

# Dr. Samuel Waymon is coming to UC Santa Cruz

*Legendary composer, actor, performer and brother of Nina Simone slated for a week-in-residence at the renowned institution of higher learning.*

SANTA CRUZ, CA, UNITED STATES, June 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dr. Samuel Waymon is coming to the [University of California, Santa Cruz](#) (UCSC) this October for a week-in-residence punctuated by an on-campus performance with the Magic Man Band on Saturday evening, October 24th.

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Don't Let The Problems Of  
This World  
Drive You Slowly Out Of  
Your Mind.  
Just Smile,  
Look at the Problem  
And Say  
It Be's That Way,  
Be's That Way Sometime!"  
*Samuel Waymon*

Waymon, who will celebrate his 82nd birthday on August 16th, has enjoyed an extraordinarily successful career in music, film and the theater.

Movie goers will recall Samuel Waymon in his role as Rev. Luther Williams in the 1973 classic *Ganja & Hess* (for which he also composed the score) and for his roles in *Personal Problems*, *Weeds* and *Philadelphia*. Theater buffs will

remember his work with writer and director Bill Gunn and with Joe Papp, creator of New York's Shakespeare in the Park and the Public Theater.

Over the past 60 plus years, music lovers have hummed, danced to and been inspired by tunes from Waymon's pen including: "It's In Your Eyes" (co-written with LeRonald Walker) - from the motion picture *Philadelphia*; "Down on Me" - from the motion picture *Personal Problems*; "Saratoga" (co-written with Mr. Gunn) - from the motion picture *Just Crazy About Horses*; "Standing on the Coastline" (co-written and performed with Mr. Walker) - from Waymon's *Mood Swing* album and "It Be's That Way Sometime" included on the 1967 album *Silk and Soul* released by his late sister, Eunice Kathleen Waymon (aka [Nina Simone](#)).

A native of Tryon, North Carolina, Samuel Waymon (aka 'Magic Man') came of age during the turbulent days of the Civil Rights era. He marched and was arrested in Philadelphia with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

For more than twenty-five years, Waymon contributed to the career of his sister - as an organist,

composer, producer and manager. The siblings traveled together to numerous venues throughout the world – including special performances for the King of Morocco, for the President of France and (sadly) at funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

During his years in the New York area, Dr. Waymon's social circle included such well-know figures as Malcolm X, Betty Shabazz, Lorraine Hansberry, Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Max Roach, Miles Davis, Cicely Tyson, Roberta Flack, Bill Cosby and Donny Hathaway.

Aretha Franklin called upon 'Dr. Sam' for assistance in refining her breathing technique.

Ganja & Hess was voted as one of the ten best American films of the decade during Critic's Week at the prestigious 1973 Cannes Film Festival.

Da Sweet Blood of Jesus, Spike Lee's 2014 remake of Ganja & Hess was inspired by Waymon's song "You Gotta Learn, To Let It Go".

Samuel Waymon's most recent projects include: the album Purpose; "Baltimore (In Four Movements)" – recorded live in North Carolina at Tryon International; and the contribution of two songs to the upcoming Tumbao Experience album, produced by the well-respected Berlin based duo The Berman Brothers (Frank and Christian). The album's arrangements were created by Demetrio Muñiz - internationally known for his work as Musical Director of the Buena Vista Social Club.

A global research university with an uncommon emphasis on undergraduate research and education, UC Santa Cruz is part of the world's most celebrated system of public higher education, and stands among the most renowned institutions of higher learning.

Waymon's week-in-residence at UCSC will include lectures, film screenings and a master class for upper division music students.

The October 24th concert will support the continuance of [Africa focused](#) courses and programs at UC Santa Cruz.

Marketing Team

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Dr. Samuel L. Waymon. Photo Credit: 4 Eyes Photography

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