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Note: Photos available at <http://mccallumtheatre.com/index.php/media>

Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder
McCallum Theatre
Thursday – March 12 – 8:00pm

Palm Desert, CA – The McCallum Theatre welcomes country/bluegrass legend Ricky Skaggs, with his band of virtuoso pickers, Kentucky Thunder, to Palm Desert at 8:00pm, Thursday, March 12. The show is made possible through the generosity of Marshall and Anne Silverstein.

Ricky Skaggs' career is easily among the most significant in recent country music history. He has 15 Grammy Awards to his credit, and he was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2018. Legendary guitarist Chet Atkins once credited Skaggs with "singlehandedly saving country music." His life's path has taken him to various musical genres, from where it all began in bluegrass music, to striking out on new musical journeys, while still leaving his musical roots intact.

Born July 18, 1954, in Cordell, Ky., Skaggs showed signs of future stardom at an early age, playing mandolin onstage with bluegrass pioneer Bill Monroe at 6 and appearing on TV with Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs at 7. He emerged as a professional bluegrass musician in 1971, when he and his friend Keith Whitley were invited to join Ralph Stanley's band the Clinch Mountain Boys. Skaggs then went on to record and perform with progressive bluegrass acts like the Country Gentlemen and J.D. Crowe and the New South, whose self-titled 1975 Rounder Records debut album was instantly recognized as a landmark bluegrass achievement. He then led Boone Creek, which also featured Dobro ace and fellow New South alumnus Jerry Douglas.

Skaggs turned to more mainstream country in the late '70s when he joined Emmylou Harris' Hot Band, replacing Rodney Crowell. He became a recording artist in his own right in 1981 when his Epic label debut album *Waitin' for the Sun to Shine* topped the country charts and yielded a pair of No. 1 hits. Overall, his stay at Epic Records would result in a total of 12 No. 1 hits. Additionally, he garnered eight Country Music Association Awards—including the coveted Entertainer of the Year trophy in 1985.

Skaggs fit right in with young "new traditionalist" '80s artists like Randy Travis, and helped rejuvenate the country music genre after the "Urban Cowboy" period. But Skaggs put his own stamp on the country format by infusing his bluegrass and traditional country music roots into the contemporary Nashville sound.

Skaggs' 1997 album *Bluegrass Rules!*, released on his newly formed Skaggs Family Records label, marked a triumphant return to bluegrass which he's solidified ever since

with a series of Grammy Award-winning albums, recorded with his amazing bluegrass band, Kentucky Thunder (eight-time winners of the IBMA Instrumental Group of the Year'). Skaggs' label has also served as a home for similar bluegrass and roots music-oriented artists including The Whites.

Skaggs counts the current configuration of Kentucky Thunder among the best group of musicians he has ever worked with. "This group of guys meets my approval every night," Ricky says. "Each and every one of the pickers in Kentucky Thunder totally amazes me in every show ... and that, to me, outweighs any award we could ever win." The all-star lineup of Kentucky Thunder includes Paul Brewster (tenor vocals, rhythm guitar), Russ Carson (banjo), Jake Workman (lead guitar), Mike Barnett (fiddle), Dennis Parker (baritone vocals, guitar) and Jeff Picker (bass, bass vocals).

www.rickyskaggs.com

Tickets for Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder are priced at \$65, \$45 and \$25. Tickets are available at the Theatre's website at www.mccallumtheatre.com or by calling the McCallum Theatre Box Office at (760) 340-2787. The McCallum Theatre, located at 73000 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert CA 92260, accepts payment by cash, personal check, VISA, MasterCard, Discover and American Express.

*The McCallum Theatre Box Office, its phone center and website, are the **only** authorized outlets for tickets to performances presented at the Theatre. Tickets purchased from any other sources, such as brokers or secondary market websites, are purchased at consumer's own risk and cannot be guaranteed as valid.*

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