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CJE Presents "Avant Gershwin" with Special Guest Patti Austin

*THE CHICAGO JAZZ ENSEMBLE,
AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JON FADDIS,
CELEBRATE THE 10th AMERICAN HERITAGE JAZZ SERIES
WITH PATTI AUSTIN'S AVANT GERSHWIN
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14*

CHICAGO, IL, October 12, 2008 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Patti Austin and The Chicago Jazz Ensemble: Avant Gershwin kicks off the 10th American Heritage Jazz Series with Jon Faddis and The Chicago Jazz Ensemble (CJE), featuring music from Austin's celebrated Grammy-winning CD, "Avant Gershwin," on Friday, November 14, at 8:00 pm at the Harris Theater, 205 East Randolph, Chicago. In addition, Faddis and music aficionado, writer and broadcaster Neil Tesser will present a pre-concert conversation about the evening's performance at 7:00 pm.

"Patti and I first worked together in New York studios in the 1970s, and I've been an admirer and fan of hers ever since," said Faddis. "Her singing reminds me of Ella Fitzgerald in many ways; like Ella, Patti is very musical and possesses a beautiful and versatile instrument. She sings with impeccable taste, intonation and timing - she can really make a lyric come to life."

With nine Grammy nominations in the Best Jazz Vocal album category, Patti Austin took home the coveted award this year for her Gershwin tribute. Singing "Lady Be Good," "Swanee," "Who Cares," "Funny Face" and others, she offers a delectable tribute to the Gershwin legacy. A staple of pop, R&B and jazz over the past 30 years, the versatile singer's career takes listeners on a marvelous musical journey while drawing wisdom and inspiration from the Great American Songbook.

Austin was applauded for her duet with George Benson on "Moody's Mood for Love" in 1980. She sang backgrounds for sessions with Houston Person, Noel Pointer, Ralph McDonald, Angela Bofill, and Roberta Flack and did vocals on Quincy Jones' renowned album, "The Dude." And, who could forget her heart-filled renderings, "How Do You Keep the Music Playing?" and "Baby, Come to Me" with James Ingram? Other recent albums include "Intimate Patti Austin" and "Love Collection: Collector's Series." On June 21, 2008, she released a single, "The Grace of God," a highlight of the AARP Songs of Soul and Inspiration Event, which features Austin, Yolanda Adams, Shirley Caesar, Chaka Khan, Queen Latifah and others. She makes a stop in Chicago amid a full schedule that includes concerts in the U.S., the Caribbean and Europe.

The 10th anniversary series also includes Paquito D'Rivera and The Chicago Jazz Ensemble: Commemorating Goodman, Celebrating Swing & Latin, Friday, December 12, 2008; The Great American Songbook featuring The Chicago Jazz Ensemble's Bobbi Wilsyn, Friday, February 20, 2009; and The Art of the Composer: Music by William Russo and Frank Foster on Friday, March 20, 2009.

On June 5, 2009, at 8 pm, the CJE takes the stage at Symphony Center for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Echoes of Nations: Dvořák Festival in a performance of Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington: "Black, Brown and Beige" and "The New Orleans Suite." In addition, the CJE travels to Carrollton, GA, for a performance at the Townsend Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday, January 24, 2009, at 7:30 pm.

The Chicago Jazz Ensemble is: JON FADDIS, Artistic Director & trumpet; alto saxophones, DAN NICHOLSON and JARRARD HARRIS; tenor saxophones, PAT MALLINGER and ROB DENTY; baritone saxophone, BRIAN SJOERDINGA; trombones, AUDREY MORRISON, TIM COFFMAN, TRACY KIRK, and ANDY BAKER, bass trombone, JOHN BLANE; trumpets, MARK OLEN, LARRY BOWEN, SCOTT HALL, ART HOYLE and PHAREZ WHITTED; piano, PETER SAXE; guitar, FRANK DAWSON; bass, DAN ANDERSON; drums, DANA HALL; vocals, BOBBI WILSYN.

The Harris Theater for Music and Dance is located at 205 East Randolph on the southeast corner of Chicago's Millennium Park. Tickets for this series are \$15 - \$45, with a 10% discount to senior citizens and students and a 20% discount to groups

of 10 or more. Tickets can be purchased at (312) 369-6600, (312) 334-7777 or www.harristheaterchicago.com. Symphony Center is located at 220 South Michigan Avenue. For tickets and more information on The CJE's concert at Symphony Center, visit www.cso.org or call (312) 294-3000.

The CJE, in residence at Columbia College Chicago, is sponsored in part by Downbeat, Schilke Music Products, MacArthur Fund for Arts & Culture at Prince, Illinois Arts Council, The Chicago Community Trust, Polk Bros Foundation, Louis Armstrong Education Foundation, The Robert Pritzker Family Foundation, The Sara Lee Foundation and media sponsor WDCB/90.9 FM.

Log on to www.chicagojazzensemble.com for more information on the 10th American Heritage Jazz Series or call (312) 369-6270.