



## MEDIA RELATIONS CONTACTS

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## FULL SCHEDULE AND IMAGES

<http://mondaviarts.org/press>

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### The Mondavi Center Welcomes Singer Lila Downs

**Davis, Calif.**—Charismatic Mexican-American singer **Lila Downs** performs **Friday, April 3, at 8 p.m.** in **Jackson Hall** of the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts**, UC Davis.

Says **Don Roth**, Mondavi Center executive director, “Lila Downs first impressed Mondavi Center audiences with a stunning opening set for Los Lobos in 2004. Downs is the total package—an astounding vocal range, a compelling stage presence and a superb backing band that seamlessly fuses Latin, jazz and rock.”

**Pricing** is \$45/35/25 for regular tickets and \$22.50/17.50/12.50 for students and children. Purchase tickets online at [MondaviArts.org](http://MondaviArts.org), through the Mondavi Center box office at 530-754-2787 or 866-754-2787 (toll-free), or at the door. Accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. This event is presented as part of the Mondavi Center’s **World Stage: Music** series.

Lila Downs (pronounced LEE-la) is a bicultural singer/songwriter raised in the Mixtec region of Oaxaca (a state in southern Mexico) and in Minnesota. Her mother is a Mixtec Indian, one of 16 native Indian groups in Oaxaca. Her father was a painter/cinematographer/biologist who taught at the University of Minnesota. Exploring and expressing Mexico’s rich culture has been a lifelong passion for Downs.

Living in such varied environments, Downs took after her mother’s stage career by singing mariachi tunes at age 8. Her career continued to evolve, studying voice as a teenager in Los Angeles and then in Oaxaca City at Bellas Artes, before graduating with a double degree in voice and anthropology from the University of Minnesota. But it was only through music that Downs reconciled her heritage.

“It took a long time to decide that I wanted to sing,” she says. “Something needed to motivate me.” That motivation was the songs and stories of the Oaxacan people. Her Mixtec mother spurred Downs to sing songs with “sentimiento”—a deep, almost empathic emotion that has left audiences of all cultures and countries spellbound.

In 1994, Downs met Paul Cohen, ex-circus clown and jazz musician, and together they began composing with folk traditions and contemporary music. Downs and Cohen began recording in 1999, and the CD “La Sandunga” was the result. Then came “Yutu Tata/Tree of Life” (2000), inspired by the mythological account in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Codex Vindobonesis telling of the first Mixtec people being born from trees, and “Border/La Linea” (2001), a collection of songs dedicated to Mexican migrants, exposing the plight of migrant workers as well as the hardships and racism endured by indigenous peoples.

Downs contributed to the music in the movie “Frida,” an Oscar-winning soundtrack, leading her to perform on the Oscar ceremony with Caetano Veloso in 2003. In 2004, Downs and Cohen moved to New York and started collaborating with New York musicians and musicians from Chile, Cuba and Brazil. In 2005, their album “Una Sangre/One Blood” won a Latin GRAMMY. Her most recent CD, “La Cantina: Entre Copa y Copa...,” marks a unique turn, as she focuses on the rich and familiar repertoire of Mexico’s beloved “cancion ranchera” tradition, giving it her particular spin.

- **Lila Downs**
- **Fri, April 3, 8 p.m.**
- **Mondavi Center, Jackson Hall**
- **9399 Old Davis Road, Davis, CA 95616 (GPS)**
- **\$45/35/25 regular; \$22.50/17.50/12.50 students, children**
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