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Contact: Penny Kemp at 601.480.7557 or penny@msarts.org
Jeremy Sollie at jeremy@msarts.org

**Celebrate America 250 at The MAX with Free Events
Featuring Award-Winning Mississippi Musicians**

MERIDIAN, Miss. (June 16, 2026) – As America celebrates its 250th anniversary over the upcoming Fourth of July weekend, the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience (The MAX) is proud to present a series of free events that honor the profound contributions Mississippi has made to the fabric of American life, including a conversation with multi-Grammy-winning musician Bobby Rush on Friday, July 3, at 5 p.m.

A Conversation with Bobby Rush will feature the blues legend alongside Taiwo Gaynor, director of the upcoming Mississippi Public Broadcasting documentary *King of the Chitlin' Circuit*, which chronicles Rush's remarkable life and seven-decade career. The public is invited to hear from one of Mississippi's most influential blues ambassadors on Friday, July 3, ahead of his performance at the City of Meridian's America 250 Concert on Saturday, July 4, alongside Daniel Houze, Jamal Roberts, and Todd Tilghman.

Kicking off a full day of activities in downtown Meridian on Saturday, July 4, will be the monthly Earth's Bounty farmers market, held in the Citizens National Bank Courtyard at The MAX from 8 a.m. to noon. Visitors can enjoy free admission to The MAX from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., including the new exhibition *John Jennings: Build Your World* (opening Saturday, June 20), as well as music by Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band starting at 11 a.m.

Led by "Fife Master" Shardé Thomas, granddaughter of the legendary Othar Turner, and percussionist Chris Mallory, the free performance will honor freedom in all its forms: our nation's independence, the emancipation of a people, and the creative spirit that defines Mississippi's global artistic impact. Stop by the Alexander Family Church Gallery upstairs at The MAX to view an episode of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* featuring

Turner, Jessie Mae Hemphill, and Abe Young, legends of Mississippi Hill Country fife and drum music.

Make plans to stay downtown for the City of Meridian's America 250 Parade, followed by a free concert and fireworks on City Hall Lawn.

To see all upcoming events at The MAX, please visit www.msarts.org/events.

About The MAX:

The Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience (The MAX) is an arts and cultural center in the heart of downtown Meridian that celebrates Mississippi's creative legacy through interactive exhibits, workshops, and live performances. The multipurpose facility contains a two-story Hall of Fame celebrating the state's groundbreaking artists like Walter Anderson, William Faulkner, Morgan Freeman, Jim Henson, B.B. King, Elvis Presley, and Leontyne Price to name a few, along with over 20,000 square feet of interactive exhibits, art studios, a recording studio, and performance spaces. Every visit to The MAX is a unique experience that leaves visitors feeling inspired and in awe of Mississippi's global impact on music, literature, art, and entertainment. Visit www.msarts.org to learn more.

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