

For Immediate Release
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ANGIE STONE EXPECTS THE '*UNEXPECTED*' ON NOVEMBER 24

R&B Star's New Album is 2nd for Legendary Soul Label Stax Records

R&B/soul luminary Angie Stone has never shied away from pushing her own limits and the limits of her music. With each new recording, with each next step in her career, she has consistently hit the world with something it didn't see coming. Her new album, ***Unexpected***, set for release on November 24th from Stax Records (a division of Concord Music Group), encompasses a diversity of styles and influences that Stone has distilled over the years – rap, R&B, soul, funk and more – and weaves them together in a narrative that addresses life's ups and downs, but ultimately strikes a redemptive chord.

"I wanted this album to be something different," says Stone, whose 2007 Stax debut, *The Art of Love & War*, was her first album to top *Billboard*'s R&B/hip-hop chart. "I didn't want to make the kind of neo-soul record I had made in the past. That would have been repetitive."

But in the midst of mapping this new direction, Stone encountered a shock that even she didn't see coming. Mid-way through the recording process, her father – Stone's spiritual anchor and creative mentor since her childhood in South Carolina – passed away very suddenly. "It was totally unexpected," she says, "and that's where I came up with the title of the album. I really didn't think I could finish the project, because I was so grief stricken...I had to do a lot of the vocals a second time. I had to lean on my dad's wisdom and energy, and try to be open to what he would have wanted me to do in order to finish the songs. I can say that his spirit was literally there in the studio with me, and I'm grateful for that."

Out of this tragedy comes ***Unexpected***, the next step forward for Stone, a stretch beyond whatever limits – real or perceived – she might have been facing when the project began. From the get-go, the quick and funky title track – with its backbeat inspired by Sly Stone's 1971 hit, "Family Affair" – warns the listener to "Prepare yourself for just about anything." Equally energetic is the album's first single, "I Ain't Hearin' U," a song that decries rumor and gossip. The track is co-written by vocalist and songwriter Juanita Wynn, Stone's collaborative partner for several years.

"I Don't Care" is a proclamation of self-acceptance and self-assurance, based on sound spiritual advice that Stone received early on: "My dad always used to tell me, 'Don't worry about what people say. They can't change anything. Whatever God wants for you is most important.'" "Tell Me" settles into a techno groove wherein the dual vocals by Stone and Wynn – artfully co-produced by Kerrim "Ikon" King and Fitzroy "Art Teacher" Reid – create a wall of sound that's augmented by an edgy delivery from rapper Dose.

"Think Sometimes" is a poignant ballad inspired in large part by Stone's late father. "It's funny how people can slip away so fast, and suddenly they're in your past," she says. "You wonder about what you could have – or should have – done differently. It'll make you think sometimes."

Unexpected represents a turning point for Angie Stone – not just in her career, but in her life and her world view. And while the losses that triggered the transformation may be painful, the artist and her work are stronger because of them. "This album is something that no one would have anticipated coming from me. My father always encouraged me and everyone else he knew to reach out and make a leap of faith, and that's exactly what I've done."

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