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Miles Davis and Edith Piaf Stamps on Sale Today

Features First QR Code on U.S. Postage Stamps



To obtain a high-resolution image of these stamps for media use only, email roy.a.betts@usps.gov.

NEW YORK — Music speaks an international language, crossing borders and oceans. Today, the United States Postal Service and *La Poste* of France celebrate a lively conversation between continents with the issuance of the Miles Davis and Edith Piaf stamps. The U.S. version of the stamps, issued as Forever stamps, go on sale today at Post Offices nationwide. The U.S. version and *La Poste* versions can be purchased in the United States online at usps.com and by phone at 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724).

This is the first time the United States and France have jointly issued a stamp since 1989, when both countries honored the bicentennial of the French Revolution.

The Miles Davis and Edith Piaf stamps also feature another historic first. For the first time, a QR code is printed on the back of the stamps. The code can be scanned with a smart phone. A landing page opens with an option to listen to music from Davis while viewing photographs and a timeline of the lives of both Davis and Piaf. There are several buttons on the landing site including a Buy Now button that enables purchasing the U.S. and French versions of the Davis and Piaf stamps as well as other related products. The landing site can be emailed, shared on Facebook and Twitter and videos may be added.

Edith Piaf, forever associated with her hometown of Paris, is one of the few French popular singers to become a household name in the United States. The renowned American jazz trumpeter Miles Davis is beloved in France, where he performed frequently and was made a Chevalier in the Legion of Honor. He also was awarded the Grande Médaille de Vermeil by the city of Paris, the equivalent of making him an

honorary citizen.

“Miles Davis was one of the great innovators in American jazz, but he was also extremely popular in France, where he performed frequently,” said U.S. Postal Service Deputy Postmaster General Ronald Stroman at the special dedication ceremony held at the Rubin Museum of Art — The Theater in New York.

“Likewise, Edith Piaf, one of France’s best-loved singers, became an icon in the United States,” Stroman said. “These musical greats never performed alongside each other — so the United States Postal Service and France’s *La Poste* are now bringing them together on these new stamps.

“With our Miles Davis and Edith Piaf stamps, our goal is to encourage more people to learn about these artists and the unique form of musical diplomacy they practiced. Like the music of Miles and Edith and like the friendship between America and France, these stamps will last forever.”

Joining Stroman to dedicate the new Forever stamps were Emmy Award-winning actress Cicely Tyson; Sirius/XM Program Director Mark Ruffin; legendary jazz bassist Ron Carter; musician/producer Don Was, currently chief creative officer of Blue Note Records; legendary music industry executive George Avakian from Columbia Records; world-class musician Jon Barnes, who played in the movie *Dirty Dancing*; and members of the Davis family, including daughter Cheryl, son Erin, and nephew Vince Wilburn, Jr. A musical tribute was performed by the Julliard School of Music, the alma mater of Miles Davis.

The Miles Davis family commented: “It is an extremely high honor to have the legacy of Miles Dewey Davis recognized with a commemorative stamp. We thank the U.S. Postal Service, along with all of the fans and well-wishers worldwide, who voiced their support for this initiative.”

During the stamp dedication ceremony, Grammy Award-winning composer Mike Stoller spoke about Piaf and her biggest selling single record, *L’Homme à la Moto (Black Denim Trousers and Motor-cycle Boots)*, which he co-wrote as a member of the songwriting team of Leiber & Stoller. Bulgarian/Italian actress and singer Maria Elena Infantino performed a scene from a one-woman show titled *Edith Piaf*, about Piaf’s life journey and was accompanied by concert pianist Tania Stavreva. Biographer Carolyn Burke, who wrote the book, *No Regrets, The Life of Edith Piaf* spoke at the event.

“She was the little sparrow, a small person physically whose monumental voice made her internationally famous,” said Stoller. “For people everywhere in the world her voice was the voice of Paris. Can you imagine how I felt at age 23 on my first trip to Europe, hearing Edith Piaf sing a song I wrote at L’Olympia Music-Hall?”

“In my early years I was a stamp collector and a jazz fan so I’m doubly pleased to be a part of this event by the U.S. Postal Service honoring Edith Piaf and Miles Davis,” Stoller said.

Americans may know Edith Piaf best for her cheerful song “La Vie en Rose” (“Life in Pink”), about the experience of falling in love and seeing life through rose-colored glasses; the tune is still heard on the streets of Paris today. The song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.

Piaf toured the U.S. ten times and sang twice at Carnegie Hall. In 1960, the ailing chanteuse discovered the defiant song that would become her anthem, “Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien” (“No Regrets”).

Miles Davis was at the forefront of jazz musicians for decades, setting trends and exploring musical styles from bebop through cool jazz, fusion and funk. His restless musical exploration made him a hero to jazz lovers throughout the world. Among his many influential recordings are *Birth of the Cool*, *Kind of Blue*, *Sketches of Spain*, and *In a Silent Way*. He was also a great bandleader, and many important musicians rose to prominence in his bands, including saxophonists John Coltrane and Wayne Shorter; drummers Tony Williams and Jack DeJohnette; and pianists Bill Evans, Chick Corea, and Herbie Hancock.

Davis’ music will long be remembered for its profound depth of feeling. By the time of his death in 1991, he had won many prizes and honors, including a Grammy Award for Lifetime Achievement. A

congressional resolution was unanimously passed to honor the legacy of *Kind of Blue* on its 50th anniversary. In 1984, he received Denmark's prestigious Léonie Sonning Music Prize. In 1989, he was awarded the Grande Médaille de Vermeil by the city of Paris, which was presented to him by Jacques Chirac, then mayor and later president of France.

A second Miles Davis stamp dedication is scheduled in Los Angeles on June 27 at the Hollywood Bowl's Museum Terrace from 7 p.m. – 8 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. The dedication will be followed by the Herbie Hancock hosted "Miles Davis Celebration" concert at the Hollywood Bowl featuring Marcus Miller "Tutu Revisited," the Miles Electric Band (featuring Vince Wilburn, Jr. on drums) and Kind of Blue: Jimmy Cobb's "So What" Band. For ticket information please visit hollywoodbowl.com.

Art director Greg Breeding designed the stamps using an undated, black-and-white photo of Piaf made by Studio Harcourt Paris and a black-and-white photo of Davis, from 1970, by David Gahr.

The Miles Davis and Edith Piaf stamps are being issued as Forever stamps in self-adhesive sheets of 20 (10 of each design) and are being sold at a price of 45 cents each, or \$9 per sheet. Forever stamps are always equal in value to the current First-Class Mail one-ounce rate.

Customers may view the Edith Piaf and Miles Davis Forever stamps, as well as many of this year's other stamps, on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps, through [Twitter @USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or on the website *Beyond the Perf* at beyondtheperf.com/2012-preview. Beyond the Perf is the Postal Service's online site for background on upcoming stamp subjects, first-day-of-issue events and other philatelic news.

How to Order the First-Day-of-Issue Postmark, Miles Davis and Edith Piaf Forever Stamps

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at a local Post Office, at The Postal Store website at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724). They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others) and place them in larger envelopes addressed to:

Miles Davis/Edith Piaf Stamp
Postmaster
421 Eighth Ave., Rm. 2029B
New York, N.Y. 10199-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes by mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by August 12, 2012.

How to Order First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog, online at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724). Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724) or writing to:

U.S. Postal Service
Catalog Request
P.O. Box 219014
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

There are eight philatelic products available for this stamp issue:

- 469562, Joint First-Day Cover Set of 2, \$3.95.
- 469563, First-Day Cover Set of 2, \$1.78
- 469568, Digital Color Postmark Set of 2, \$3.20
- 469574, Folio, \$16.95
- 469584, Uncut Press Sheet, \$36.00.
- 469591, Ceremony Program (random single), \$6.95.

- 469597, Panel, \$9.95.
- 469599, Cancellation Keepsake (DCP Set 2 w/Pane), \$12.95.

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A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation — 151 million residences, businesses and Post Office™ Boxes. The Postal Service™ receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, *usps.com*®, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500. In 2011, Oxford Strategic Consulting ranked the U.S. Postal Service number one in overall service performance of the posts in the top 20 wealthiest nations in the world. *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic Business* magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for six years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

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