



UMS and Ann Arbor Skatepark to Host Live Skateboarding and Music Celebration Jason Moran & The Bandwagon to Perform in Collaboration with Professional Skateboarders

ANN ARBOR, MI (August 2, 2016)— The **University Musical Society (UMS)** and **Friends of the Ann Arbor Skatepark** are pleased to present a groundbreaking event showcasing the art of improvisation that's prevalent in both music and skateboarding. The event, called ***Falling Up and Getting Down***, will take place on **Sunday, September 11** at the **Ann Arbor Skatepark** (350 N. Maple Road). Nationally- and internationally-celebrated professional skateboarders will improvise to an inspired blend of jazz, R&B, and hip-hop, performed live by the Kennedy Center's artistic director of jazz **Jason Moran** and his band, **The Bandwagon**. Featured skateboarders include **Andy Macdonald, Alex Sorgente, Ron Allen, Chuck Treece, Jordyn Barratt, and Natalie Krishna Das**. The exhibition begins at 2:30 pm and will also include DJ sets by **Tadd Mullinix** and **Alvin Hill**. The event is presented in partnership with the City of Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation.

Admission is free, but advanced registration is requested at ums.org/skatepark.

The event serves as the culmination of the Ann Arbor Skatepark's third annual celebration and is a chance for UMS and Friends of the Ann Arbor Skatepark to give back to the community. "We are so excited to partner with UMS to bring such a unique experience to our community," said Friends of the Ann Arbor Skatepark president Josh Meisler. "It's a true realization of our vision for the park: a place where athletes and community members of all walks of life can come together to enjoy a space that's intended to serve everyone."

Beyond the live performance and skateboarding exhibitions, activities include open skate, DJ sets by Tadd Mullinix and Alvin Hill, food trucks, vendors, raffles, a skateboard art museum, and more.

UMS senior programming manager Mark Jacobson noted, “There is something very special about this poetic play on improvisation that will shine through as the athletes and artists play off of one another. My hope is that people will be inspired by how Jason Moran and the musicians motivate and push the skateboarders, and how the skateboarders fuel and energize the musicians in return. Some of the featured athletes are accomplished musicians in their own right and we’re looking forward to showcasing that, too. I am thrilled that we are able to bring an open-to-the-public event of this scale to the Ann Arbor community in one of its greatest public parks.”

This event kicks off UMS’s 138th season, which features 66 performances through the end of April 2017.

ABOUT ANN ARBOR SKATEPARK

The Ann Arbor Skatepark opened on June 21, 2014. It's a 30,000 square-foot skateboarding facility that is free to use and open to the public. Part of the Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation system, the skatepark is the result of a collaboration of community members including Friends Of The Ann Arbor Skatepark, a nonprofit organization that conceived, raised funds for, designed, and maintains the skatepark, the Washtenaw County Parks Commission, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant, and the City of Ann Arbor. It is located in Veterans Memorial Park and open year-round.

ABOUT UMS

One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. An integral part of the Ann Arbor community, UMS is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Michigan, presenting over 70 music, theater, and dance performances by professional touring artists each season, along with over 100 free educational activities. UMS is part of the University of Michigan’s “Victors for Michigan” campaign, reinforcing its commitment to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness. UMS was awarded the 2014 National Medal of Arts by President Obama.

ABOUT THE FEATURED ARTISTS & SKATEBOARDERS

Jazz pianist **Jason Moran** made his formidable emergence on the music scene in the late 1990s and now serves as the Kennedy Center's artistic director for jazz. He opened UMS's 2013-14 season with a unique performance celebrating the music of Fats Waller at Ann Arbor's Downtown Home & Garden. His unique vision and innovative approach to music is on display with this skateboarding event, which he conceived of to showcase the intersection of the great American skateboard subculture with music and art.

Growing up in 1980s Houston, Moran was obsessed with skateboarding and skateboard videos, which often used a jazz soundtrack. He sees skateboarding and jazz musicians both as great improvisers with an ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances. His band The Bandwagon includes bassist Tarus Mateen and drummer Nasheet Waits.

Andy Macdonald is a pro athlete who has been crowned as skateboarding's World Champion for nine years in the World Cup Skateboarding Series. He has competed in every X Games since its inception and owns 23 medals. Known for his clean image, Andy's work with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America culminated with a speech at the White House, where Andy was the first person ever to ride a skateboard down the smooth marble hallways inside the White House. He now lives in San Diego.

At 18 years old, **Alex Sorgente** is one of the strongest up-and-coming skateboarders of the next generation. A winner of the 2015 WCS Bowlriding title, the Mystic Cup bowl contest in Prague, and a bronze medal at the 2011 World Championships, Alex is a member of the Grind for Life skate team, which provides financial assistance to cancer patients and their families.

Ron Allen is a skateboarding veteran who has been skating since 1975 and is an inspiration to countless athletes who have followed in his footsteps. Based in Oakland, CA, he's been competing at a professional level for over 20 years. He's worked with Jason Moran on two other skateboarding/jazz collaborations and is now also focused on touring his music, in addition to skateboarding.

Chuck Treece is a session musician and professional skateboarder from Philadelphia. He started the 1980s skate punk band McRad, has filled in on drums at a Pearl Jam concert, and has toured with Urge Overkill and Bad Brains. In 2010 he was awarded a Pew Fellowship in the Arts. He was the first African-American skateboarder featured on the cover of skateboarding's *Thrasher* magazine (1984).

Jordyn Barratt took third place this summer at the Vans US Open in skate and is also competing in the surf competition as the first-ever athlete to compete in both events. Now 17, she has been skating since she was 10.

Natalie Krishna Das was born in Los Angeles to an Indian father and an English mother. She turned pro in 2010 and has been featured in five Coca Cola skateboarding commercials. She graduated from Arizona State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a minor in interdisciplinary arts.

--30--

MEDIA CONTACT

Mallory Schirr, Marketing & Media Relations Coordinator

734.647.4020 / mschirr@umich.edu