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For immediate release:

## Sitar Virtuoso Anoushka Shankar to Play the Mondavi Center

March 8, 2008; Davis, California—What’s in a name? For **Anoushka Shankar**, her family name was a kind of destiny. As the daughter and pupil of legendary sitar master **Ravi Shankar** and half-sister to pop superstar **Norah Jones**, she was probably destined to be the musician who would update Ravi Shankar’s towering legacy for a new generation, mixing traditional Indian sounds with jazz, electronica, contemporary world music, and more. Next month, Anoushka Shankar will both perform both traditional and contemporary styles at the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts** accompanied by *tabla* player **Tommy Bose**, **Leo Dombecki** on piano and electronics, drummer **Jesse Charnow**, and *tanpura* player **Sanjeev Shankar**.

The event will begin at 8 pm on April 5 in the Mondavi Center’s Jackson Hall on the **UC Davis** campus. Tickets are available from the Mondavi Center Ticket Office at 530.754.ARTS (2787) or online at [MondaviArts.org](http://MondaviArts.org). The event is presented as part of the Mondavi Center’s **Global Beat Series**. There will be a **Pre-performance Lecture** featuring **Matthew Grasso**, classical guitarist and instructor, **Sacramento City College** and **UC Davis Experimental College**, beginning at 7 pm on April 5 in the Mondavi Center’s Studio Theatre. Patrons are advised that incense will be burned on stage during the performance.

Anoushka Shankar is a rising star on the world music scene, able to play traditional Indian music with a virtuosity reminiscent of her famed father while incorporating a wide range of world music influences into a style all her own. “Shankar displayed not only an impressive technical command, but a flair for making the sitar speak a number of musical tongues,” wrote the *Philadelphia Inquirer* of one performance.

“Anoushka Shankar ... presented herself as a brilliant figure in the center of her rotating cast of male Indian musicians,” wrote the *Monterey County Herald* of a 2007 concert. “Her presentation ended with an amazing display of her virtuosic sitar skills, both melodic and rhythmically interesting to the last note.”

Born in London in 1981, Anoushka Shankar is the daughter of one of the twentieth century’s most influential musicians. Ravi Shankar is not only among the greatest sitar players of our era but also a cultural icon whose incredible virtuosity attracted the attention of countless Western musicians, from **Beatles** guitarist **George Harrison** to jazz saxophonist **John Coltrane**, and helped bring traditional Indian music into mainstream of American popular culture. Ravi Shankar consistently expanded the reach of Indian classical music, composing two concertos for sitar and orchestra, writing film music, recording with Harrison and other Western musicians, and even performing at several of the major rock festivals of the 1960s, including Woodstock.

Prompted by her mother, Anoushka Shankar began musical studies with her father at the age of eight. She was prodigy, and by 13 had already made her recording debut. At age 16, she released her first album, a solo recital entitled *Anoushka*, prompting critics to call her “a remarkably promising sitarist” (*Time Out New York*) and leading the British Parliament to award her a House of Commons Shield, making her both the youngest and the first female recipient of that high honor. In 2000, her second album, *Anourag*, expanded upon and refined the traditional style of her debut, and in 2001 she released *Live at Carnegie Hall*, which drew a Grammy Award nomination and brought Shankar into the international spotlight.

Although she did not release any new recordings under her own name for the next four years, Shankar kept busy, performing in 2002 at the Concert for George, a tribute to the late Harrison, where she conducted her father’s composition “Arpan,” which featured a guitar solo by **Eric Clapton**, and performed Harrison’s “The Inner Light.” The same year saw the release of her book *Bapi: The Love of My Life*, a biographical portrait of her father, as well as a BBC-produced documentary *Anoushka Shankar: Sitar Trek*, a 30-minute glimpse into her life on the road. She also acted in the film *Dance Like a Man* by the Delhi-based director **Pamela Rooks**, a role for which she earned a best supporting actress nomination from India’s National Film Awards.

*Rise*, her return to recording in 2004, marked a new direction in her music and a breakthrough for her artistry. Where previous albums usually found her performing her father’s music as a solo artist, *Rise* put her in the context of a highly interactive group of electric and acoustic musicians, fusing Eastern and Western influences for something altogether new. *Rise* received glowing reviews and prompted another Grammy nomination in the Best Contemporary World Music category.

“Anoushka Shankar ... takes serene and confident steps away from her father’s long shadow on *Rise*,” wrote *Jazz Times*. “The multicultural music on *Rise* speaks to a deeper sense of global bonds rather than the usual shotgun marriage of unrelated styles that the world-music aisles are rife with. The CD’s nine meditative and often cinematic tracks offer a worldview, where the various native rhythms are melding into one another, and the phenomena is something to marvel at and ponder ...”

In August 2007, Shankar’s *Breathing Under Water* was released to similar acclaim. The album stands as another breakthrough, thanks in part to the extraordinary chemistry between Shankar and composer/producer **Karsh Kale**, and includes guest appearances by both Ravi Shankar and Norah Jones. “*Breathing Under Water* far exceeds anything this genre has ever created,” wrote *Relix* magazine. “This record sets a new standard....”

On tour, Shankar performs both traditional Indian music and her contemporary, world music-influenced style, and says she finds the versatility extremely liberating. “I feel like there are so many things I’m starting to do now creatively,” Shankar has said. “Seeing people connect to the middle ground that my music now exists in, it’s really inspiring me. I’m thinking in alternate ways.”

“Anoushka Shankar’s artistry spans the gap between traditional Indian music and contemporary music in ways that are remarkably creative and exciting, and we look forward to presenting her in Jackson Hall,” said Mondavi Center Executive Director **Don Roth**.

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**What:** Anoushka Shankar  
**When:** Saturday, April 5 ▪ 8 pm  
**Where:** Jackson Hall  
Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts  
University of California, Davis

**Admission:** \$44/\$39/\$34 Adults • \$22/\$19.50/\$17 Students, Children

**Tickets/Info:** 530.754.ARTS (2787)  
866.754.ARTS (toll-free)  
<http://www.MondaviArts.org>  
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