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Paul Jackson, Jr. named artist-in-residence after Garn family endows fund to bring visiting artists to USC Thornton School of Music

Noted guitarist, producer and composer Paul Jackson, Jr. has been named the first recipient of the Garn Family Contemporary Music Artist-in-Residence Endowed Fund established by Doug and Julie Garn, parents of a Popular Music alum.

October 4, 2016 – Paul Jackson, Jr., a GRAMMY-nominated guitarist, producer and composer who is one of the most recorded guitarists in the world, has joined the faculty of the USC Thornton School of Music as an artist-in-residence for the 2016-2017 school year.

Jackson is the first recipient of the Garn Family Contemporary Music Artist-in-Residence Endowed Fund established by Doug and Julie Garn of Corona del Mar, CA to bring in visiting contemporary music artists each year to the school. Parents of Skyler Garn ’16, a graduate of USC Thornton School of Music’s Popular Music program, Doug and Julie Garn’s fund is the first of its kind in USC Thornton’s Contemporary Music division.

“What the Garn Family Artist-in-Residence provides is the opportunity for students to work with world renowned artists on a sustained basis,” said Vice Dean Chris Sampson, founder of the Popular Music program. “Our students will really get to know and be mentored by Paul Jackson, Jr., over the course of the school year. This creates a very deep and lasting impact.”

Jackson, a native of Los Angeles, grew up near the USC campus and is happy to return to teach. “When I was kid, we used to drive here,” he said. “Both of my parents received
their masters degrees from USC – my mother in psychology and my father in engineering. To come back years later as an instructor is pretty amazing for me.”

Each artist-in-residence funded by the Garn gift will spend an academic year working with students in USC Thornton’s Contemporary Music division. The template for the contemporary artist-in-residence experience was set recently, when hip-hop producer and engineer Young Guru spent two years working with USC Thornton students and helped shape a new major in music production.

Jackson will stay busy. “This morning I was with professor Paul Young in a music business class, and this afternoon I’m working with students in the Studio/Jazz Guitar program,” he said. “I’m doing a jazz forum soon, a recording workshop, and a lot of classes with Patrice Rushen (head of the Popular Music program) as well as mentoring students. I’m going to have my hands full, but it’s all really good stuff.”

USC Thornton’s Contemporary Music division is known for bringing in an impressive schedule of artists for its weekly Popular Music Forum, giving students an opportunity to learn from – and occasionally play with – musical legends. Some past artists who have come to the forum include Elton John, Randy Newman, Smokey Robinson, Chaka Khan, and Mike Love and Bruce Johnston of The Beach Boys.

“Talent and knowledge are assets, and you have to reinvest them,” Jackson said. “I think it’s necessary. Nobody would make money and then not try to reinvest it in the stock market or real estate or something. So, for me, this is trying to reinvest things that I’ve been blessed to know and do and experience. I’m just really happy to do that.”

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**About Paul Jackson, Jr.**

Paul Jackson, Jr. has played on recordings by Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston, Elton John, Barbara Streisand, Celine Dion, Quincy Jones, Luther Vandross, Ella Fitzgerald, Natalie Cole, B.B. King, Selina, Jennifer Lopez, Luis Miguel, Jewel, Amy Grant, Bebe & CeCe Winans, Boney James, Kenny Rogers, Al Jarreau, Stanley Clarke, George Duke, Joe Sample, Barry White, Chicago and many others. His playing can also be heard on the underscore of many motion pictures such as *Get On Up*, *Zootopia* and *The Color Purple*. Most recently, Jackson played and composed music for the Daft Punk CD, which garnered 5 GRAMMY Awards and garnered Jackson GRAMMY recognition for his contributions to the album.

He has released eight albums of his own on the Atlantic, Pony Canyon/Blue Note and Branch Records labels, including the GRAMMY nominated *I Came to Play*. 
He has been a regular band member on television shows such as *American Idol*, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* and *Don’t Forget the Lyrics*, and has taught at music workshops around the globe.

**About the USC Thornton School of Music**

For more than 125 years, the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music has prepared students to excel as performers, composers, industry leaders and educators on stages and in studios around the world. Founded in 1884 and today the oldest continually operating cultural institution in Los Angeles, USC Thornton is internationally recognized as one of the finest conservatories and music schools in the U.S. By blending the rigors of a traditional conservatory-style education with the benefits of a leading research university, USC Thornton offers a curriculum designed to prepare students for successful careers in the 21st century.