



The Recording Academy[®]

3030 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90404

www.grammy.com

**THE RECORDING ACADEMY[®] TO HONOR 2016 SPECIAL MERIT
AWARDS RECIPIENTS WITH NEW TELEVISION SPECIAL
"GRAMMY SALUTE TO MUSIC LEGENDS[®]" AS PART OF LANDMARK
"GREAT PERFORMANCES" SERIES ON PBS**

**AWARDS CEREMONY AND TRIBUTE CONCERT TO
TAKE PLACE SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 2016 AT
THE DOLBY THEATER IN LOS ANGELES**

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (March 29, 2016) — [The Recording Academy](http://www.grammy.com)[®] will honor its **2016 Special Merit Awards** recipients with an awards ceremony and live tribute concert on **Saturday, April 23, 2016** at The Dolby Theater in Los Angeles. Dubbed "**GRAMMY Salute to Music Legends**," the event will be produced in partnership with THIRTEEN as part of the "**Great Performances**" series on PBS, set to air later this year. Led by music industry icon Don Was as musical director, the tribute concert will feature rare performances by honorees and never-seen renditions by those they've inspired. Tickets for the event will be on sale via Ticketmaster beginning Tuesday, March 29, 2016 at 10:00 am PST.

This year's Lifetime Achievement Award honorees include **Ruth Brown, Celia Cruz, Earth, Wind & Fire, Herbie Hancock, Jefferson Airplane, Linda Ronstadt**, and **RUN DMC. John Cage, Fred Foster**, and **Chris Strachwitz** are **Trustees Award** honorees; and **EMT** and **Dr. Harvey Fletcher** are **Technical GRAMMY[®] Award** recipients. Also being honored is **Phillip Riggs**, this year's recipient of the **GRAMMY Foundation Music Educator Award**. Performers will be announced shortly.

Previously held during GRAMMY Week, this is the first time that The Recording Academy has celebrated the Special Merit Awards with a stand-alone event and musical tribute. In addition to the tribute concert, special celebrity guests will present recipients their award statues and guests will enjoy never-before-seen video packages celebrating each of the honorees' contributions to the music industry and our cultural heritage.

"For many years now, we've wanted to honor Special Merit Awards recipients on a larger scale with an event like 'GRAMMY Salute to Music Legends,' so I'm delighted to partner with THIRTEEN Productions and PBS to bring this worthy celebration to a bigger stage," said Neil Portnow, President/CEO of The Recording Academy. "The contributions of our honorees are innumerable, and we look forward to an unforgettable evening as we pay tribute to their exceptional accomplishments."

A production of THIRTEEN Productions LLC for WNET, "GRAMMY Salute to Music Legends" will be written by David Wild and directed for television by David Horn, with Mitch Owing as producer, and David Horn and Neil Portnow as executive producers.

The Lifetime Achievement Award honors performers who have made contributions of outstanding artistic significance to the field of recording, while the Trustees Award recognizes such contributions in areas other than performance. Both awards are determined by vote of The Recording Academy's National Board of Trustees. Technical GRAMMY Award recipients are determined by vote of The Academy's Producers & Engineers Wing[®] Advisory Council and Chapter Committees, and are ratified by The Academy's Trustees. The award is presented to individuals and companies who have made contributions of outstanding technical significance to the recording field.

About the Lifetime Achievement Award Honorees:

Ruth Brown* began her musical career in the church choir at the tender age of 4. A singer/songwriter, record producer, composer, and actress noted for bringing a pop music style to R&B music, Brown became one of the undisputed architects of the genre. She recorded a number of hit songs, including "I'll Wait For You," "I Know," "5-10-15 Hours," and "Mambo Baby." She later went on to have a successful theater career.

Celia Cruz* was one of the most popular salsa singers and performers in history. Known internationally as the "Queen of Salsa," the Cuban-American Cruz was a larger-than-life personality. She recorded 23 gold albums and was a recipient of the United States National Medal of Arts. Cruz received three GRAMMY Awards and four Latin GRAMMY Awards.

Six-time GRAMMY winners **Earth, Wind & Fire** were one of the most important and innovative contemporary pop/R&B musical forces of the 20th century. Members Philip Bailey, Larry Dunn, Johnny Graham, Ralph Johnson, Al McKay, Fred White, Maurice White*, Verdine White, and Andrew Woolfolk built the group's distinctive signature sound, which has remained profoundly influential. Successfully breaking down all musical genre boundaries since forming in 1969, they recorded seven #1 R&B singles and eight Top 10 pop albums. Earth Wind & Fire earned more than 50 gold and platinum album certifications and more than 90 million albums worldwide, placing them on the list of best-selling musical artists of all time.

One of the most revered and idiosyncratic figures in jazz, **Herbie Hancock** has been at the forefront almost every development in electronic and acoustic jazz and R&B. A stylistically diverse and ever-intriguing canon of songs, including "Maiden Voyage" and "Rockit," has helped earn him 14 GRAMMY Awards during his impressive five-decade-plus professional solo career.

Marty Balin, Jack Casady, Spencer Dryden*, Paul Kantner*, Jorma Kaukonen, and Grace Slick comprised **Jefferson Airplane**, pioneers of counterculture-era psychedelic rock. Emerging from the San Francisco scene to achieve international mainstream success, performing at the three most famous American rock festivals of the 1960s — Monterey (1967), Woodstock (1969), and Altamont (1969). Their 1967 album *Surrealistic Pillow* is regarded as one of the key recordings of the "Summer of Love." Two hits from that album, "Somebody To Love" and "White Rabbit," are among *Rolling Stone's* "500 Greatest Songs of All Time."

With roots in the Los Angeles country and folk-rock scenes, **Linda Ronstadt** is one of the most popular interpretive singers of all time, earning a string of platinum-selling albums and Top 40 singles. Throughout the 1970s, her laid-back pop never lost sight of her folky roots, yet as Ronstadt moved into the 1980s, she began to change her sound with the times, adding new wave influences. Her later years saw the 10-time GRAMMY winner exploring traditional pop, Latin, and musical theater.

RUN DMC, comprising of Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Jason "Jam Master Jay" Mizell*, and Joseph "Reverend Run" Simmons, were one of the most influential and best-known acts in the history of rap.

They were the first group in the genre to have a gold album (*RUN DMC.*, 1984) and to be nominated for a GRAMMY Award. They were also the first hip-hop group to earn a platinum record (*King Of Rock*, 1985), and the first to earn multiplatinum certification (*Raising Hell*, 1986).

About the Trustees Award Honorees:

John Cage* was an avant-garde composer whose inventive works and unorthodox ideas profoundly influenced the entire music industry. His innovative ideas on composition and performance influenced a broad spectrum of artists including fellow musicians, dancers, choreographers, painters and more. Cage remained on the leading edge of both playful and profound experimentalism for the greater part of his career. One of Cage's best-known and most sonically intriguing innovations, the prepared piano, has become an almost commonplace compositional resource.

Music entrepreneur **Fred Foster** contributed a great deal to the Nashville music scene of the 1960s and 1970s as a producer and as the head of one of the city's strongest independent labels, Monument Records. He is best known for producing many classic hits by Roy Orbison. He also played a vital role in the career of Kris Kristofferson, and worked with Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton, Ray Stevens, among others. From 1960 to 1964, Foster produced the overwhelming bulk of hit songs with which Orbison is associated: "Only The Lonely," "In Dreams," "Running Scared," "Blue Bayou," "Blue Angel," "Dream Baby," "Crying," "Candy Man," "Mean Woman Blues," "It's Over," and "Oh, Pretty Woman."

Chris Strachwitz has made his living celebrating the music he loves – music that forms the fabric of both American and international culture. He is the founder of Arhoolie Records and produces much of the content he releases. To blues fans he is a legend, releasing seminal works by Mississippi Fred McDowell, Mance Lipscomb, Charlie Musselwhite, Rebirth Brass Band, Big Joe Williams, Big Mama Thornton, Lightnin' Hopkins, Earl Hooker, and Elizabeth Cotten, and many others. Strachwitz also produces Cajun music, highlighted by his releases by Clifton Chenier, and also focused on Mexican recordings, especially Norteño music.

About the Technical GRAMMY Award Recipients:

Known as the father of stereophonic sound, **Dr. Harvey Fletcher*** was a prominent physicist, credited with inventing the hearing aid and the first audiometer. Through his research, he was able to document and demonstrate the spatial effects of sound, which he called auditory perspective, or stereo. However, it was his profound interest in music that led Fletcher to partner with Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and this collaboration produced more than 100 stereo recordings. In his tests, listeners were often unable to distinguish the difference between the live orchestra and the recordings.

EMT (Elektro-Mess-Technik) was founded in Berlin in 1940, originally manufacturing high-end pro measuring devices and turntables for broadcast, television, and recording studios. In 1957, the company made a huge breakthrough with the release of the EMT 140 Reverberation Unit — the first plate reverb. Upon its introduction, the EMT 140 Reverberation Unit quickly garnered popularity, providing a smoother substitute to spring reverb systems, simplifying the process of affecting recorded sound while providing the engineer with a more versatile and customizable interface than acoustic chambers. With the plates' introduction, the sound of popular music changed dramatically as evident in English recordings made at Abbey Road by the Beatles and Pink Floyd, as well as RCA Victor recordings by Nashville's Chet Atkins and many others.

***Denotes posthumous award**

Established in 1957, The Recording Academy is an organization of musicians, songwriters, producers, engineers, and recording professionals dedicated to improving the cultural condition and quality of life for music and its makers. Internationally known for the GRAMMY Awards — the preeminent peer-recognized award for musical excellence and the most credible brand in music — The Recording Academy is responsible for groundbreaking professional development, cultural enrichment, advocacy, education, and human services programs. The Academy continues to focus on its mission of recognizing musical excellence, advocating for the well-being of music makers and ensuring music remains an indelible part of our culture. For more information about The Academy, please visit www.grammy.com. For breaking news and exclusive content, follow @TheGRAMMYS on [Twitter](#), "like" The GRAMMYS on [Facebook](#) and join The GRAMMYS' social communities on [Google+](#), [Instagram](#), [Tumblr](#), and [YouTube](#).

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