



PRESS RELEASE

200 E. Saint John Street
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GRAMMY Award-Winner to Take Bluegrass Spartanburg Stage

SPARTANBURG, SC (September 27, 2021). The Spartanburg Philharmonic opens its Bluegrass Spartanburg season on October 16, 2021 with GRAMMY-Award winner, Bluegrass Hall of Famer, vocalist, and multi-instrumentalist, **Sam Bush** at Twichell Auditorium on the campus of Converse University. "The goal of Bluegrass Spartanburg has always been to attract the best bands and musicians in the Bluegrass industry," says Kathryn Boucher, Executive Director. "We are thrilled to bring Sam Bush to our community, who is not only one of the premier talents in music but who is also always impressive to watch. He and his band continue to be at the top of their game, and it will be an incredible night of music."

Since picking up the fiddle as a young boy, music has undoubtedly been Sam Bush's calling. Inspired by the musicians he watched on television at the Grand Ole Opry, he became a three-time national champion in the junior division of the National Oldtime Fiddler's Contest. Bush recorded his first album, Poor Richard's Almanac, his senior year in high school. But it was at the spring 1970 Fiddlers Convention in Union Grove, NC, where he first became inspired by bluegrass, specifically the rock-inspired progressive sound he heard performed by the New Deal String Band. Country titan Roy Acuff even offered him a spot in his band, but Sam Bush turned him down. He'd be struck by the Bluegrass bug, admiring the grace of legends Flatt & Scruggs and the sound of Bill Monroe.



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Sam Went on to perform with the Bluegrass Alliance before forming his own band, New Grass Revival, which would become one of the top bands in bluegrass. While many call him the "Father of Progressive Bluegrass," Sam insists that his sound was not new. "There were already people that had deviated from Bill Monroe's style of bluegrass," Bush explains. "If anything, we were reviving a newgrass style that had already been started. Our kind of music tended to come from the idea of long jams and rock-&-roll songs." Bush was the newgrass commando, incorporating a variety of genres into the repertoire. He discovered a sibling similarity with Marley and The Wailers' reggae rhythms and, accordingly, developed an ear-turning original style of mandolin playing.

Bush has also enjoyed performing with other top-tier musicians throughout his career, continually crossing genres in his quest to play the best music he possibly could. After leaving New Grass Revival, he spent five years working with Emmylou Harris' Nash Ramblers, then a stint with Lyle Lovett. During this time, Sam Bush also took home three-straight International Bluegrass Music Associations' (IBMA) Mandolin Player of the Year award, 1990-92 (and a fourth in 2007) and two GRAMMY awards in 1992 and 1996 (a third in 2007). In 1995 he reunited with former New Grass band-mate Béla Fleck, now a burgeoning superstar, and toured with the Flecktones, reigniting his penchant for improvisation. Then, finally, after a quarter-century of making music with New Grass Revival and collaborating with other bands, Sam Bush went solo.

He's released seven albums and a live DVD over the past two decades. In 2009, the Americana Music Association awarded Bush the Lifetime Achievement Award for Instrumentalist. Punch Brothers, Steep Canyon Rangers, and Greensky Bluegrass are just a few present-day bluegrass vanguards among so many musicians he's influenced. His performances are annual highlights of the festival circuit. "With this band, I have now I am free to try anything. Looking back at the last 50 years of playing newgrass, with the elements of jazz improvisation and rock-&-roll, jamming, playing with New Grass Revival, Leon, and Emmylou, it's a culmination of all of that," says Bush. "I can unapologetically stand onstage and feel I'm representing those songs well."



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Tickets to see the Sam Bush Band are \$40-\$55 and can be purchased online via the Spartanburg Philharmonic website or by calling the Converse University Box Office at 864-596-9724. Seating for the concert is limited to allow the audience to sit socially distanced, and masks are required throughout the show. More information is at spartanburgphilharmonic.org/events/Sam-Bush.

ABOUT SPARTANBURG PHILHARMONIC

An arts organization whose mission is to enrich, inspire, and educate through live performances of high-quality music, the Spartanburg Philharmonic partners with a variety of community, health, and education organizations to provide opportunities for all ages and abilities to enjoy. Amongst the programs are Music Sandwiched In, a free and open to the public lunch hour series; the Spartanburg Philharmonic Youth Orchestras, offering instrumental music education to students grades 6 through 12 in 16 different schools across three counties; and Carnegie Hall's Weill Institute's Link Up program, providing a music curriculum to 4th graders throughout Spartanburg County.
www.spartanburgphilharmonic.org

ABOUT BLUEGRASS SPARTANBURG

Bluegrass Spartanburg, an entity of Spartanburg Philharmonic, was established in 2015 by a small group of bluegrass fans living in our town. Their goal was to bring nationally recognized and award-winning bluegrass entertainment to our community. Today, Bluegrass Spartanburg welcomes a variety of bluegrass bands that span from traditional to contemporary, bringing their down-home roots mixed with rock-infused jams for all to enjoy. www.SPhil.org/Bluegrass