

SAVANNAH MUSIC

The common language of jazz

Dianne Reeves and Chico Pinheiro join forces to perform at festival

BY LINDA SICKLER

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Expect the unexpected from jazz singer Dianne Reeves.

"When people come to see me, they always say, 'We don't know what you're going to do' and I say, 'Even I don't know what I'm going to do!'" Reeves said. "I like to create a new experience. I'm a storyteller."

Reeves will perform at the Savannah Music Festival on April 2 as part of "Jazz Meets Brazil." Though many critics consider her to be the finest jazz singer performing today, she remains modest about her achievements.

"My family was pretty musical," Reeves said. "If they weren't involved directly in music, they listened to good music. I knew I loved to sing and that people were moved by it."

Many artists and styles of music influenced Reeves. "It was the times rather than one specific artist," she said. "In the times I grew up, it was really important to be the best you could be, to develop your own uniqueness."

"I listened to jazz, classical, rhythm and blues and Motown because Motown was huge," she said. "I loved the music because there was an aspect of freedom in it in terms of being able to tell a story."

Appearing in the film "Good Night and Good Luck" was a career highlight for Reeves. "I sang live in the film and delivered my lines as an actor, which was exciting, as was being directed by George Clooney," she said.

"I love Savannah and I'm looking forward to being there," Reeves said. "I'm going



Chico Pinheiro



Dianne Reeves

Photos courtesy of Savannah Music Festival



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IF YOU GO

What: "Jazz Meets Brazil" with Dianne Reeves and Chico Pinheiro.

When: April 2 at 8 p.m.

Where: Lucas Theatre, 32 Abercorn St.

Cost: \$20, \$25, \$40, \$50 and \$65.

Info: Tickets for the Savannah Music Festival can be purchased online at www.savannahmusicfestival.org, by phone at 912-525-5050, at the Savannah Box Office window at 216 E. Broughton St., or at the door one hour prior to the event.

to do a little shopping before the show."

At the festival, Reeves will share the stage with one of the leading figures in modern Brazilian music, guitarist/composer/arranger Chico Pinheiro. At the age of 6, Pinheiro taught himself to play guitar and piano, and he began playing and recording professionally at 14.

"My mom used to have an old nylon string guitar at home, so one day I took it and started playing," Pinheiro said. "I remember trying to figure out some chords, some lines. I

ended up figuring out how to play 'Dear Prudence' from the Beatles' White Album."

Although he was a success, Pinheiro moved to Boston and earned a music degree at the Berklee School of Music. "At 18, I was already pretty much established as a sideman musician in São Paulo, playing with a lot of different artists, but at the time I was still feeling that I could go much deeper as far as my musical knowledge," he said.

"I had the chance to play with some great musicians from America, Asia, Europe and Africa, and we would use this common language, the improvisation, the jazz idiom," Pinheiro said. "But at the same time, it was very clear to me that each one of us were bringing something unique, our own heritages."

"That was a very cool thing to realize because it had a great deal to do with helping me understand who I was as a musician, artist, and person," he said.

It was an incredible experience."

Pinheiro equally enjoys playing, composing and arranging. "They're very different processes and I love them all," he said. "I believe they're complementary to each other."

Although Reeves has appeared on Pinheiro's albums, this will be the first time they've appeared onstage together. "She is an absolutely amazing artist, an incredible singer," he said. "I can't wait to make some music with her, it will be an absolute pleasure and honor."