



Austin City Limits Presents an Hour with Willie Nelson

Icon Returns to “the House that Willie Built”

Broadcast Episode Premieres January 26 on PBS

Austin, TX—January 23, 2019—Austin City Limits (ACL) proudly welcomes back a longtime friend, American music icon [Willie Nelson](#), in a career-spanning hour as he performs a mix of his universally-known hits and new classics from his timeless catalog. The new episode premieres **Saturday, January 26 at 8pm CT/9pm ET** on PBS stations as part of ACL’s Season 44. The program airs weekly on PBS stations nationwide ([check local listings for times](#)) and full episodes are made available online for a limited time at pbs.org/austincitylimits immediately following the initial broadcast. Viewers can visit acltv.com for news regarding future tapings, episode schedules and select live stream updates. The show’s official hashtag is [#acltv](#). Viewers can visit acltv.com for news regarding future tapings, episode schedules and select live stream updates. The show’s official hashtag is [#acltv](#).

There’s a good reason why a bronze statue of Willie Nelson stands at the entrance to ACL’s studio home on the Austin street that bears his name. The Texas native launched *Austin City Limits* with the now-historic pilot episode (taped in 1974), ushering in what has become the longest-running television music series ever. Inducted into the inaugural class of the ACL Hall of Fame in 2014, he returns to “the house that Willie built” for a remarkable 18th appearance on the program, marking his first headlining appearance in a decade since he shared the stage with Asleep at the Wheel during Season 35 in 2009. The new performance marks his first appearance with his longtime Family Band since Season 25 in 2000.

In the 45-year history of *Austin City Limits*, no artist has personified the music series’ eclectic, freewheeling spirit more fully than Willie Nelson. Joined by the five-piece Family band, Willie starts the 16-song set with his perennial opener, “Whiskey River,” the song he launched ACL with almost a half-century ago. The energy is palpable for the mainstays that established him as a songwriting legend: “Funny How Time Slips Away,” “Crazy,” and “Night Life” (undertaking such an intense, bluesy shred on his trusty acoustic Trigger that he has to shake out his left hand afterward). He honors departed pals and co-songwriters with shout-outs (“Good Hearted Woman,” “for Waylon!” and “It’s All Going to Pot,” “for Merle!”). Willie calls out often for the

crowd to join in, and they reply with joy and respect. "I hear it!", he answers back with a grin during one of many sing-along moments.

The set features the pinnacles of his artistry as an interpreter: "Georgia on My Mind" anchored by harmonica master Mickey Raphael's counter melodies; his version of "Nuages," Django Reinhardt's 1940 gypsy jazz instrumental, is lifted by the fascinating interplay with sister Bobbie's piano; "Always on My Mind" showcases Willie's inimitable phrasing. In tribute to his own favorite vocalist, Willie dips into his most recent album for a jazzy take on Frank Sinatra's hit "Fly Me to the Moon." The outlaw legend performs his new-classic anthem "Roll Me Up and Smoke Me When I Die," and elicits unerringly faithful crowd-chorus callbacks on "Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to be Cowboys" and the raucous sing-along "On the Road Again." All reveal a singular artist who's still exploring, still playful, still pushing the boundaries of where his music can go. After a rousing, standing-room, hand-clapping "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" and his now-standard set-closer "I'll Fly Away," Willie smiles as wide as Texas, and with a wave of his hat offers a heartfelt "Thank you, Austin City Limits!"

"There would be no Austin City Limits without Willie Nelson - simple as that," says ACL executive producer Terry Lickona. "He launched ACL into the television universe in 1974, and has helped keep us going for 45 years. It was truly emotional to witness such an outpouring of love from the audience. This show is Willie Nelson, pure and simple."

WILLIE NELSON

WHISKEY RIVER

STILL IS STILL MOVING TO ME

GOOD HEARTED WOMAN

FUNNY HOW TIME SLIPS AWAY

CRAZY

NIGHTLIFE

FLY ME TO THE MOON

ROLL ME UP AND SMOKE ME WHEN I DIE

NUAGES

GEORGIA ON MY MIND

GEORGIA ON A FAST TRAIN

MAMAS DON'T LET YOUR BABIES GROW UP TO BE COWBOYS

ANGEL FLYING TOO CLOSE TO THE GROUND

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

ALWAYS ON MY MIND

WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN / I'LL FLY AWAY

Season 44 | Season 44 Broadcast Season (second half)

February 2

Buddy Guy/ August Greene

February 9

ACL Presents: Americana Music Festival (season finale)

About Austin City Limits

Austin City Limits (ACL) offers viewers unparalleled access to featured acts in an intimate setting that provides a platform for artists to deliver inspired, memorable, full-length performances. The program is taped live before a concert audience from The Moody Theater in downtown Austin. *Austin City Limits* is the longest-running music series in television history and remains the only TV series to ever be awarded the National Medal of Arts. Since its inception, the groundbreaking music series has become an institution that's helped secure Austin's reputation as the Live Music Capital of the World. The historic KLRU Studio 6A, home to 36 years of ACL concerts, has been designated an official Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Landmark. In 2011, ACL moved to the new venue ACL Live at The Moody Theater in downtown Austin. ACL received a rare institutional Peabody Award for excellence and outstanding achievement in 2012.

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