

Xavier University Music Series to Present Teenage Americana Prodigy EmiSunshine in Free Concert

The Xavier University Music Series is moving forward despite the COVID-19 pandemic putting a temporary halt to in-person concerts.

Since 1976, the series has brought acclaimed classical and jazz artists from around the world for live concerts at X.U.'s Gallagher Student Center Theater, several times per year. Now the series is continuing as a YouTube livestream at no charge to the public, thanks to a grant from the Sarah Marvin Foundation for the Performing Arts and support from individual patrons.

"Music is more important than ever nowadays, and I am determined to keep the Xavier Music Series going with the same quality of guest artists as before," said series director Polina Bepalko. "Hopefully, we will be able to resume traditional concerts in person, in the future."

On Thursday, March 11, the Xavier University Music Series will present *EmiSunshine and The Rain: Live from the Smoky Mountains*. It will be the first time that the series has featured music beyond classical and jazz.

"We have always had a loyal group of supporters who came to our classical and jazz concerts, but since we are currently livestreaming, we wanted to cast a wider net and appeal to more people," Bepalko said. "As an Americana artist, EmiSunshine's music has some blues and jazz influences. She is amazing."

<https://youtu.be/n16NFQLgIS4>

Now 16 years old, EmiSunshine has been attracting national attention since age 9, with appearances on *Today*, NBC's *Little Big Shots*, the Grand Ole Opry, *WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour*, *Song of the Mountains* (which airs locally on CET) and more. In 2018, the Tennessee native was featured in the Grammy-nominated Elvis Presley documentary *The King*, for which she wrote and performed two original songs, "Danny Ray" and "Johnny June and Jesus." Her 2019 album *Family Wars* was critically acclaimed. In 2019, she also received the prestigious ASCAP Foundation Desmond Child Anthem Award. In 2020, she collaborated with Cincinnati funk-music legend Bootsy Collins on the song "Stars" to benefit the Recording Academy's COVID-19 Relief Fund.

Although there will be no charge for her upcoming performance for the Xavier University Music Series, donations will be accepted for the Bootsy Collins Foundation, which supports a variety of Cincinnati-area causes: Madi's House, which helps people deal with addiction and mental health issues; the historic King Records restoration project; and the Groovemint Girls, an organization combating bullying and helping young people overcome abuse.

EmiSunshine performs nationwide with her family band, The Rain, which consists of her father, Randall Hamilton (bass), brother Jonathan Hamilton (mandolin) and Uncle Bobby Hill (drums). They will perform from Emi's home studio in East Tennessee, for the Xavier University Music Series on March 11 at 7:30 p.m. Eastern time. For information, visit xavier.edu/musicseries/sunshine.

Information about EmiSunshine is available at TheEmiSunshine.com.