

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MEMBERS OF R.E.M., WILCO, YO LA TENGO, AND MANY OTHERS CELEBRATE  
BIG STAR IN *THANK YOU, FRIENDS: BIG STAR'S THIRD LIVE ... AND MORE***

***Concert film and album due out April 21; World Premiere at SXSW Film Festival.***

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Concord Bicycle Music is proud to announce the release of *Thank You, Friends: Big Star's Third Live ... And More*. The 90-minute concert film, which celebrates the music of Big Star through an illustrious collective of musicians, will have its world premiere at the 2017 SXSW Film Festival in Austin, Tex., on March 16. The title will be available in stores April 21, 2017 as a 2-CD/DVD or Blu-Ray combo pack, as well as a standalone, 2-CD album. Liner notes by GRAMMY® Award-winning writer Anthony DeCurtis and Chris Stamey (from the dB's, and a founding member of the Big Star *Third* ensemble) will round out the package.

Big Star's devastatingly beautiful third album has long been revered by artists and critics as one of the most influential records ever produced. Written and recorded when the legendary '70s band was primarily a studio project consisting of guitarist Alex Chilton and drummer Jody Stephens, *Third* (or *Sister Lovers*, as it was alternatively known) had never been performed in public with the original string and wind arrangements. That changed in 2010, following Chilton's untimely death just two days ahead of a much-anticipated Big Star performance at the South by Southwest Music Festival. That December, famous friends and fans assembled from far and wide to play a fully orchestrated Chapel Hill, N.C. gig in Chilton's honor. From there, the core players (including sole surviving Big Star member Jody Stephens, Mike Mills [R.E.M.], Mitch Easter [Let's Active], Chris Stamey [the dB's], plus the Posies' Ken Stringfellow and Jon Auer) took the show on the road internationally, enlisting guest stars and orchestras in each city, and performing not only songs from *Third*, but also material from Big Star's first two albums, *#1 Record* and *Radio City*. That core ensemble, along with a star-studded cast of guest artists, assembled in April 2016 at Glendale, Calif.'s Alex Theatre for the epic concert seen in *Thank You, Friends*. Directed by Benno Nelson of Yes Equals Yes, the film includes performances by a who's who of indie rock, including Jeff Tweedy and Pat Sansone of Wilco, Ira Kaplan (Yo La Tengo), Robyn Hitchcock, Dan Wilson (Semisonic), Benmont Tench, Jessica Pratt, Brett Harris, Django Haskins, and Skylar Gudasz as well as a full chamber orchestra helmed by San Francisco's acclaimed Kronos Quartet and conducted by Carl Marsh, who wrote the original orchestrations for *Third/Sister Lovers*.

*Thank You, Friends: Big Star's Third Live ... And More* will premiere at Austin, Tex.'s Alamo Ritz 1 on Thursday, March 16 at 6:30 PM, as part of the SXSW Film Festival. A Q&A with Benno Nelson, Jody Stephens, Mike Mills, Chris Stamey, Ken Stringfellow, and Skylar Gudasz will follow the screening. An orchestrated live concert of this music by many of the core ensemble featured in *Thank You, Friends* will take place at the Central Presbyterian Church on Friday, March 17 at 10:30 p.m.

About Big Star:

Much like Nick Drake, the Velvet Underground, or other critically esteemed artists whose work only gained commercial traction long after its initial release, Big Star's trademark mix of shimmering jangle pop with a side of elliptical melancholia was originally let loose into a world that just wasn't ready for it. Formed in 1971 by singer/songwriters Alex Chilton (1950-2010) and Chris Bell (1951-1978), drummer Jody Stephens (b. 1952) and bassist Andy Hummel (1951-2010), the Memphis-based band is now considered to be one of the most influential bands in modern music, having inspired some of the biggest alt-rock artists of the '80s, '90s and beyond. An underground core of fanatical enthusiasts kept the fire burning. The Replacements famously released "Alex Chilton," a song that paid tribute to Big Star's

songwriting genius. R.E.M.'s Peter Buck said, "Big Star served as a Rosetta Stone for a whole generation of musicians."

Over the course of their time together, Big Star recorded three LPs with producer John Fry at his Ardent Studios. 1972's *#1 Record* included the power-pop anthem "When My Baby's Beside Me," dreamy "Thirteen" and "In the Street" (famously covered by Cheap Trick for the theme of *That '70s Show*). *Radio City* (1974), recorded after the departure of Chris Bell, featured "September Gurls" (covered by likes of the Bangles and Superdrag). In the fall of 1974, not long after the release of *Radio City*, and the departure of bassist Andy Hummel, Chilton and Stephens recorded a new album, which was shelved until 1978, after the group had disbanded. That mythic album was released as *Third* (later reissued under the name *Sister Lovers* as well), and has long been revered by artists and critics as one of the most influential albums ever produced. *Third* is included as one of *Rolling Stone* magazine's "500 Greatest Albums of All Time."

Preorder *Thank You, Friends: Big Star's Third Live... And More*  
2-CD/Blu-Ray: [http://smarturl.it/ThankYouFriends\\_BR](http://smarturl.it/ThankYouFriends_BR)  
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Watch the trailer for *Thank You, Friends: Big Star's Third Live ... And More*:  
<https://youtu.be/Da-STdAmAUM>