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For immediate release:

Blues Singer Shemekia Copeland to Play Mondavi Center

March 20, 2007; Davis, California—Blues singer **Shemekia Copeland** may be just 28 years old, but she’s already released three CDs, won five Blues Music Awards, five Living Blues Awards, and *Downbeat* magazine’s “Talent Deserving Wider Recognition” award. She’s also been nominated for a Grammy and been called “the next **Tina Turner**” by rock icon **Robert Plant**. Often compared to a young **Aretha Franklin** or **Etta James**, Copeland will perform with her four-piece band at the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at UC Davis**.

The event will begin at 8 pm on April 20 in the Mondavi Center’s Jackson Hall on the UC Davis campus. Tickets are available from the Mondavi Center Ticket Office at 530.754.ARTS (2787) or online at MondaviArts.org. The event is presented as part of Mondavi Center’s **American Heritage** series.

Shemekia Copeland was born in Harlem, New York in 1979, and is the daughter of Texas blues guitar legend **Johnny Clyde Copeland**. Though her father recognized and encouraged her gift early on—even going so far as to pull an eight-year-old Shemekia on stage to sing at Harlem’s famed Cotton Club—Copeland didn’t really discover her passion for singing till age 15, when health problems began to slow her father down. She began touring with him, participating more and more in the shows, and often receiving rave reviews. “She grabbed the crowd with her powerful voice, poised and intense,” wrote *Blues Revue* at the time.

Copeland stepped out of her father's shadow in 1998 when Alligator Records released her debut CD *Turn the Heat Up*, which received glowing reviews from *Billboard*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Chicago Sun-Times*, and many others. “Nothing short of uncanny,” raved *The Village Voice*. “She roars with a sizzling hot intensity,” wrote *The Boston Globe*.

Her 2000 CD *Wicked* was nominated for a Grammy Award, with the song “It’s 2:00 A.M.” winning the Blues Music Award for Song of the Year. Her follow-up, *Talking to Strangers*, was produced by New Orleans music legend **Dr. John** and reached no. 1 on the *Billboard* Blues Chart. “Copeland blazes through *Talking to Strangers* with fervor and grace,” wrote the *Associated Press*. “Her singing can be as thunderous as Etta James and as mellow as Chaka Khan.”

Copeland’s most recent recording is *The Soul Truth*, an album produced by guitarist **Steve Cropper**, an original member of **Booker T. & the M.G.s** who played on many of the greatest recording sessions of **Wilson Pickett**, **Otis Redding**, **Sam and Dave**, and other greats of ‘60s soul music. The recording has a “Memphis

soul” feeling akin to many of those legendary sessions, and has been described as a “powerful collection of heartfelt, bluesy R&B” (*Dayton Daily News*).

Copeland’s success as a recording artist and touring performer has brought her numerous opportunities to perform on television and in films. She has appeared on the *Late Show with David Letterman* (along with **B.B. King**), on *Late Night with Conan O’Brien*, and also performed on National Public Radio’s *Weekend Edition* and the *CBS Saturday Early Show*. In November 2001, she appeared on *Austin City Limits* to an enthusiastic live audience. She was featured in the **Martin Scorsese**-produced concert film *Lightning in a Bottle*, the PBS television series *The Blues*, and opened a show for the **Rolling Stones** in Chicago.

For her Mondavi Center concert, Copeland will perform with her regular working band, which includes guitarist **Arthur Neilson**, keyboard player **Jeremy Baum**, bassist **Kevin Jenkins**, and drummer **Damon DueWhite**.

“The blues is one of our country’s greatest musical traditions, and that tradition is alive and well in the music of Shemekia Copeland,” said **Don Roth**, the Mondavi Center’s executive director.

What: **Shemekia Copeland**
When: Friday, April 20, 8 pm
Where: Jackson Hall
Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts
University of California, Davis
Admission: \$39/\$34/\$29 Adults • \$19.50/\$17/\$14.50 Students, Children
Tickets/Info: 530.754.ARTS (2787)
866.754.ARTS (toll-free)
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