



THE JOHN L. WARFIELD CENTER FOR AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES
The University of Texas at Austin

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Civil Rights Icon Angela Davis headlines UT Austin's Black Matters International Black Studies Conference Sept. 30

Davis: 'Radical simply means grasping things at the root.'

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — Groundbreaking activist, professor and civil rights icon Angela Davis will keynote at the University of Texas at Austin's inaugural Black Matters International Black Studies Conference at 5 p.m. Friday, Sept 30 in Lady Bird Johnson Auditorium.

Davis, an emerita professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz and author of *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*, (Haymarket Books, 2016), is a living witness to the historical struggles of the contemporary civil rights era. She gained national attention in 1969 when she was removed from her UCLA teaching position because of her membership in the Communist Party and other activism. In 1970, she made the FBI's 10 Most Wanted List and was acquitted of charges in 1972 following 16 months in jail and an international "Free Angela" campaign advocating for her release.

She continues to advocate for prisoners' rights across the globe, among other causes, and at 72, fervently supports the neo-civil rights movement characterized by Black Lives Matter. Movie rights to her book *Angela Davis: An Autobiography* has been acquired by Codeblack Films, and will be produced by Nina Yang Bongiovi, whose credits include "Fruitvale Station" and "Dope," among others.

"Black Lives Matter, this is what we've been waiting for," Davis said when she accepted the 2016 Sackler Center First Award given to trailblazing women. "This is a historical conjuncture where all the ingredients came together in an amazing way and [founders] Opal, Patrisse, and Alicia were able to read the times and understand that this is what we need at this moment."

As a keynote speaker, Davis joins musician and spoken word artist Saul Williams and Lezley McSpadden, mother of Michael Brown and author of *Tell the Truth and Shame the Devil: The Life, Legacy and Love of My Son Michael Brown* (Regan Arts, 2016).

A full schedule of events may be found [here](#). A live feed of the two-day inaugural event may be viewed [here](#).

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