

**James "Plunky" Branch to Discuss His Memoir at the Library of Virginia on June 23**

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For Immediate Release

Richmond native James "Plunky" Branch is a multi-talented saxophonist, businessman, composer, and producer. On the evening of June 23 he will celebrate the launch of his memoir *PLUNKY - Juju Jazz Funk & Oneness* at the Library. The launch will include a brief musical set and an interview with Peter Solomon, host of *Jazz with Peter Solomon* on WCVE 88.9 FM. The interview will be followed by an audience question-and-answer session and a book signing. Copies of the book will be available through the Virginia Shop, located on the first floor of the Library of Virginia. The talk will begin with a brief musical set from Branch and Plunky & Oneness starting at 5:30 PM followed by the interview at 6:15 PM, a question-and-answer session, and a book signing.

A 2015 Strong Men and Women honoree, Branch was educated in Richmond's segregated schools and attended Columbia University. In 1971 he formed *Juju*, a musical group that combined rhythm and blues, jazz, soul, and African musical influences. Branch and his group have continued recording and performing, most recently as *Plunky & Oneness*. In 1982, their song "Every Way but Loose" made the top 10 on the London soul music charts. Branch is a founder of the Richmond Jazz Society and has released 25 albums through his own independent record label, N.A.M.E. Brand Records.

In *PLUNKY - Juju Jazz Funk & Oneness*, Branch discusses music and his career during which he composed hundreds of songs, and produced a documentary, *Under the Radar—A Survey of Afro-Cuban Music*. Working with the U.S. Information Agency and the Virginia Commission for the Arts, Branch has educated audiences at home and around the world about the cultural significance of music. He has lectured on African-American music at Virginia Commonwealth University and directed the Virginia Union University Jazz Ensemble. Branch serves as an artist-in-residence and performs in public schools around the state and in 2012 was named one of the Richmond Public School system's Living Legacies. Today Branch spends his time leading his band onstage playing rousing funk, R&B, jazz, African, reggae, gospel and rap and making music in his recording studio.

**-MORE-**

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The Library is located at 800 East Broad Street in historic downtown Richmond. There is free parking for this event in the Library's underground deck, which is accessible from either Eighth or Ninth streets. This program is free and open to the public but reservations are requested. Please **register** at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/juju-jazz-funk-and-oneness-an-evening-with-plunky-branch-and-oneness-tickets-25267263064>.

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