

NEWS RELEASE

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Skirball Cultural Center unveils details about upcoming exhibition BILL GRAHAM AND THE ROCK & ROLL REVOLUTION

May 7–October 11, 2015

First retrospective about the visionary impresario to include memorabilia, photographs, concert footage, vintage and newly commissioned posters by Fillmore artists, audio tour, and psychedelic light show

Multi-city exhibition tour includes stops in San Francisco and Cleveland

LOS ANGELES, CA—The Skirball Cultural Center announces details about its landmark exhibition *Bill Graham and the Rock & Roll Revolution*, the first major museum show about renowned concert promoter Bill Graham (1931–1991). Graham launched the careers of countless iconic acts in the 1960s at his famed Fillmore Auditorium, among them the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, and Janis Joplin. He also broke ground conceiving of rock & roll as a force for humanitarian causes, spearheading benefit concerts such as Live Aid (1985) and Human Rights Now! (1988).

On view at the Skirball May 7–October 11, the exhibition will then travel to the Contemporary Jewish Museum (San Francisco), where it will be presented March 10–June 12, 2016. In 2017, it will proceed to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum (Cleveland); exact dates TBD. Additional venues may be announced. The premiere of *Bill Graham and the Rock & Roll Revolution* in 2015 is especially timely as the year marks the thirtieth anniversary of Live Aid, the fiftieth anniversary of The Grateful Dead's live debut, and the fiftieth anniversary of Graham's first-ever concert.

"A legend in the music industry, Bill Graham transformed the way audiences experience music and community to this day. The Skirball is proud to celebrate his legacy as a cultural innovator," remarked Robert Kirschner, Skirball Museum Director. "We are also inspired by how Bill Graham saw purpose in bringing people together and championing human rights and social justice."

To chronicle Graham's impact on American popular culture, more than 400 objects have been gathered from lenders across the country—from the private Graham family archive to the Experience Music Project to Carlos Santana's personal collection. Many of the lenders are permitting display of their items for the first time. Highlights are as follows:

- First museum exhibition to display Jerry Garcia's "Wolf" guitar, designed by acclaimed luthier Doug Irwin and played by Garcia between 1973 and 1993. Made from purpleheart and curly maple with an ebony fingerboard and twenty-four frets, "Wolf" bears Irwin's eagle logo on the headstock and a cartoon wolf inlaid in the guitar's body.
- First display of select items given to Graham by performers, such as:

- Janis Joplin's tambourine and microphone used during a Fillmore East show
 - Handwritten note of appreciation from Donovan, signed "Thy humble minstrel"
 - Silver megaphone from the Rolling Stones 1981 tour
 - Keith Richards's leather boots repaired by Graham with duct tape during the 1981 tour
- First museum exhibition of original artwork and preparatory drawings for iconic Fillmore posters, including work by Bonnie MacLean, Wes Wilson, David Singer, Greg Irons, and David Byrd. These will be among more than eighty iconic Fillmore posters, many signed by the artists.
 - Debut of three newly commissioned posters, created for the exhibition by Bonnie MacLean, David Singer, and Randy Tuten.
 - Shard of a Fender Stratocaster smashed by Jimi Hendrix during a performance at Royal Albert Hall, London, on February 24, 1969.
 - Pete Townshend's 1968 Gibson SG Special used during the performance of *Tommy* at the Metropolitan Opera House on June 7, 1970, and thrown to a fan in the audience.
 - Stunning collection of live performance and backstage photos of rock & roll royalty who performed at the Fillmore, Winterland, Day on the Green, Live Aid, and other Bill Graham Presents concerts throughout the era, including: Aerosmith, Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton, The Clash, Bo Diddley, Perry Farrell, Mick Fleetwood, Peter Frampton, Aretha Franklin, the Grateful Dead, Jimi Hendrix, KISS, Mick Jagger, Jim Morrison, Stevie Nicks, Tina Turner, The Sex Pistols, Sting, and Stevie Wonder. The images were taken by such preeminent rock photographers as Jim Marshall, Ken Regan, and Baron Wolman.
 - Additional noteworthy rock & roll memorabilia, including:
 - Graham's personal scrapbook of Live Aid clippings and mementos, as well as his letter to Live Aid (Philadelphia) artists, in which he wrote: "Your being here gives this project life and makes it meaningful for millions of people throughout the world..."
 - Dress worn by Grace Slick at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival
 - A 1970s Carlos Santana guitar, on loan from Santana himself
 - 1958 Fender Stratocaster used by Robbie Robertson during *The Last Waltz*
 - 1959 Gibson Les Paul played by Duane Allman on the album *At Fillmore East*
 - The original apple barrel that greeted guests at the Fillmore Auditorium with fresh apples. Accompanied by a sign that read "Take One or Two," the apple barrel represented Graham's wish "to make the place more *haimish*" (warm and comfortable).
 - Exclusive site-specific installation of "The Joshua Light Show," the trailblazing liquid light show conceived in 1967 by multimedia artist Joshua White, which served as a backdrop to many Graham-produced shows.
 - Audio guide, affording visitors the chance to hear recordings of Graham himself as he shares anecdotes about artists who performed at the Fillmore.
 - First display of spectacular attire worn by Graham during Grateful Dead New Year's Eve shows, including his "Father Time" and butterfly costumes.
 - First display of assorted fan mail as well as letters of complaint received by Graham, which he painstakingly saved in large-format scrapbooks.

- First display of charred relics from the offices of Bill Graham Presents, which was firebombed and burned to the ground in 1985 by suspected neo-Nazis. Many believe the act was in retaliation for Graham's very public protest of President Ronald Reagan's visit to a Bitburg, Germany cemetery where members of the Waffen SS were buried.
- Treasured photographs and artifacts from Graham's early life, many on view to the public for the first time. These help to document Graham's childhood experiences as a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, New York City street kid, and Korean War soldier.
- Exclusive video of recently conducted conversations with Ralph Moratz, Graham's boyhood friend with whom he fled Berlin and crossed the Atlantic in 1941.
- Archival concert footage, as well as historical audio interviews. Famous interviewees include Carlos Santana, Jack Casady, and Wavy Gravy.

More information on press previews and guided press tours of the exhibition to be announced. Selection of images that may be used to illustrate editorial coverage of the exhibition may be viewed here: skirball.org/bill-graham-PRhighlights

BILL GRAHAM AND THE ROCK & ROLL REVOLUTION AND ITS RELATED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AT THE SKIRBALL CULTURAL CENTER ARE MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING DONORS:

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About the Skirball

The Skirball Cultural Center is dedicated to exploring the connections between 4,000 years of Jewish heritage and the vitality of American democratic ideals. It welcomes and seeks to inspire people of every ethnic and cultural identity. Guided by our respective memories and experiences, together we aspire to build a society in which all of us can feel at home. The Skirball Cultural Center achieves its mission through educational programs that explore literary, visual, and performing arts from around the world; through the display and interpretation of its permanent collections and changing exhibitions; through an interactive family destination inspired by the Noah's Ark story; and through outreach to the community.

Visiting the Skirball

The Skirball Cultural Center is located at 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049. Museum hours: Tuesday–Friday 12:00–5:00 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; closed Mondays and holidays. Admission to exhibitions: \$10 General; \$7 Seniors, Full-Time Students, and Children over 12; \$5 Children 2–12. Exhibitions are always free to Skirball Members and Children under 2. Exhibitions are free to all visitors on Thursdays. For general information, the public may call (310) 440-4500 or visit skirball.org. The Skirball is also home to Zeidler's Café, which serves innovative California cuisine in an elegant setting, and Audrey's Museum Store, which sells books, contemporary art, music, jewelry, and more.

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