



**MADELEINE PEYROUX**

Saturday, September 23, 2017, at 7:30pm

Tryon Festival Theatre

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# PROGRAM

## **MADELEINE PEYROUX**

Madeleine Peyroux, vocals and guitar

Jon Herington, guitar

Barak Mori, bass

The program will be announced from the stage.

*This performance will be presented with no intermission.*

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*Madeleine Peyroux appears by arrangement with:*

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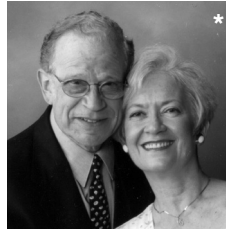
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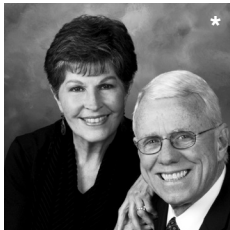
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# PROGRAM NOTE

The story starts with a concert in the countryside of England in the tiny village of Great Milton, Oxfordshire, where we were invited to play by Raymond Blanc for Belmond Le Manoir in October 2015. Saint Mary's Church dates back to Norman times. Its small, musty, stone and wooden reverb is rich with ten centuries of history. This is where I heard the sound for this record, enveloped in the bosom of a soulful room.

Guitarist Jon Herington, upright bassist Barak Mori, and I had been building our trio repertoire for two years, playing all kinds of rooms, exploring the intimate in all kinds of music—blues, gospel, Americana, even dub reggae. Each song we added gave me a sense of awe, a reverence for the small, everyday trials of our lives. They are personal, disarming, and honest, and they come from all kinds of places and eras. But their rendering, if only by its sincerity, intends to share a universal message. Somehow I felt this little church gave us the sanctuary we needed for that to be heard.

We returned the following January to record, including a performance for the local townspeople. Post concert I received a most gracious compliment, that our show filled the hall with spiritual humanism. This is the result of those recordings and it is in this vein that I titled the album *Secular Hymns*.

—Madeleine Peyroux

**MADELEINE PEYROUX** (vocals and guitar) continues her musical journey twenty years after her recording debut, *Dreamland*. She explores beyond the ordinary with *Secular Hymns*, a spirited and soulful masterwork of loping, skipping, sassy, feisty, and sexy tunes delivered in a captivating mélange of funk, blues, and jazz. With her trio that had been touring together for two years—electric guitarist Jon Herington and upright bassist Barak Mori—Peyroux set out to record in a live setting a collection of songs that have their own hymn-like stories of self-awareness and inner dialogue, a communal consciousness and a spiritual essence.

“Music has been our spiritual life,” she says. “So I think of these as hymns, secular hymns—songs that are very individual, personal, introverted.”

With her seductively expressive voice, Peyroux intimately renders tunes by seminal blues artists (two penned by Willie Dixon and one by Lil Green), the classic gospel singer Sister Rosetta Tharpe, the under-the-radar dub star Linton Kwesi Johnson, three renowned contemporary composers (Tom Waits, Townes Van Zandt, Allen Toussaint), the 19th-century composer Stephen Foster (considered to be the first great songwriter in America) and ending with a traditional African-American spiritual.

Inspiration for the album came when Peyroux and her trio performed in Saint Mary’s Church. “At the sound check, I was singing Randy Newman’s song ‘Guilty,’ and it was amazing the way my voice sounded in the cavernous room,” Peyroux says. “It has a wood ceiling that gave my voice a reverb. My live engineer Doug Dawson told me I should make a record there.”

Fresh from the rarefied experience of performing their songbook there, a few months later, they all returned to the church with Peyroux wanting to document the secular hymnal she and her band had been developing on the road. “We had all become very close, and we were stretching to come up with new sounds,” the acoustic guitarist says, noting that she had added a guilele (an acoustic, nylon-stringed tenor ukulele) to the voice of the band. “Jon became very versatile on the guitar and Barak was good with the bow. Plus they both like to sing.”

Peyroux booked the 200-seat church for three days—first day for set up and sound check, second for a free live show for townspeople that was recorded, and third to recut new live takes sans audience if needed. “It was a blast playing with Jon and Barak and so much had to do with the interplay among us,” says Peyroux. “It’s a recording that reflects the organic way we had been working as a trio on the arrangements of these songs.”

While noting that she veers away from being “the normal jazz trio,” Peyroux nonetheless brings her jazz sensibility into roots music territory in such a moving way that she captures the celebration and praise implied in the songs—a special 10-song collection of bona fide *Secular Hymns*.

**JON HERINGTON** (guitar) is the veteran touring and recording guitarist for Steely Dan and The Dukes of September Rhythm Revue (featuring Donald Fagen, Boz Scaggs, and Michael McDonald), and the lead singer, guitarist, and songwriter for the New York City-based Jon Herington Band. Herington’s newest solo release *Time On My Hands* (nominated for *Vintage Guitar* magazine’s “Album of the Year” for the 2013 Hall

of Fame) reflects the bluesy, driving rock that had its gestation in the club scene, and is now available at jonherington.com, Amazon, and on iTunes. The undeniable chemistry of the band, built on a lifetime of collaboration with Dennis Espantman on bass and Frank Pagano on drums, is clearly evident in this collection of 10 original songs.

Herington's love for music surfaced early, and he studied piano, saxophone, and harmony in his grade school years. Just before his high school years, however, he developed a passion for pop music and the electric guitar, and soon was writing songs and performing with his own band near his New Jersey Shore home doing opening slots for local hero Bruce Springsteen, beginning a performing career that has continued ever since. College followed, with extensive musical studies in both classical and jazz composition and theory at Rutgers University, and private jazz guitar study, with the help of a National Endowment for the Arts grant, with the late, great jazz guitarist, Harry Leahey. Next came several years of study with the late Dennis Sandole, the acclaimed music teacher from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania who once taught the late greats James Moody and John Coltrane.

**BARAK MORI** (bass) has been one of the New York jazz scene's most sought-after musicians since 1998. Born in Tel Aviv, Israel, in 1975, Mori began playing the organ at age seven, and by the age of 13 was playing jazz on the guitar and electric bass. At age 15, in addition to his jazz studies, Mori began his classical training on the acoustic bass. By the time Mori had graduated from the Thelma Yelin School of the Arts, he had already played professionally at the world-renowned Red Sea Jazz Festival and toured internationally with the Young Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1996, Mori joined Israel's most prestigious jazz band led by saxophonist Walter Blanding, Jr. In 1998, he received a scholarship to study at the New School University. Residing in New York for the past 16 years, Mori has performed and recorded alongside many distinguished artists such as Benny Green, Peter Bernstein, Eric Reed, Paula West, Kenny Washington, David Hazeltine, Jim Rotondi, Peter Cincotti, Marcus Printup, and Madeleine Peyroux.