

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY HONORS METLIFE AND CONGRESSMAN FRANK PALLONE, JR.

Saturday, June 1, 2019

New Brunswick, NJ (May 13, 2019)— State Theatre New Jersey will honor **MetLife** and **Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr.** at the **2019 State Theatre Benefit Gala** on **Saturday, June 1, 2019** featuring Tony® and Grammy Award®-winning jazz vocalist **Dee Dee Bridgewater** and pianist **Bill Charlap**.

“We are honored to receive this award from the State Theatre,” said **Dennis White, President & CEO, MetLife Foundation**. “MetLife and MetLife Foundation are committed to supporting arts venues and programs that strengthen communities where MetLife employees and customers live and work.”

“I am honored to be one of this year’s honorees at the State Theatre Gala,” said **Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr.** “The State Theatre is one of New Jersey’s great cultural institutions and I applaud for them for being a vibrant part of this state’s arts community for almost 100 years.”

“The two honorees have made remarkable contributions to the arts and our community,” said **Sarah K. Chaplin, State Theatre New Jersey President & CEO**. “MetLife’s commitment to strong communities and Congressman Frank Pallone’s dedication to all of the arts in New Jersey are truly inspiring and we look forward to celebrating their contributions.”

Gala Information

The Gala festivities begin at 6pm at State Theatre New Jersey with the MetLife Vaudeville Cocktail Hour featuring live music and big band musicians, prohibition cocktails, gourmet hors d’oeuvres, and dancing. At 7pm, following the cocktail hour, guests will head over to The Heldrich Hotel for dinner, a silent auction, and an intimate performance featuring Dee Dee Bridgewater and Bill Charlap.

The Benefit Gala, State Theatre New Jersey’s biggest annual event, underwrites the State Theatre’s artistically-acclaimed programming and nationally-recognized education programs. **A portion of each ticket price represents a tax-deductible contribution to the State**

Theatre. *Benefit Gala tickets start at \$700. For more information or to reserve Benefit Gala tickets email rsvp@stnj.org*

The 2019 Benefit Gala Co-Chairs are **John S. Fitzgerald** (*Magyar Bank*) and **John Reissner** (*Magyar Bank*), Joining the State Theatre for this year's Gala as Honorary Chairs are **New Jersey Governor Philip D. Murphy** and **First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy**.

About the Gala Artists

Over the course of a multifaceted career spanning four decades, Grammy® and Tony® Award-winning jazz giant **Dee Dee Bridgewater** has ascended to the upper echelon of vocalists, putting her unique spin on standards, as well as taking intrepid leaps of faith in re-envisioning jazz classics. Ever the fearless voyager, explorer, pioneer, and keeper of tradition, the three-time Grammy®-winner recently won the Grammy® for Best Jazz Vocal Album for *Eleanora Fagan (1915-1959): To Billie With Love From Dee Dee*. Bridgewater earned her first professional experience as a member of the legendary Thad Jones/Mel Louis Big Band, and throughout the 70s she performed with such jazz notables as Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon, and Dizzy Gillespie.

One of the world's premier jazz pianists, **Bill Charlap** has performed and recorded with many leading artists of our time, ranging from jazz masters Phil Woods and Wynton Marsalis to singers Tony Bennett and Barbra Streisand. Since 1997, he has led the Bill Charlap Trio with bassist Peter Washington and drummer Kenny Washington, now recognized as one of the leading groups in jazz. Charlap is the artistic director of New York City's Jazz in July Festival at the 92nd Street Y, and he has produced concerts for Jazz at Lincoln Center, the JVC Jazz Festival and the Hollywood Bowl.

About State Theatre New Jersey

The theater exists to enrich people's lives, contribute to a vital urban environment, and build future audiences by presenting the finest performing artists and entertainers and fostering lifetime appreciation for the performing arts through arts education. State Theatre New Jersey's programs are made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Grant funding has been provided by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders through a grant award from the Middlesex County Cultural and Arts Trust Fund. United is the official airline of the State Theatre.

STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY

Creating Extraordinary Experiences Through the Power of Live Performance

15 Livingston Ave

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

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PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS FURNISHED UPON REQUEST

Please contact Kelly Blithe at

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Information in this release is current as of May 13, 2019.

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