

Brownie McGhee and John Hammond to perform; sponsored by University Events

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FOLK ARTISTS BROWNIE MCGHEE AND JOHN HAMMOND TEAM UP TO PLAY AT UCSD ON NOV. 18

Legendary blues entertainer Brownie McGhee will appear with champion Delta blues singer John Hammond, playing guitar and harmonica, at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18, in the University of California, San Diego Mandeville Auditorium.

McGhee, who began his career nearly 50 years ago singing, playing and hitchhiking across the southeast, landed in New York City in the early 1940s. There he met with other soon-to-be folk greats Pete Seeger, Josh White, Lee Hays, Betty Sanders, Woodie Guthrie, and Huddie (Leadbelly) Ledbetter.

Since those early years of the American folk music genre, McGhee has written and recorded several well-known blues hits. "My Fault," a 73 rpm single for Savoy Records, hit the top of the tin pan alley charts in the late 1940s. He has since recorded for every major label including some in England, Denmark and Germany. Among the best known songs written by McGhee are "Baseball Boogie" (1947), "My Fault" (1948), "So Much Trouble" (1953), "Diamond Ring" (1953), "Walk On" (1958), and "Blues Had a Baby" (1960).

McGhee set a rigorous tour schedule for the past 40 years or more, and for decades shared the stage with the late folk artist Sonny Terry. McGhee has toured every state in the union, playing concert halls in Europe, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, India and Japan, and has made special performances in New York City's Town Hall, Carnegie Hall, and Apollo Theatre.

McGhee has played with legendary musicians, such as Josh White, Big Bill Broonzy, Lonnie Johnson, Muddy Waters, Leadbelly, and B.B. King. From 1955-57 he appeared in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" in New York City, and later toured with the show. From 1962-65, he toured with the Harry Belafonte Show. Recently his touring schedule included Hawaii, Australia, and New Zealand. He also performed at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, and for the Prairie Home Companion and Mountain Stage radio shows.

Movie appearances by McGhee began with "A Face in the Crowd," with Andy Griffith and went on to include "Butch and the Preacher" with Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier, "The Jerk" with Steve Martin, and most recently he played the character Toot Sweet in "Angel Heart," starring Micky Rourke. McGhee has made television commercials for Alka-Seltzer and Nescafe, and has made numerous television appearances, including "Midnight Special." He was given the National Endowment for the Arts Heritage Award in 1982.

John Hammond has been a well-known folk artist for the past 25 years. His musical style is evocative of earlier greats Big Bill Broonzy, Sleepy John Estes and Willie McTell. During a recent interview, Hammond was quoted as saying, "There isn't much you can do with the blues. If you change it, it isn't blues anymore. Too little and it becomes a ballad. Too much and it becomes rhythm and blues. You can't hoke it up. It's just a simple style. It's an American classical art form and I don't want to change it. I just want to be able to do it better, to do right by it."

And do right by it he does. Cash Box says, "John Hammond is one of the best blues singers and guitar players in America today, with soulful, frenetic slide work and aching, right-on-target vocals.

Brownie McGhee and John Hammond are brought to San Diego by the UCSD University Events Office. Tickets for this performance will be available from the UCSD Box Office (534-4559) or from Ticket Master outlets. General admission is \$11; seniors, \$9; students, \$7.

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