and inspiring generations. He would be deeply honored to have his name attached to an award that celebrates artists who share his fearless creativity and dedication to their craft. Jon Batiste embodies that spirit, and The Ray Charles Foundation is proud to join the GRAMMY Museum in recognizing his extraordinary contributions to music.”

Batiste will take the stage for two special performances during the evening, which will also feature one-of-a-kind musical moments from a lineup of artists to be announced soon. The event will additionally honor this year’s label honoree, Republic Records.

Returning as host is esteemed CBS News journalist Anthony Mason. The show will be produced by former GRAMMY Awards® Executive Producer Ken Ehrlich, alongside Ron Basile, Lindsay Saunders Carl and Lynne Sheridan, with musical direction by GRAMMY and Latin GRAMMY® Award-winning composer, producer, and conductor Cheche Alara.

The Gala will celebrate the 2025 GRAMMY Hall Of Fame inducted recordings, which include iconic recordings such as JAY-Z’s *Reasonable Doubt*, Cat Stevens’ *Tea For The Tillerman*, Santana’s *Supernatural*, and classics from Big Star, Clara Ward, Eddie Floyd, Emmylou Harris, Fela Kuti & Afrika 70, Geeshie Wiley, Gloria Estefan & Miami Sound Machine, J.D. Crowe & The New South, Linda Martell, and Luther Vandross.

The GRAMMY Hall Of Fame was established by the Recording Academy’s National Trustees in 1973. The inducted recordings are selected annually by a special member committee of eminent and knowledgeable professionals from all branches of the recording arts with final ratification by the Recording Academy’s National Board of Trustees. With 13 new titles, the GRAMMY Hall Of Fame currently totals 1,165 inducted recordings. Eligible recipients will receive an official certificate from the Recording Academy. For a full list of 2025 recordings inducted into the GRAMMY Hall Of Fame, see below or visit [here](#).

Tickets for the GRAMMY Hall Of Fame Gala are on sale now. For more information, visit: <https://grammymuseum.org/programs/hof-gala/>.

For sponsorship opportunities, reach out to halloffame@grammymuseum.org.

###

ABOUT THE GRAMMY MUSEUM

The GRAMMY Museum is a nonprofit organization dedicated to celebrating and exploring music from yesterday and today to inspire the music of tomorrow through exhibits, education, grants, preservation initiatives, and public programming. Paying tribute to our collective musical heritage, the Museum values and celebrates the dynamic connection in people’s diverse



backgrounds and music's many genres, telling stories that inspire us, and creative expression that leads change in our industry.

For more information, visit www.grammymuseum.org, "like" the GRAMMY Museum on Facebook, and follow @GRAMMYMuseum on Instagram and TikTok.

ABOUT JON BATISTE

Jon Batiste is a seven-time Grammy and Academy Award-winning singer, songwriter, and composer. His latest album, *Beethoven Blues* (Batiste Piano Series, Vol. 1), is the first in his solo piano series, reimagining classical works through a fresh lens. This follows *World Music Radio* (Aug. 2023), which earned five Grammy nominations, including Album of the Year. Batiste also earned an Oscar nomination and Grammy win for his song "It Never Went Away," on behalf of the Netflix documentary *AMERICAN SYMPHONY*, which follows Batiste as he finds himself celebrated with 11 Grammy nominations, including album of the year for his 2021 studio album *WE ARE*. On the film side, Batiste's innovative score was featured in Jason Reitman's 2024 *SATURDAY NIGHT*.

ABOUT CBS NEWS' ANTHONY MASON

Anthony Mason is a senior culture and senior national correspondent for CBS News. A veteran of more than 40 years at CBS, he is the former co-host of "CBS This Morning" and "CBS This Morning: Saturday." Mason is one of the most experienced and versatile correspondents in television news. But he is perhaps best known for his interviews with artists and musicians, including Bruce Springsteen, Elton John, Aretha Franklin, Adele, Billie Eilish, Dolly Parton, Joni Mitchell, Lady Gaga, Paul McCartney, Pharrell, Cher, André 3000, R.E.M., Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. Mason has won a dozen Emmy Awards and was recently given the Patron of the Arts Award by the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

CONTACTS

GRAMMY Museum:

Jasmine Lywen-Dill

T. 213.725.5703

jlywen-dill@grammymuseum.org

2b Entertainment:

Jaime Rosenberg

2b Entertainment

T: 917.292.2490

jaime@2bentertainment.net

Luke Burland



2b Entertainment

T: 310.721.4443

luke@2bentertainment.net