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A SPECIAL NIGHT WITH GEORGE BENSON AT REICHHOLD CENTER

Reichhold Center for the Arts presents a special evening performance with jazz great George Benson on Thursday, November 29, 2007 at 8 p.m.

Benson has established himself as one of the greatest guitarists in jazz. His versatility extends to the pop world where his smooth lyrics spawned such hits as “*The Greatest Love of All*,” “*This Masquerade*” and “*Give Me the Night*.”

Born in Pittsburg, Pa., Benson began his recording career at age 21 as a jazz guitarist with his first album, “*The New Boss Guitar*,” in 1964. Between 1964 and 1975, Benson released almost 20 jazz albums.

In 1976, Benson’s “*Breezin*” became the first jazz album to attain platinum status. The album also ushered a new audience for Benson with his number one hit “*This Masquerade*” on the pop, jazz and R&B charts. The title track, “*Breezin*” became Benson’s signature jazz set.

Along with “*This Masquerade*,” other songs to reach the top of the charts are “*On Broadway*,” “*Give me the Night*,” and “*Turn Your Love Around*.” His other popular songs include “*Lady Love Me (One More Time)*,” “*In Your Eyes*,” “*Love X Love*,” and “*Never Give up on a Good Thing*.”

Benson is a major influence on many young musicians. He recorded the original version of “*The Greatest Love of All*” in 1977. The song later won fame for Whitney Houston. Benson’s 2004 album, “*Irreplaceable*,” included music written by R&B star Joe and the song, “*Whole Man*,” co-produced by Hakin Bell, son of Kool and the Gang’s founder Robert “Kool” Bell. Benson has also collaborated with Mary J. Blige, Chris Botti and Jill Scott among others.

He has also shared the stage and studio with some of the greatest names in music, such as pianist Joe Sample and soul legend Aretha Franklin. During his early career, Benson played alongside Miles Davis and his mentor Wes Montgomery.

In 2006, Benson teamed with jazz powerhouse and crossover artist Al Jarreau on “*Givin’ It Up*,” featuring covers on songs by Sam Cooke, Billy Holiday and others. The pair also made new arrangement of each others’ biggest hits – Jarreau adding lyrics to and singing Benson’s signature instrumental smash “*Breezin*,” while Benson delivers a lovely instrumental version of Jarreau’s hit “*Mornin*.” The album garnered two Grammy Awards.

In Benson’s 40-plus years in the music business, he has released more than 50 albums. Benson is also a 10-time Grammy Award winner. He received an honorary doctorate degree of music from Berklee College of Music in 1990. In 2007, the Society of Singers awarded him the Satchmo Award, honoring the life and work of Louis Armstrong.

George Benson’s performance at Reichhold Center is sponsored by First Bank, First Insurance, Marriott Frenchman’s Reef Resort, Tropical Shipping, the Virgin Islands Council on the Arts and Innovative Cable TV.

Tickets are \$35, \$45 and \$55. Tickets are available at Modern Music, UVI Bookstore, V.I. Bridal & Tuxedo, Urban Threadz, Essentric Shoe Boutique, Island Video (Nisky), Home Again (Red Hook) and the Reichhold Center Box Office at 693-1559.

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