



News & Events

University News & Information

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California

Jan. 10, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: LISA WOSKE

(805)756-7110

Grammy Winning Bluegrass Legend to Play Cohan Center Jan. 29

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA -- Rolling Stone Magazine called Ralph Stanley "a master performer without an expiration date." The Los Angeles Times dubbed him "a cultural treasure."

The Chicago Sun Times declared "Ralph Stanley is undeniably the most important figure in bluegrass music today."

On Saturday, January 29 at the Christopher Cohan Center, Cal Poly Arts presents Grammy winner Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys. Singing high and lonesome, nimbly picking on his banjo, the 77 year-old Stanley will deliver his signature sound -- the last surviving link to pure, old-time mountain music.

After more than 200 albums and 57 years of music-making, bluegrass patriarch Ralph Stanley became a mainstream "overnight success" with his award-winning work on the best-selling movie soundtrack, "O Brother, Where Art Thou?"

Dozens of major artists have recorded duets with Stanley, among them Bob Dylan, George Jones, Vince Gill, Emmylou Harris, Lucinda Williams, Dolly Parton, Ricky Skaggs, Joan Baez, Pam Tillis, and Porter Wagoner.

In 1946, Stanley began performing hard-driving bluegrass professionally with his older brother, Carter. By 1966, when Carter died, the Stanley Brothers and the Clinch Mountain Boys had become one of the most celebrated bluegrass groups in the world, rivaling in popularity such leaders as Bill Monroe and Flatt & Scruggs.

After Carter's death, Stanley shifted the band's musical emphasis to an older, sadder, less adorned mountain style. As a bandleader, he nourished such young and promising talents as Ricky Skaggs, Keith Whitley, Larry Sparks, and Charlie Sizemore.

Long revered by enthusiasts of folk, bluegrass, and country music, Stanley won Grammys in 2002 for Best Country Male Vocalist Performance -- beating out Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Tim McGraw, Lyle Lovett and Ryan Adams -- and for Album of the Year ("O Brother, Where Art Thou?" collection).

In 2003, Stanley was awarded another Grammy for Best Bluegrass Album.

"Well, it's true these awards have been coming pretty fast," says the reticent, plain-spoken Stanley, "but I enjoy every one of them."

Of his Best Country Male Vocalist Grammy, he notes, "I was a little surprised, but that was the one I really hoped to win. It just felt so good I can't hardly tell you."

In January, 2000, Stanley became the first artist of the new millennium to be inducted into the historic Grand Ole Opry. He is also the central figure in the D. A. Pennebaker/Chris Hegedus 2000 documentary, "Down From The Mountain."

Stanley holds the Living Legend award from the Library of Congress and was the first recipient of the Traditional American Music award from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

One of his proudest achievements is the honorary doctorate in music Lincoln Memorial University conferred on him in 1976.

Humbled by all the recognition, Ralph Stanley does acknowledge that there are few major recognitions to which he still aspires today: "Well, there is the Country Music Hall of Fame. I'd like that to happen some day."

Tickets for the performance range from \$22 - \$34, with student discounts available, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call 805/756-2787; to order by fax: 805/756-6088. Order on-line at www.pacslo.org.

Sponsored by KPIG 94.9 FM and KCBX 90.1 FM.

For audio and video samples of Cal Poly Arts events, visit www.calpolyarts.org.

Cal Poly News Web • Cal Poly Magazine • Cal Poly Update E-newsletter

Giving to Cal Poly

Public Affairs Office
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
805.756.1511
[E-mail Public Affairs](#)