



Wednesday, September 6th, 2017

British drummer/artist Gilson Lavis to donate painting to B.B. King's, NYC

Gilson Lavis portrait of B.B. King, circa 2007 B.B. King, circa 2007, 28 by 22 ¾ inches, acrylic on canvas board, artist-signed.



NEW YORK – Jools Holland Rhythm and Blues Orchestra drummer and artist **Gilson Lavis**, who was also the original drummer for British band Squeeze, will be in New York City for a series of events to coincide with his debut NYC art exhibit “**Gilson Lavis: In Tune With the Portraits**” at Salomon Arts Gallery, 83 Leonard Street in Tribeca from September 15 through October 5, 2017.

On September 13, Lavis will commemorate Blues legend B.B. King, who would have celebrated his 92nd birthday in mid-September, by presenting his one-of-a-kind acrylic on canvas painting of the blues icon to B.B. King's on 42nd Street for permanent display at the live-music venue's permanent display. Lavis got to know King while playing drums for the blues legend during two performances on the BBC's *Later With Jools Holland*.

On September 14, there will be an invitation-only opening reception at Salomon Arts Gallery, followed by an intimate after-dinner for Lavis hosted by New York nightlife impresario **Rocco Ancarola**. It will be held at the new West Village hotspot **Casita**, on Washington Street, which will also present gallery exhibitions throughout the year.

Lavis' acrylic-on-canvas paintings and ink sketches have become quite popular in London music and art circles, especially portraits of music legends he has known and performed with, including Amy Winehouse, Eric Clapton, B.B. King, Bryan Ferry, Cher, Robert Plant, Paul McCartney, Ray Charles many others.

Lavis explained, "I find a peace and serenity in art that I have never known before. Most of my portraits feature artists and performers I have had the privilege of working with and that have been of inspiration to me. My art is a painted biography of my musical life, one I can never hope to finish, but what a joy it is to engage in. I enjoy working in black and white, giving my art a bit of stage drama and allowing me to play with the shadows, while occasionally adding a little splash of color. My work, I hope, communicates the close working relationship I have with many of the subjects I paint."

As many would know, Lavis was a founding member and original drummer in the group Squeeze, along with pianist Holland. Squeeze achieved huge success all through the 1980s, and Lavis later went on to perform live or record with many of the top names in popular music. Lavis started the hugely popular Jools Holland Rhythm & Blues Orchestra over 20 years ago with longtime friend and former band mate Holland, who has become an institution in the U. K., hosting BBC Television's *Later With Jools Holland* for the last 25years. The orchestra performs throughout Europe and the U.K on a regular basis.