

theLYRIC

Winter 2020



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Letter from the **Executive Director**



Kia Fontaine

Winter time is here and with the shorter days, The Lyric is bringing bright stars to light the long nights!

Our winter lineup has a diverse offering of artists and shows providing a flavor of entertainment for every taste - Guitar Player Hall of Famer Leo Kottke, blues goddess Ana Popovic, *Rave On! The Buddy Holly Experience*, revolutionary jazz musician Branford Marsalis and his Quartet, alternative rock band Fastball, blues legend Taj Mahal, modern Rat Pack meets tap in the Tap Pack, country music hit maker Phil Vassar, Bel Canto Trio revival, songwriter and musical genius Jim Messina, *Classic Moody Blues* with John Lodge, Sheela's *A Night of Soul from Aretha to Adele*, and Grammy Award-winning bluegrass band Steep Canyon Rangers just to name a few. Be sure to read all about the winter shows in "Tapping, Tributes & Trash Talk" (page 6).

Winter is also a time for celebrations and connections to family and friends, so come and experience the wonder and excitement of performing arts together with our Family FUN Series! "Junk rock" Recycled Percussion, National Geographic Live: Hidden Secrets of the Everglades with Conservation Photographer Carlton Ward Jr., Trey McLaughlin and his high-energy choir The Sounds of Zamar, and acrobatic rescue canines in *Mutts Gone Nuts* (page 16).

Calling all Student Youth Performers to audition for the 2020 Youth Arts Celebration! The Lyric League WANTS YOU - Singers, Dancers, Actors, Musicians, Comedians, Jugglers, Magicians, Poets, Tumblers and any other talents you can amaze us with! Auditions for 1st - 12th grade student performers will be held by appointment at The Lyric Theatre (pages 50 & 57).

With the aid of Women Supporting the Arts, we are strengthening our commitment to educate and inspire our leaders of tomorrow by providing access to all Lyric Theatre performances through our new Arts & Education Program *KidTix*. *KidTix* provides FREE tickets to non-profit organizations that serve low-income and/or at-risk youth. Please help us spread the word to deserving local organizations (page 50).

Performing arts provide an escape from everyday life. The magic of live entertainment takes us out of our everyday realities and can transport us into another realm. Whether cultural, educational or a trip down memory lane, performing arts have a transformative power to move communities forward in a meaningful way - it inspires and motivates, it is a medium for artistic expression that elevates and educates.

THANK YOU for your support to provide access to arts and culture at The Lyric for everyone! Together we are making the Treasure Coast a better place to live, work and play.

Warmest Regards,

Kia Fontaine

The Lyric Theatre's Mission

"To provide the community with a home for the performing arts that entertains, educates, and stimulates the growth of artistic integrity and experience for everyone."



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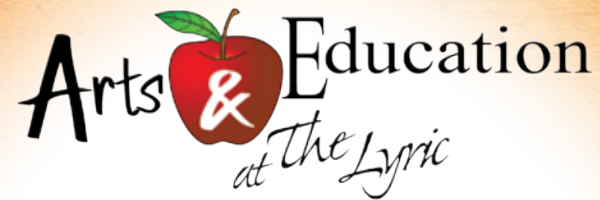


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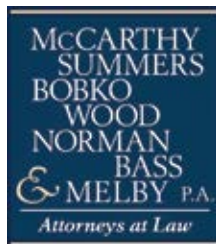
With nearly a quarter-century of music-making under their collective belt, the members of Fastball continue to extend and expand the band's widely loved body of work. January 25, 2020 7:00pm at the Lyric Theatre.

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The Friends of the Lyric, Inc. would like to thank these sponsors who have generously helped to underwrite the costs of our 2019-20 Season.



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The Tap Pack
JAN 29, 2020 | 4pm & 7pm



Tapping, Tributes & Trash Talk

Our winter line up features many of your favorite returning artists and some new names you won't want to miss. We have new energetic shows that are perfect for our family audience and continue on with our tradition of classic entertainment!

Married to Broadway

(January 8, 2020 7:00pm) They say that workplace romances are not a good idea, but don't tell that to Ron Sharpe and Barbra Russell. They first met when they played the romantic leads of Marius and Cosette in *Les Miserables*. The story they like to tell is that they were married so often on stage that they decided to get married in real life. Their love affair with each other and with Broadway has never altered and they have asked some of their talented friends to join them in a special show, *Married to Broadway*, which features the best of The Great White Way from the past to the present. There will be songs from *Phantom of the Opera*, *Carousel*, *Guys & Dolls*, and *West Side Story*, as well as surprises for the audience.

Ron Sharpe was the first actor to have played both male leads, Marius and Jean Valjean, in *Les Miserables* on Broadway. Other Broadway credits include original productions of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *The Civil War*, and in Disney's *King David*. He reprised his role of Jean Val Jean for the 25th anniversary production of *Les Mis* when it returned to Broadway in 2014 and he was featured in the production of *Sweeney Todd* at Live at Lincoln Center with Emma Thompson.

Barbra Russell performed as Cosette on the national tour of *Les Miserables*. She has performed as Luisa in *The Fantasticks* and Laurie in *Oklahoma* and has appeared in *The Little Shop of Horrors*, *Side by Side by Sondheim* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. She has performed in concert around the world and conceived, produced and performed on the CD *Sweethearts*, the music of Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. Both have performed at the White House for Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

The Sharpes are producers and directors and a recent high point was co-directing a production of *Les Mis* by the New Jersey Repertory Company. The romance and music continue.

Cirquesco

(January 9, 2020 7:00pm) Take the seductiveness of the Argentinian tango and French burlesque. Add the oohs and aahs of European circus techniques. The result, *Cirquesco*, an unforgettable evening that explores the art of choreography while testing the limits of the human body. From beginning to end, *Cirquesco* is a breathtaking production featuring state-of-the-art lighting, costuming and choreography.

Cirquesco was developed by Kevin Black, a former dancer, who decided that being on the stage was not fulfilling enough for him. He enjoyed choreography, costume design and set design, as well. He worked for several years at Norwegian Cruise Lines, developing and producing shows for onboard entertainment. In 1992, he settled in Florida and began Kevin Black Productions to provide entertainment for everything from cruise lines to resorts and theaters. He has presented *Dance D'Amour* and *Dance Your Pants Off* to sell-out crowds at The Lyric. Recently, he has directed *Spamalot*, *Tommy* and *The Rocky Horror Show* at The Crest Theatre in Delray Beach. He has designed several Cirque-style shows, spurred in part by the success of *Cirque du Soleil*.

"Before *Cirque du Soleil*, the circus theme was thought to appeal only to younger audiences," he said. "It was all about fun and clowns and silliness in three rings. *Cirque du Soleil* made circus a form of art that would appeal to the intellectual side and brought it into the adult world."

For *Cirquesco*, Black has brought professionally-trained dancers and acrobats and added state-of-the-art lighting and costuming and an electrifying soundtrack for a titillating and jaw-dropping exploration of the human body in action. Black considers it "Cirque du Soleil meets *Moulin Rouge*." You'll consider it simply amazing.

Leo Kottke

(January 11, 2020 7:00pm) Guitarist / composer Leo Kottke is one of the foremost finger-style guitar players in the world and he has the degree to prove it. In 2008, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Peck School of the Arts awarded Kottke a doctorate in performance music for redefining the potential of the guitar. "Kottke is an American musical icon who has extended the tradition established by musical greats such as Chet Atkins and Merle Travis and John Fahey," said Scott Emmons, dean of the school. "Over the past 35 years, no single guitarist has

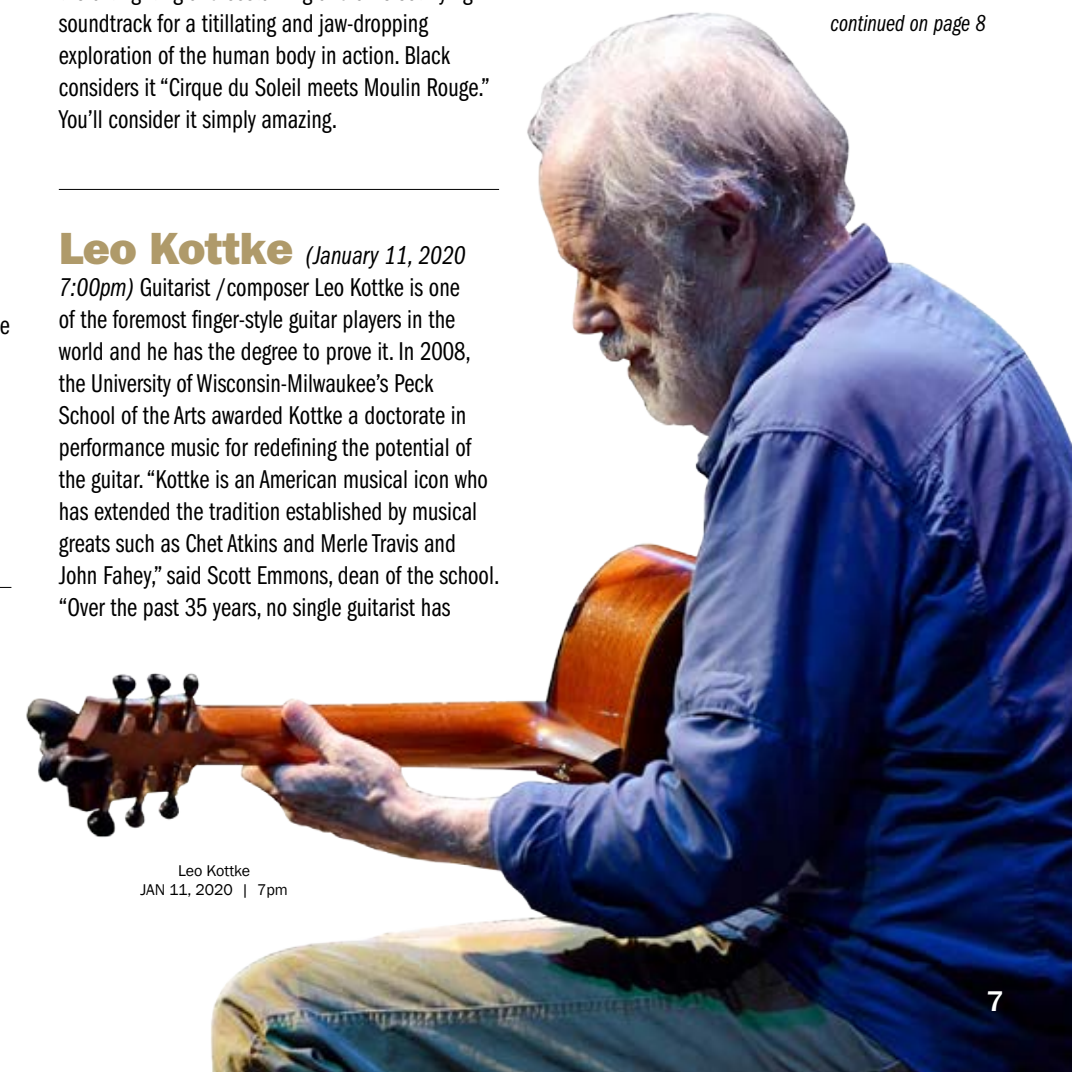
influenced an emerging performance style to the extent that Kottke has influenced finger-style guitar."

Leo Kottke was born in Georgia, but his family moved around and he was influenced by folk and delta blues music, especially the work of Mississippi John Hurt. As a boy, he played the violin and trombone, but abandoned both to the guitar by the age of 11. In the 1960s, after a stint in the military, Kottke settled in the Twin Cities area and began playing at Minneapolis' Scholar Coffeehouse, which had been home to Bob Dylan and John Koerner. His debut album, *12 String Blues*, was recorded on a Viking quarter-inch tape recorder.

After sending tapes to John Fahey, Kottke was signed to Fahey's Tacoma label and released *6-and-12-String Blues*, known as the "Armadillo album." Fahey's agent signed Kottke to a contract at Capitol Records, and his first major label record, *Mudlark* was released in 1971.

Kottke wanted to remain an instrumentalist, but *Mudlark* and albums like *The Greenhouse*, *My Feet are Smiling* and *Ice Water* positioned him as a singer/songwriter in the golden era of the singer/

continued on page 8



Leo Kottke
JAN 11, 2020 | 7pm

songwriter. His last album for Capitol, *Chewing Pine*, put him in the Top 30; his touring had brought him fans throughout the United States and the world. In 2002, Kottke collaborated with Phish bassist Mike Gordon, recording *Clone* and *Sixty Six Steps*. He has toured with flamenco and jazz guitar virtuosos Paco de Lucia and Al Di Meola, and his composition, "Ice Fields," a suite for amplified steel-string guitar and chamber orchestra, is considered a milestone for guitar concerto.

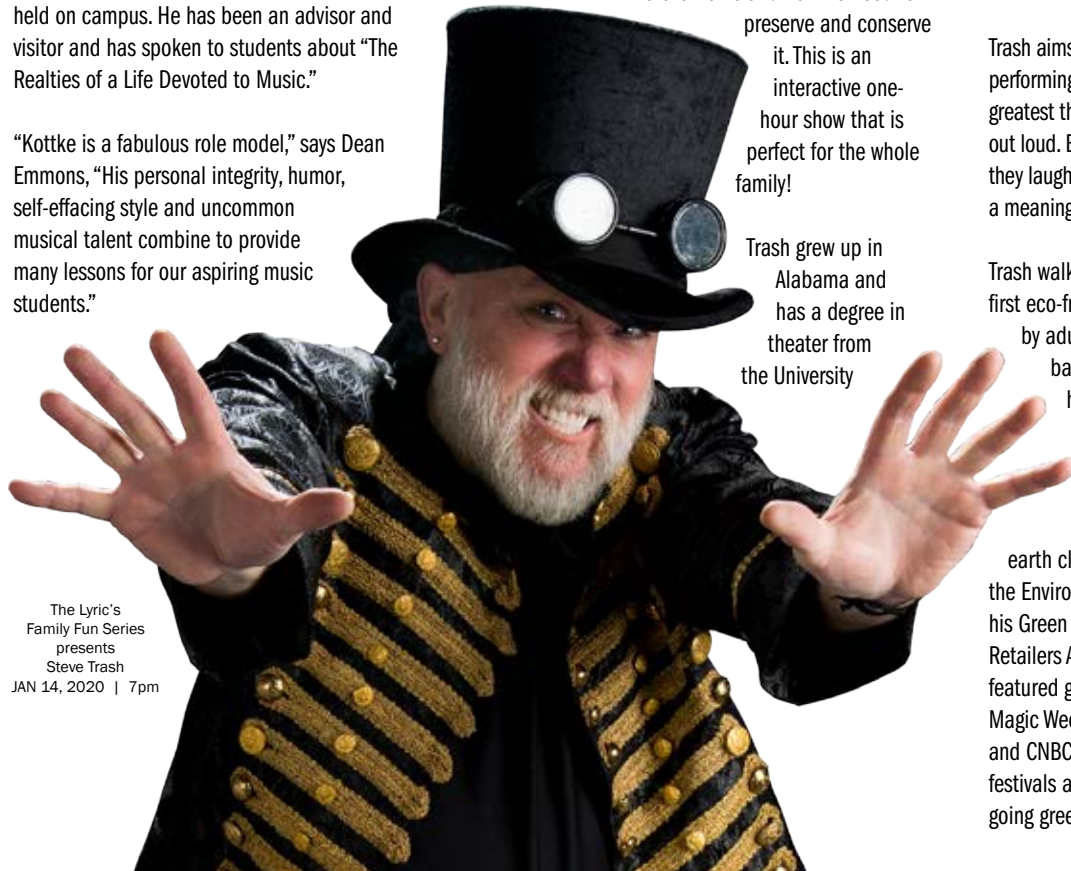
Throughout his career, Kottke has had to deal with partial hearing loss from an accident and severe tendonitis in his right hand, which almost ended his career. He maintained a relationship with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and its unique guitar program, the only one in the world at which a student may choose to specialize in finger-style, jazz, classical or flamenco guitar. In 1985, he performed at the first American Finger-Style Festival, held on campus. He has been an advisor and visitor and has spoken to students about "The Realities of a Life Devoted to Music."

"Kottke is a fabulous role model," says Dean Emmons, "His personal integrity, humor, self-effacing style and uncommon musical talent combine to provide many lessons for our aspiring music students."

Leo Kottke's peers have honored him, as well. He has two Grammy nominations, *Performance Magazine's* "Best Instrumentalist" award and induction into the Guitar Player Hall of Fame. Perhaps in tribute to his not playing the trombone as an adult, and with tongue in cheek, he was awarded a Certificate of Significant Achievement in Not Playing the Trombone from the University of Texas at Brownsville with Texas Southmost College.

The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents
Steve Trash (January 14, 2020 7:00pm) Steve Trash loves garbage. The self-proclaimed garbologist and green magician does magic tricks using everyday things people have thrown away. His goal is to entertain with magic tricks and illusions while telling the story of how nature works and how we need to preserve and conserve it. This is an interactive one-hour show that is perfect for the whole family!

Trash grew up in Alabama and has a degree in theater from the University



The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents Steve Trash JAN 14, 2020 | 7pm

of North Alabama. He moved to New York and studied at the Stella Adler School of Acting. In a 2010 interview with Gazette.net, he explained how he fell into garbage. "I wanted to make a living in entertainment," he said. "I was an actor, but that didn't really fulfill what I wanted. I wanted to reach people with fun, comedic entertainment. I stumbled onto doing tricks with trash and it just grew into this big thing, being able to share ecological principles through really high-quality magic tricks and stage illusions."

Audience members may watch Trash saw Mother Nature in half, but not to worry. She will be put together by "reusing, reducing and recycling." "I'm always looking for a way to make the magic play into a story I tell about how Mother Nature works and how we can conserve resources. I always want to do very high-quality magic. Magic should never suffer from trying to tell the eco message."

Trash aims his show at the entire audience, but performing for children is his passion. "Probably the greatest thing on the whole planet is a kid laughing out loud. Because they are very pure about the things they laugh about. You can really get at their hearts in a meaningful way if you can make them laugh."

Trash walks the magic walk. He created the world's first eco-friendly green magic set that can be used by adults and kids. It is made up of renewable bamboo and rubber tree wood. In 2013, he and Kelvin Holly released an album called *The Trash Tunes*, and he is a creator of The Recycle Cycle, a mobile recycling edu-station, to help kids learn the importance of keeping the earth clean and litter free. He has been given the Environmental Educator of the Year award, and his Green Magic Set won an American Specialty Retailers Association Award in 2009. He was a featured guest on LeVar Burton's *Reading Rainbow* Magic Week and has appeared on CBS, ESPN and CNBC. He has appeared in theater, fairs and festivals around the world, spreading his message of going green and being kind.



Sounds of Soul Tribute to Motown and Beyond JAN 15, 2020 | 7pm

"Be good. Be amazing. Don't be mean." Those are his watchwords.

Come and watch and join the fun. Proudly sponsored by The Bauman Family Foundation.

Sounds of Soul Tribute to Motown and Beyond (January 15, 2020 7:00pm)

Berry Gordy started the record label that came to be known as Motown 61 years ago. It's hard to understate the impact that label and that music had on American culture. Since 1996, the Sounds of Soul has brought to life the stars of Motown and those who followed. The group is known for its choreography, distinct harmonies and flashy, upscale stage personas and with a grueling schedule that averages more than 450 shows a year, they have reminded audiences that great music has no boundaries.

The six artists who make up the Sounds of Soul bring great vocals, slick dance moves and snazzy

costumes to an exciting, high-energy show that spotlights Motown classics and just great songs from The Temptations, The Four Tops, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, The Supremes, Lionel Richie, Tina Turner, Barry White and more. The Tampa-based group has performed at the American Airlines Arena in Miami, The Sun Dome in Tampa and the Registry Hotel in California. They are regularly featured on cruise ships and were the big hit at a "Motown Excursion" sponsored by CBS Radio. They have shared the stage with The O'Jays, Bobby Brown and funnyman Sinbad.

Richard Haerther of the Carrollwood Cultural Association said that the group put on a show that was one of the best his audiences had seen. "It was an amazing show, right down to the choreography. Audience members were dancing in the aisles. The Sounds of Soul Tribute to Motown and Beyond truly defines the Motown Sound and the soul music of the era. Patrons were asking to buy tickets to see them again right after the show and I had to rebook them that night."

You've heard it through the grapevine. Don't miss them.

America's Amazon: The Story of the St. Lucie River
A Film Produced by John Nelson

Presented by the Florida Oceanographic Society, the Historical Society of Martin County and WQCS / NPR for the Treasure Coast (January 16, 2020 7:00pm)

From the earliest times of Indian settlements to the present day, the St. Lucie River has played a vital part in the history of the Treasure Coast. Today, the river is frequently plagued with toxic algae blooms and pollutants that have caused immeasurable damage to the environment, but why has our river become one of the most polluted bodies of water in the nation?

To find the answer, photographer and documentarian John Nelson tirelessly worked over three years to create *America's Amazon: The Story of the St. Lucie River*. John explored documents, films, audio tracks, historic images, and technical drawings. He researched the archives of the Elliott Museum, the Florida Photographic Library, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Army Corp of Engineers, the University of Florida, Florida State University, and many other sources to meticulously document the history of the river.

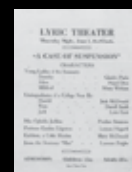
Throughout the film, leading scientists and environmentalists such as legendary photographer, Clyde Butcher; Dr. R. Grant Gilmore, senior scientist and founder of Estuarine, Coastal & Ocean Science; Dr. Paul Gray, Science Coordinator of Audubon Florida's Everglades Restoration Program; Dr. Edith (Edie) Widder, founder of Ocean Research & Conservation Association (ORCA); and the late Nathaniel Reed who was Florida's Environmental Advocate and co-author of the Endangered Species Act will be cited.

John said, "Discovering the untold history of the St. Lucie River was a challenging piece of detective

continued on page 14



Spring of 1913
 Construction for The "first" Lyric began on Osceola Avenue near Belle Flora and opened for its first performance a year later.



1917
 The "first" Lyric was abandoned and moved to a little wooden structure on Osceola Avenue.

June 1925
 Judge JC Hancock began construction of the new Lyric Theatre.



1930
 Newly equipped with a RCA Photophone, *Danger Lights* was screened as the first "talkie."



1926
 The Lyric opened with the feature picture *Skinner's Dress Suit*. Cost of construction was \$100,000 and was the largest building in Martin County.

1936
 The Hancocks fell on hard times during the Great Depression and sold The Lyric to the bank.

1936-1978
 The Lyric was rented out to community groups and was used to present traveling vaudeville shows, news weeklies, movies and eventually, a Performing Arts Auditorium.

1978
 The Lyric was purchased by the New Life in Christ Church and used for weekly worship services.



HISTORICAL LYRIC
 A Brief History

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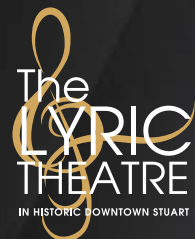
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work. As I started researching the river, especially from the mid 1800's on, the documents took me into areas that I would never have imagined." The St. Lucie River was once called "America's Amazon" and the "Jungle River," and early pioneers saw eco-tourism as a means of building the economy of the Treasure Coast, but others attempted to engineer the river for public commerce.

Only after seeing this documentary can one truly appreciate how different the river is now, and how serious the environmental problems are that we have created. There is hope for the St. Lucie River's future if we can learn from our past. Following the film, a panel discussion will be lead by Mark Perry of the Florida Oceanographic Society.

John Nelson is the voice of *The Audubon Moment* which is heard locally on WQCS, 88.9 NPR for the Treasure Coast. He is also an assistant instructor for the University of Florida's Florida Master Naturalist program. He will return to Indian River State College's Felden Lifelong Learning Institute to teach this spring as he will be doing a lecture series on the St. Lucie River.

Ana Popovic (January 17, 2020 7:00pm) Bruce Springsteen called her "One helluva guitar player." She was the only female guitar player invited to play in the All-Star Hendrix Experience, a national tour celebrating the music and legacy of another helluva guitar player, Jimi Hendrix. She is Ana Popovic, Lyric favorite and fiery performer who didn't come to the blues in an ordinary way.

Popovic grew up in Belgrade, Serbia, in the former Yugoslavia. Music was an important part of her life as her father was a musician and often invited friends to jam. Although she grew up in the oppressive Milosevic regime, she was able to study guitar privately and before

she was 20, had started her own band, Hush. They performed all over Yugoslavia, and with the fall of Communism, she was able to travel throughout Europe. She studied at the Conservatory in Utrecht, the Netherlands, and eventually signed a record deal with a German company.

In 1999, Popovic formed the Anna Popovic Band and began gaining international attention with her blend of electric funk and slide guitar, jazzy instrumental and soulful blues. By 2009, two of her albums reached the *Billboard* Blues Chart.

Ana Popovic
JAN 17, 2020
7pm



Popovic is very aware of her role as an international artist and a representative of women. "I grew up in Serbia, but my childhood was nice," she said. "Later on, by the time I left, it was a difficult time for the family I left behind. I left at the right moment. I moved to Holland and studied jazz and world music. I was traveling to both sides of the ocean and was the first international, central European artist to be nominated for an American Blues Award. That's when my career really started. I'm very fortunate and thankful to the audience. It's wonderful to be acknowledged for this work, and it's a huge honor to represent women and Europeans who come here to play."

The Hendrix tour has been another outlet for her representation of women. "I'm representing women and it's a great thing," she said. "I'm hoping they'll include more women. I'm here to open doors. There were women before me and it got easier with time. I wanted to play and have my own sound, not male or female. Younger women come to my shows and want to do what I do. That's wonderful. The guitar is becoming a female instrument and women are taking the lead. I think they can be as successful as men, being business ladies and taking their careers into their own hands."

Popovic practices what she preaches. She released her album *Trilogy* on her own label and it was in the Top 10 alongside Eric Clapton and Bonnie Raitt.

The musician stressed that no two shows of hers are the same. "*Trilogy* has 23 songs to choose from," she said. "There's everything from funk to soul to rock and blues and jazz. There's lots of guitar, melodies, jazzy standards, funk and soul. There's a little bit for everyone. If you've seen other shows before, it's not the same show. That's not how we roll. It's fun for the band and me."

That makes it fun for the audience, too, and a great night of music.

Tito Puente, Jr. (January 18, 2020 7:00pm) Sons of famous fathers take different paths. Some run as far away as they can from their father's fame and legacy. Others try to emulate it and fail. Some like Tito Puente, Jr., son of the performer known as El Rey, the King, embrace the legacy and work to keep it alive, while making their own kind of music and their own mark.

In an interview, Tito Puente Jr., who was raised in New York and now lives in Miami, spoke about the different influences on his father and himself. "I was born in the suburbs of Rockand County," he said. "I was suburbanized. New York is a totally different feeling. It's more urban jazz. South Florida is more mambo, more Caribbean islands, more Afro-Cuban salsa. It's part of the aura of South Beach, New York is more jazz and Big Band."

Puente noted that his father, who was born and raised in Harlem, was exposed to jazz, blues and the Apollo sound. "My father created a sound and a vision," Puente said. He added mambo to swing. It was very danceable and was very structured in its way. It had the rhythm. Gloria Estefan was right about that."

Puente liked and admired his father, who taught him valuable lessons. "He was an incredible man," Puente said. "He said the main thing was to hone your craft and surround yourself with creative people and you will be creative, too. He was always around musicians. He was a cool cat and spent a lot of time with jazz, Latin and percussion players. I learned that from him and it's taken me far into a career having that instilled at an early age."

One thing his father did not teach him was the drums. The younger Puente began his career in the school marching band and he took drum lessons with someone else. "He didn't have the patience to teach," Puente said. "He sent me to drum classes and in college, jazz appreciation pushed me to learn more about music. I would come on the road with him from my late teens to early adult, watching and listening. It was the greatest way to learn about



Rave On! The Buddy Holly Experience
JAN 21, 2020 | 7pm

Latin jazz music, seeing that mentorship. It got into my heart. He didn't push me; I gravitated to it."

Puente has created his own style and it has taken him a long way. He brings a taste of contemporary jazz to the traditional mambo style and performs more than 300 shows a year across the country, from jazz festivals to grand symphony halls. In 2004, he released the celebrated album, *In My Father's Shoes*, which inspired a BET Jazz television special. He also appeared on the NPR tribute, *The Apollo at 70: A Hot Night in Harlem*. His 2010 album, *Got Mambo*, featuring guests Hansel and Raul and Bobby Cruz combined traditional mambo with new and innovative salsa compositions.

Now 47, Puente is comfortable with his legacy and his own music. "I'm getting to the point where I feel I've embraced his spirit," he said. "He left a catalogue of more than 186 records. I've embraced the 'nepotism.' I do feel that I honor his name. He shined a light on Latin music as an ambassador and I'm proud to hold that crown highly. What makes my concerts unique is that I have a quirkiness between songs and tell how it was written. I also engage the audience and talk about the great nightclubs and places like Kutcher's in the Catskills. It's really nostalgic and your feet will be hurting you."

Rave On! The Buddy Holly Experience

(January 21, 2020 7:00pm) "That'll Be the Day" when *Rave On! The Buddy Holly Experience*, rock 'n' rolls into town, bringing the music you danced and sang to. From "Peggy Sue" to "Everyday," to "It's So Easy," Buddy Holly managed to change the face of rock 'n' roll and become a legend before dying in a plane crash at 22.

Rave On! is not an ordinary tribute show that tries to replicate every song as it was produced. Instead, the show reinvents the ordinary tribute show with an electrifying, high-energy rock 'n' roll extravaganza. The musicians are top flight and help re-imagine all the thrills of a Buddy Holly concert so many years ago. In a unique twist, the show's creator, Billy McGuigan, as Buddy Holly, celebrates the birth of an era and pays homage to fellow rockers Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper. The latter two, of course, would die in a snowy cornfield with Holly on a day that singer/songwriter Don McLean called "The Day the Music Died."

For McGuigan, playing Holly was the role he was born to play. An Air Force brat, his father loved to

continued on page 20

1988
Friends of the Lyric purchased the historic theatre.

1989
Friends of the Lyric became a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

1993
The Lyric Theatre was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1996
New Orchestra seating was installed and administrative offices constructed.



1999
Vacant lot to the north of The Lyric was purchased for a future expansion.

2001
The balcony of the theater was remodeled for the installation of new balcony seating, an elevator was installed and refurbishment of the lobby and restrooms.

2005
The Lyric expansion was completed, enlarging the stage 14 feet and adding a backstage equipped with a restroom and office/storage areas.



A Capital Campaign resulted in substantial renovations to the lobby and box office, new exterior and interior entrances, new orchestra seating, new sound system and architectural elements added to the walls and columns.

2015-16
The Lyric's proscenium was ornamented in an Art Nouveau style. The elegant design, artistry and craftsmanship of the trompe l'oeil art technique were added throughout The Lyric including the balcony parapet, doorway transoms and interior theatre walls.



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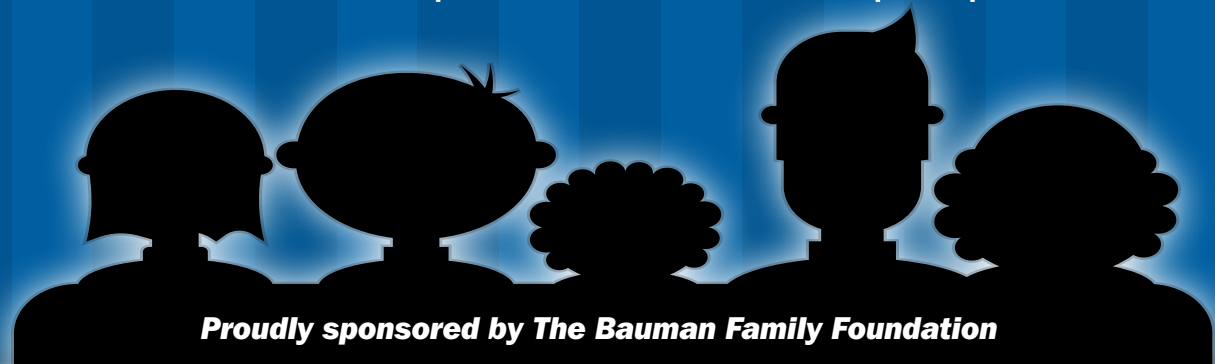
MAR 19 • 7pm



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MAR 29 • 4pm & 7pm



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sing Beatles music. In an interview with *Broadway World*, McGuigan described how his house was always filled with music. "One of my first musical memories was my dad teaching my brother Ryan and me to sing the high harmony lines on 'She's Leaving Home.' There we were, Ryan, 5, and me, 8, singing these high parts terribly while my dad did his best Paul impersonation. Little did he know he was planting the seeds of a career in music!"

McGuigan has played Holly, the rock 'n roll pioneer who died too young, more than 2500 times in *Rave On!* and hundreds more times in *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. He has received critical acclaim for his energy, realism and raw talent. Tommy Allsup was a Grammy winner and a lead guitarist for Buddy Holly, gave up his seat to the Big Bopper on the fateful deadly flight. He has said that "*Rave On!* is the best Buddy Holly show out there."

An Evening with Branford Marsalis

(January 22, 2020 7:00pm & January 23, 2020 7:00pm) A revolutionary jazz musician and Grammy-winning saxophonist, Branford Marsalis is in a league of his own. He is an NEA Jazz Master and Tony award nominee for the original score for the revival of August Wilson's *Fences*. The New Orleans native, eldest son of pianist and educator Ellis Marsalis and the brother of Wynton, Delfeayo and Jason Marsalis, the musician began his career as a youngster, picking up the clarinet first. He eventually settled on the soprano sax and worked with Clark Terry and his brother, Wynton, in Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers while in college. In 1986, he formed his own quartet, which has become one of the most widely respected groups in jazz.

In 2015, Marsalis and his quartet received a rare invitation to join Kurt Elling in a weekend performance at the New Orleans Snug Harbor. Elling and Marsalis recorded their collaboration, which can be heard on the 2016 release *Upward Spiral*, which was nominated for a 2017 Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal Album. Now the artist and his ensemble have released *The Secret between the Shadow and the Soul*, which capitalizes on Marsalis' collaborations with Sting and Elling. "Working with Kurt for a year and a half took me back to what I learned in hindsight from my gig with Sting," he said. "Working with a

singer changes you in ways you don't realize. When I started playing jazz, after my background in R & B, all the possibilities I discovered led me to play solos that went on and on. Sting said, 'No, you've got 45 seconds,' which did more than just cause me to edit. It taught me to focus on the melodies, to get to the point."

Marsalis and his group have longevity not often seen in the music business. Pianist Joey Calderazzo and bassist Eric Revis have been with the group for more than 20 years, and drummer Justin Faulkner, known as "the rookie," has been with it for a decade. In addition to performing, each of the veterans, including Marsalis, is a composer and their works are heard on the recording and in concert. For Marsalis, it's about the non-verbal story-telling, a lesson he learned from Sonny Rollins. "Sonny Rollins

An Evening with
Branford Marsalis
JAN 22, 2020 | 7pm
JAN 23, 2020 | 7pm



provided the template for playing each piece with a ton of vocabulary and how to use the sound of one's instrument," he said. "With us, it's all about the sound and the power it has to create emotion. When you deal with sound, you don't play the same thing twice in a row. You listen to each other and every song is different."

Marsalis has had a wildly successful career as a solo artist, working with some of the best classical ensembles in the world. He has performed with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago and Dusseldorf Symphonies, and performed his first solo concert at San Francisco's Grace Church in 2014, a performance documented in the recording, "In My Solitude." He served as creative director for the Ascent series for the Cincinnati Symphony in 2012-2013 and served as musical director to *The Tonight show with Jay Leno*.

Still, Marsalis finds that his band works best for him. "Some musicians may need to work in different projects to create the illusion of sounding different by changing the context," he said. "We are confident that we can adjust our group sound so we don't have to change the content. Staying together allows us to play adventurous, sophisticated music and sound good. Lack of familiarity leads to defensive playing, playing not to make a mistake. I like playing sophisticated music and I couldn't create this music with people I didn't know."

The Capitol Steps

(January 24, 2020 6:00pm & 8:30pm) The political satire troupe The Capitol Steps, founded in 1981 by a group of Capitol Hill staffers, has a definite political bias. They disdain the pompous, the self-important and the just plain silly, regardless of political affiliation. They skewer political figures and hangers-on of both parties in equal measure. The only sure thing is that whatever your political preferences, they will make you laugh.

The group began when staffers to then Senator Charles Percy were asked to plan entertainment for a Christmas party. As they tell it, their first idea was a Nativity play, but in the whole Congress, they couldn't find three wise men or a virgin. Please direct all comments about irreverence to the Capitol Steps, Washington, DC. They work in song parodies and are long-time staples on NPR

and at The Lyric, where they always get the year off to a great start.

Elaina Newport, a founding member of the group, loves Florida because we keep them in material. From the days of hanging chads to the feeling that Florida is bemused every time Election Day rolls around, as if it's the first ever held, the group knows that Florida will have something to give.

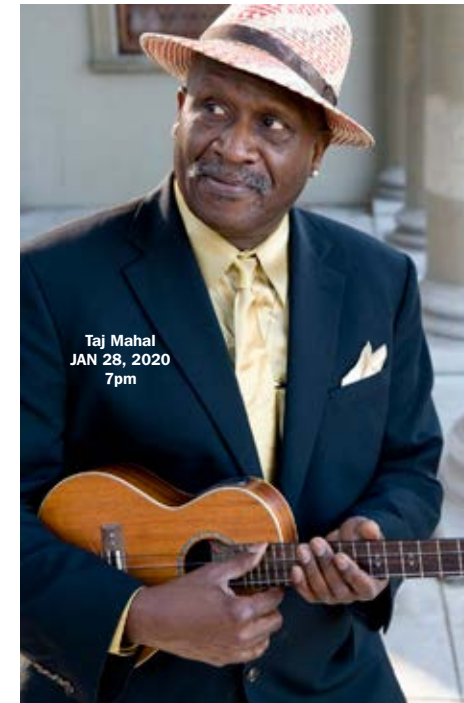
In a 2018 interview for *City Beat* magazine, Newport noted that things have been changing so rapidly of late that they sometimes write a song and the person is gone from the scene before the singer has learned the song. (Think Anthony Scaramucci.) People like Paul Manafort ("I'm So Indicted") and others have ebbed and flowed in the ongoing drama. Still, the Steps have covered six presidents and the high bar for satire is set.

"Until now, Bill Clinton was the golden age of political satire," she said. "There was a little bit of the same thing going on with Clinton as with Trump; it was hard to be more ridiculous than the actual stories, with Linda Tripp putting a wire in her bra and Monica (Lewinsky) keeping the dress. That story got more and more bizarre. The same is true today. The good news is we're bipartisan. If you'd seen the show in the Clinton years, you would have been like, 'Oh, you've got so many songs about Democrats.' Now the Republicans are the party in power, and the party in power is always funnier."

No one is too powerful to escape the Steps treatment. There may be songs about small hands or bad hair and the subject need not be American. Vladimir Putin had his turn with "Putin on the Blitz." Beto O'Rourke was popular last year and all of the men wanted to play him because of his youthful good looks. Newport noted that they all hoped they were handsome enough. She also said that the good news is the presence of more women in the troupe because there are more women in power. You can probably figure that Nancy Pelosi and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez will be immortalized in song very soon.

Of course, things change very quickly in Cap Steps world. People we don't even know about may break through and find themselves getting the Cap Steps treatment. It really is a sign they've arrived.

As for Newport, she has always maintained that she is completely nonpartisan. She worked for two Republican senators, Chuck Percy and Al D'Amato, both of whom were defeated. She is married to a



Taj Mahal
JAN 28, 2020
7pm

former Clinton appointee and considers herself "an extreme moderate." Whether you tilt left, right or are just down the middle, you'll find the Capitol Steps the antidote for whatever ails our political system. Proudly sponsored by Fred and Betty Kopf.

Fastball

(January 25, 2020 7:00pm) When Tony Scalzo, Miles Zuniga and Joey Shuffield formed a band in Austin in 1995, they experimented with several names including Magneto U.S.A. They changed the name to Fastball when they signed with Hollywood Records and their 1998 album, *All the Pain Money Can Buy*, hit platinum within six months. It stayed on the *Billboard* 200 chart for a year. That album also had two Grammy nominations, including one for their hit song, "The Way."

The band would record and then go their separate ways. That's changed in recent years with the group's release of *Step into the Light* in 2017 and their 8th album, *The Help Machine*, scheduled for 2019 release. "In the past, we'd made a record and then everybody would go their separate ways for a while," said Miles Zuniga. "Now, we're feeling so excited about the music that it's 'How soon can we make another record?' We're feeling a sense of urgency about the music that's really refreshing."

Fastball now records on its own label and the new album demonstrates the distinctive songwriting, expressive vocals and inventive melodic sensibilities of Zuniga and Scalzo. Add in drummer Shuffield and the long-standing lineup shows its creative rapport

on compositions by both Zuniga and Scalzo. Those compositions gain resonance with the production of Los Lobos member and Grammy-winner Steve Berlin. "Steve became an integral part of the team," Shuffield said. "He's a really positive guy, he's got a great ear and he helped us come up with some great sounds. His personality fit right into what we were doing and he understood where each of us was coming from. He just drove us into the ground: it would be one or two in the morning and he'd say, 'All right, what do you guys want to do next?'"

The band members agree that Berlin created an atmosphere where each could break out of his comfort zone. Scalzo tackled the keyboard and guitar and brought in an old friend, Bruce Hughes, to handle the bass parts. Other guests include Austin legend Charlie Sexton, who adds guitar on the song "The Girl You Pretended to Be," Wye Oak member Andy Steck, who played multiple instruments on a pair of tracks and Band of Heathens member Gordy Quist and John Chipman. "We had a great time in the studio and the whole thing was a very creative experience," Scalzo said. "When Fastball started out, we were almost like two different bands and Miles and I tended to be very careful to keep our hands off each other's songs. But now we view them all as Fastball songs and we generally feel free to mess with them. It works better that way."

The band has been together for a quarter century and feels that they're making some of the best music of their lives. "When you're young, you're insecure and trying to get attention for yourself," Scalzo said. "When you get a little more mature, you start to care more about what's right for the music. When I was in my 20s, I was always trying to impress people, but all I care about now is making great music and I think the whole band feels that way."

Taj Mahal

(January 28, 2020 7:00pm) Taj Mahal believes that the blues are everywhere, transcending time and place. The 76-year-old legend, who has been making music for six decades, makes the music that has meaning to him. "I just want to be able to make the music that I'm hearing come to me," he said. "That's what I did. When I say, 'I did,' it's not coming from ego. The music comes from somewhere. You're just the conduit it comes through. You're here to receive the gift."

For this great artist, his gift has served to reveal the scope of the blues to a wider audience. "The blues

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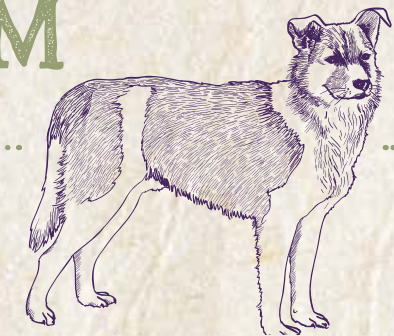
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is bigger than most people think," he said. "You could hear Mozart play the blues. It might be more like a lament. It might be more melancholy, but I'm going to tell you, the blues is in there."

Taj Mahal has spent decades pursuing the roots of the music to the American South, the Caribbean and Africa, creating new sounds again and again. It's the juxtaposition of the traditional and the avant-garde that has brought him praise from rock 'n roll stars like Eric Clapton and the Rolling Stones.

The artist's exploration of music began as an exploration of self. He was born in 1942 in Harlem to a jazz pianist father with Caribbean roots and a gospel-singing school teacher mother from South Carolina. "I was raised really conscious of my African roots," he said. "I was trying to find out where what we did here connected to what we left there."

In the 1950s, the family moved to Springfield, Mass., a melting pot for immigrants. While there was music from a variety of cultures, it was a challenge to hear it. "Things were different in those days," Taj said. "There weren't a lot of places that African-Americans had to go out and entertain themselves, so people did a lot of entertaining in their homes. Friday and Saturday night, you'd move the furniture, mop and wax the floor and set things up so people could pop over and hear all the music."

Taj Mahal attended the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he studied agriculture and animal husbandry. He felt that his interest in agriculture was as basic as his interest in music. "Those were the two things I recognized, even as a very young

child, that people were never going to do without," he said.

In 1964, Taj headed to Los Angeles and formed a group, the Rising Sons. He released several albums and received a Grammy nomination, the first of 14, for the soundtrack from the film, *Sounder*. In the 1980s, he moved to Hawaii, and as he toured internationally, his gritty blues sound began to incorporate Latin, reggae, Caribbean, calypso, Cajun and jazz, layered with an Afrocentric roots base.

Taj Mahal hasn't done it alone. For more than 40 years, he and bandmates bassist Bill Rich and percussionist Kester Smith have been on a wild ride through reggae, funk, jazz and more. In 2019, guitarist and lap steel virtuoso Bobby Ingrano joined the group and they became the Taj Mahal Quartet.

It's hard to quantify Taj Mahal's importance, but there are a few hints. He's been nominated for a Grammy 14 times and won three, the latest in 2017 for *TajMo*, a collaboration with Keb' Mo'. He is in the Blues Hall of Fame and has won a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Americana Music Association. Mahal is proud of the accolades, but that's not what drives him. "I was raised really conscious of my African roots," he said. "Like it or not, the music and the movement of my people to the West completely shaped the modern music that we have. I'm not trying to start crowing about it, but popular music is shaped on the backs and shoulders and foundation of what came out of Africa."

The Tap Pack (January 29, 2020 4:00pm & 7:00pm) The Rat Pack was the epitome of cool. Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and the gang personified an era that is long past but not forgotten. Enter The Tap Pack, five talented Australian blokes who sing, joke around and tap dance in an elegant and entertaining nod to the originals. They're a modern Rat Pack with world class tapping skills and it begs the question: why are Australian men so gorgeous?

The guys, dressed in slick suits, pay homage to the Rat Pack with their witty banter and smooth vocals and a swinging live jazz band, but it is the extraordinary tap dancing that will amaze. They grab you from the first downbeat and the pace of the show never slows as they joke, compete and perform cool classics with a fresh twist. They infuse tap dance with swing music and dance up a storm. The talented performers have stage, film and television credits and more than 20 musical productions among them.

This is the group's first U.S. tour, but they have packed in audiences at the Sydney Opera House and London's West End. *TimeOut London* said that the show "was an astonishing tap display that builds in intensity...hammering out completely different rhythms with each foot, soaring in the air, touching toe to heel. Genuinely breathtaking." *The Sydney Morning Herald* called the hometown lads "a terrific cast and some hot tapping. Take this chance to get the full, swoon-inducing effect of these classy young men with their incredibly fast feet."

The Tap Pack is pure entertainment. They sing, they dance, they joke. They bring a new, invigorating energy to a timeless style. It's Old School Cool from the new Kings of Swing. They'll tap their way into your heart.

The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents Recycled Percussion (February 1, 2020 7:00pm) Taking percussion to a whole new level, Recycled Percussion is a "junk rock" performance perfect for the whole family. After becoming a national phenomenon following their appearance on *America's Got Talent* in 2009, Recycled Percussion has brought their brand of innovative rock percussion to audiences across the United States and around the world in over 15 countries. In their immersive performances, the quartet of percussionists use buckets, power tools,

ladders, trashcans, and anything else they can get their hands on to make music.

Formed in Goffstown, New Hampshire, Recycled Percussion was formed by Justin Spencer in 1995. Along with groups like Stomp, the junk rock group helped give birth to this exciting style of music. Recycled Percussion got their first break in 2009, when they appeared on *America's Got Talent*. They became the then highest-placed non-singing act to ever compete when they finished 3rd in the competition. Since then, the group has had guest appearances on the *Carson Daly Show*, the *Today Show*, *China's Got Talent*, and the Latin Grammy Awards. Recycled Percussion was featured on the cover of *USA Today* and voted National Act of the Year a record-breaking six times. In 2010, the percussionists became headliners in Las Vegas, performing nightly in the Saxe Theater at Planet Hollywood on the Las Vegas Strip. Don't miss Recycled Percussion in their performance at The Lyric Theatre. *Proudly sponsored by The Bauman Family Foundation.*

Abbacadabra: The Ultimate ABBA Tribute (February 4, 2020 6:00pm & 8:30pm) Jack Greenberg signed the up-and-coming Swedish pop group ABBA to its first U.S. recording contract in 1974. It was hard to envision then what was to become a global phenomenon, spawning a Broadway show and several hit movies. When Greenberg first saw Abbacadabra, an ABBA tribute band, he said it was a revelation.

"I know ABBA inside and out and when I first saw Abbacadabra perform, I couldn't believe it. It was like watching the real deal."

Greenberg put his money where his mouth is and now manages the tribute band, which came to life in 2004. Gary Raffanelli, a musician, entrepreneur, Benny Andersson look-alike and ABBA fan, saw the group in 1979 and decided to put together a tribute band. He called on his friend Sandy Selby, who has a four-octave range, to help dissect the vocal parts. Every musical note would have to be transcribed and replayed into the computer. All of the parts were assemble and compared to the original ABBA tracks for accuracy.

Raffanelli brought together a team of highly trained vocalists and internationally-known keyboardists, percussionists and bassists to recreate the sounds and sights of an ABBA show. The group's first show was at the El Dorado Resort and Casino in Reno, but they were soon playing to sold out crowds around the country and on cruise lines such as Princess and Royal Caribbean. Fittingly, in 2007, they began performing in Europe, where ABBA first came to fame.

The group covers 20 of ABBA's mega-hits, including "Mamma Mia," "Dancing Queen," "The Winner Takes it All," and "Take a Chance on Me." They are known for their attention to detail, from the sound to the clothing. Listening to them is like taking a step back in time, when everyone was dancing.

Tony Orlando once told Gary Raffanelli that "When you're dreaming about your life and future, shoot for the moon, because even if you miss, you'll still be up there among the stars." Raffanelli took a chance and it has paid off big time, for his band, and most especially, for his audiences. You can take a chance, too. *Partial proceeds to benefit Tykes & Teens.*

The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents National Geographic Live! Hidden Wild Secrets of the Everglades with Conservation Photographer Carlton Ward Jr.

(February 5, 2020 7:00pm) Author, photographer, conservationist and National Geographic explorer Carlton Ward Jr. travels the world to find and document conservation stories that have not yet been told. He has lived deep in the Amazon, documented new species in the rainforests of Gabon and photographed endangered desert elephants in Mali. Then he discovered the biggest untold story of his career, hiding in his own back yard.

Ward is an eighth generation Floridian, and he uses his camera to tell the story of the little-known world surviving in the shadows of the beaches and theme parks that people associate with Florida. He has trekked more than 2,000 miles on two National Geographic-supported expeditions, to showcase a statewide vision to protect Florida's wild places. Both expeditions produced award-winning books, PBS films and widespread outreach. Ward continues to fight to protect an endangered wildlife corridor needed to keep the Everglades connected to the

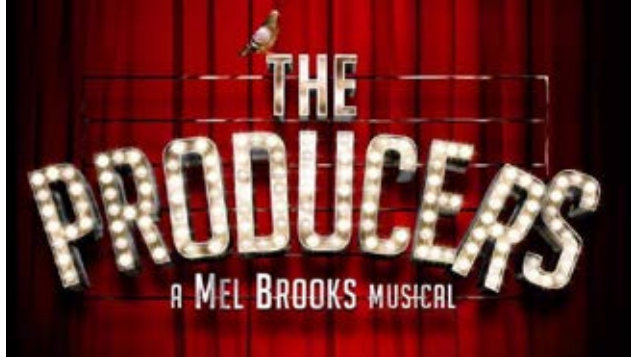
The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents Recycled Percussion FEB 1, 2020 | 7pm



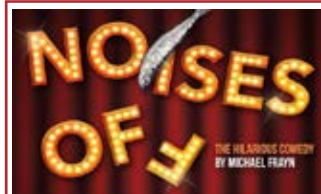
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Martin County's Community Theatre For 49 Years



Max Bialystock, the one time king of Broadway producers is hungry to strike it rich, and Leo Bloom, an accountant has dreams of someday becoming a theatre producer. They discover they can get rich by producing a flop rather than a hit, and start by finding the worst show, worst director, and worst actors. When their new production, the gloriously offensive "Springtime for Hitler" turns out to be a smash success, the plan is thrown. **JAN 16 - FEB 2, 2020**



by Michael Frayn

Brimming with slapstick comedy, Noises Off is a farce, complete with slamming doors, falling trousers, and of course flying sardines. Their troupe's production of "Nothing On" in three stages, dress rehearsal, the opening performance, and a performance towards the end of a debilitating run, gives us a window into the inner workings of theatre behind the scenes, progressing from flubbed lines and missed cues in the dress rehearsal to mounting friction between cast member in the final performance. **MAR 12 - 29, 2020**



by: Charles Busch

A contemporary Cinderella story set in Greenwich Village, reminiscent of the classic screwball comedies of the 1930s, but with a twist. A shy and eccentric Christopher helps an elderly millionaire when he faints in the street. Touched by his generous spirit, he becomes his benefactor, and arranges for him to meet his Prince Charming. When Christopher inherits half of his millions, and the family threatens to contest the will, the old man's ghost returns to help. **MAY 7 - 24, 2020**

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LYRIC LEGACY

A Society for Preservation of the Arts

Bob & Ralf Massey encourage others to become Founding members of *the Lyric Legacy Society*

By Linda Prange, Development Director

From the beginning, we knew our lunch was going to be special when Bob said, "When we heard of the Lyric Legacy and that it's designed to help preserve The Lyric for years to come, we jumped on it!" To this, Ralf readily added, "We hope others will do the same."

Bob and Ralf Massey are Founding Members of The Lyric's new Planned Giving Program, the Lyric Legacy Society and Kia Fontaine and I enjoyed lunch recently with them. Bob and Ralf aka Alice, told us they're not seeking the "limelight" but rather they want to do whatever they can to encourage others to consider including The Lyric in their estate planning.

Bob proudly pointed out they're both from the "Jersey Shore" and that he was raised around boat yards. He developed a love of boating so it seemed appropriate that his first job was at a boat yard. He started at the bottom - literally -- as a "bottom painter." Bob painted the bottom of boats and quickly became a "varnisher." Before long, he was selling boats, learning the business and in fact, building boats.

Ralf was also driven and loved challenges. At a time when being a New York Registered Stock Exchange Broker was a primarily male dominated field, Ralf surprised everyone but herself when she achieved the designation after many grueling hours of study and hard work.

Bob and Alice (she hadn't earned her nick name Ralf yet) met at a party and as Ralf tells it, after seeing Bob, she told her roommate, "I found just the guy for you!" A few nights later while Ralf was studying, there was a knock at the door; there stood Bob and that was it. They married at the court house and 56 years later are still very much in love.

They've had many adventures. Bob served in the Army New Jersey National Guard, Ralf smiles as she tells how she taught Bob to fish, Bob smiles as he tells how she was dressed for surf fishing one morning and he quipped, "You look more like a Ralf" (his spelling) and the name stuck. They both hold Private Pilot licenses and both also have 100 Ton Master Captain's Licenses.



They ran boat charters, built boats and in 1971 began Bob Massey Yacht Sales and ran it successfully until selling the business in 1995.

Bob and Ralf have lived in the Yacht and Country Club of Stuart since 2004 but if you're looking for Bob, you'll probably find him on his 31' Duffy Lobster Maine Built boat and if weather is good though, he's probably fishing. Ralf, on the other hand loves golf. But she's also a needlepoint artist since she creates amazing petit point needlepoint belts. Bob has more than 23 of her original creations and the one he was wearing at lunch was incredible. Ralf also crochets and knits ... "She's always doing something" said Bob.

Our lunch ended too quickly but before leaving, Bob and Ralf reminded us of their commitment to The Lyric and of the message they want to share. "The Lyric is a part of our life and without it, there would be a void. We hope our gift will keep The Lyric alive and the center for arts and culture in Stuart for many years to come ... we hope others will join us as Founding Members of the Lyric Legacy Society."

We agree with Bob and Ralf ... Now is the perfect time to become a Founding Member of *the Lyric Legacy Society* ... Will you join us?

QUESTIONS? LET'S TALK!

You may reach me ... Linda Prange, Development Director at 772.220.1942 extension 209 or email development@lyrictheatre.com. Play Your Role Today to Ensure The Lyric's Role Tomorrow



rest of America. His current National Geographic project, "Path of the Panther," is using sophisticated camera traps and intimate photojournalism to create an unprecedented glimpse into the life of one of America's most endangered and elusive predators.

Carlton Ward is the author of four books and his photographs have been published widely in *National Geographic*, *Audubon*, *Smithsonian* and *Nature Conservancy* magazines. He has received the Conservation Leadership Award from the Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida and the Rolex Artist-in-Exploration Awards from the Explorers Club.

The Cocktail Cabaret
FEB 6, 2020 | 7pm



The Cocktail Cabaret

(February 6, 2020 7:00pm)

Do you remember when the Happy Hour meant a lounge act to enjoy while you sipped your

favorite drink? The Cocktail Cabaret takes its audience back to the time of the Happy Hour lounge act in Las Vegas with a show that is upbeat, stylish, intimate musical cabaret, reminiscent of vintage Vegas. The musical

National Geographic has been making explorers of all of us for more than a century through groundbreaking storytelling from the world's best and brightest scientists, explorers, photographers and filmmakers. National Geographic Live! brings their stories to the stage and enables audiences to interact with the men and women who have gone where few have gone before.

You can join Carlton Ward Jr. at The Lyric as he follows the footsteps of bears, panthers and cowboys while discovering the wonders of a hidden world on the brink of being lost forever. *Proudly sponsored by The Bauman Family Foundation.*

revue features a combination of live, original music and standards, performed by four-Broadway-caliber singers from the Great White Way and *America's Got Talent* and a four-piece band led by concert pianist Philip Fortenberry, who performed as Liberace's hand and body double in the HBO movie, *Beyond the Candelabra*.

Fortenberry is the co-producer and pianist of the show, which debuted in 2017 at Cleopatra's Barge at Caesar's Palace on the Las Vegas Strip. The pianist, who holds a Master of Music Degree in classical piano performance from New Jersey City University, was an adjunct faculty member at the Steinhardt School of Education at NYU and continued private piano studies at Juilliard. His "flying fingers" have performed for 10 Broadway shows and eight national tours, including *Cats*, *Ragtime*, and *The Lion King*.

In addition to Fortenberry and the band, the cast includes Niki Scalera, a Broadway veteran who performed as Penny in *Hairspray*, Jane in Disney's *Tarzan*, and in Neil Simon's *Jake's Women*. Maren Wade was featured on *America's Got Talent* and starred as Anastasia Steele in *50 Shades: The Parody*, at Bally's. Eric Jordan Young is a quadruple threat as a singer, director, choreographer and playwright. He received the Broadway World Award in 2011 and 2012 for Best Performance by a Lead Actor in *VEGAS! The Show*. Ron Remke is a frequent soloist with symphonies throughout North America and toured with *Kiss Me Kate*. His debut CD is a collection of Broadway classics.

The singers and band aim to please with crowd favorites that include songs like "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," "It's Now or Never," "Scotch and Soda," "Red Red Wine," "That's Life," "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and, in tribute to their roots, "Viva Las Vegas."

Get a cocktail, come into the theater and relax. It's Happy Hour.

Phil Vassar "Stripped Down"

(February 7, 2020 7:00pm) He's a singer who writes hit songs and a songwriting piano player who rules the stage. Phil Vassar, a country music hit maker, is a piano-pounding powerhouse on stage who taps into his audience via social media for song requests during his more than 135 shows a year.

Vassar was writing hit songs before his own recording career began. His songwriting career blossomed in the 1990s, when he landed a publishing contract with EMI and penned hits for Collin Raye "Little Red Rodeo," Alan Jackson "Right on the Money," Tim McGraw "For a Little While," Jo Dee Messina "Bye, Bye, I'm Alright" and Blackhawk "Postmarked Birmingham." "Bye Bye, I'm Alright," earned Vassar his first ASCAP Song of the Year.

In 1998, he signed a record deal of his own with the Arista Nashville label, and in 1999, Vassar was named ASCAP Country Songwriter of the Year. His debut single, "Carlene," was his first #1 hit as a singer, and his signature songs such as "Just Another Day in Paradise," "Six-Pack Summer" and "When I Love You" were part of a sweep that included 10 #1 singles and 26 Top 40 hits. His first album, *Vassar*, went gold and its success led to tours with Kenny Chesney. In addition to recording, Vassar kept writing and a song he co-wrote, "My Next Thirty Years" was a chart-topper for Tim McGraw.

Phil Vassar continues to write incisive, soulful lyrics and infectious melodies that capture the heart and soul in his unique style. On his latest tour, "Stripped Down," he will be bringing new insights to the songs and stories that have been become some of the biggest hits in music. His Lyric concert in February will follow the January release of his new acoustic EP, titled *Stripped Down*. Be one of the first to hear it up close and personal.

Bel Canto Trio

(February 9, 2020 7:00pm) The great singer Mario Lanza became a star when he toured in 1947-1948 with George London and Frances Yeend as the Bel Canto Trio. For 10 months, the group toured the United States, Canada and Mexico, bringing some of opera's greatest works to their audiences. To honor the 70th anniversary of that tour, the Bel Canto Trio, now made up of soprano Julie Adams, tenor Joshua Guerrero and bass-baritone Nicholas Brownlee, will perform the original program of that historic tour, featuring some of the greatest arias, duets and trios from *Rigoletto*, *La Boheme*, *The Barber of Seville* and others.

The artists chosen for this concert are among the most talented of rising stars.

Julie Adams was a winner of the 2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the 2015 George

London Award, the 2015 Elizabeth Connell Prize for aspiring dramatic sopranos and the 2015 Sara Tucker study grant. She holds Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. In the 2017-2018 season, she performed at the San Francisco Opera in Francesca Zambello's production of Wagner's *Ring cycle*. She has also performed with the opera as Mimi in *La Boheme*, and Kate Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly*. In 2018-2019, she debuted with the Arizona Opera in *Silent Night* by Kevin Puts and as Mimi in *La Boheme* with the Des Moines Metro Opera. She has performed Beethoven's Symphony Number 9 with the Phoenix Symphony and a concert version of *West Side Story* with the Oakland Symphony. On the recital stage, Ms. Adams was featured as part of the Schwabacher Debut recital series with John Churchwell.

Joshua Guerrero was the second prize winner at Placido Domingo's Operalia Competition in 2014 and was the recipient of the 2016 Richard Tucker Grant. He is a Grammy winner for the Los Angeles Opera's recording of John Corigliano's *Ghosts of Versailles*. He has performed at the Washington National Opera in a new production of *La Traviata*, at the Houston Grand Opera in Catan's *Floriencia en el Amazonas* and at the Canadian Opera Company in *La Boheme*. He has performed at the famed Glydebourne Festival in England and toured Europe in concert with Gustavo Dudamel and the Simon Bolivar Orchestra singing Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. He was a featured soloist at the Richard Tucker Music Foundation Gala at Carnegie Hall and appeared at a special gala honoring Placido Domingo at the Salzburg Festival.

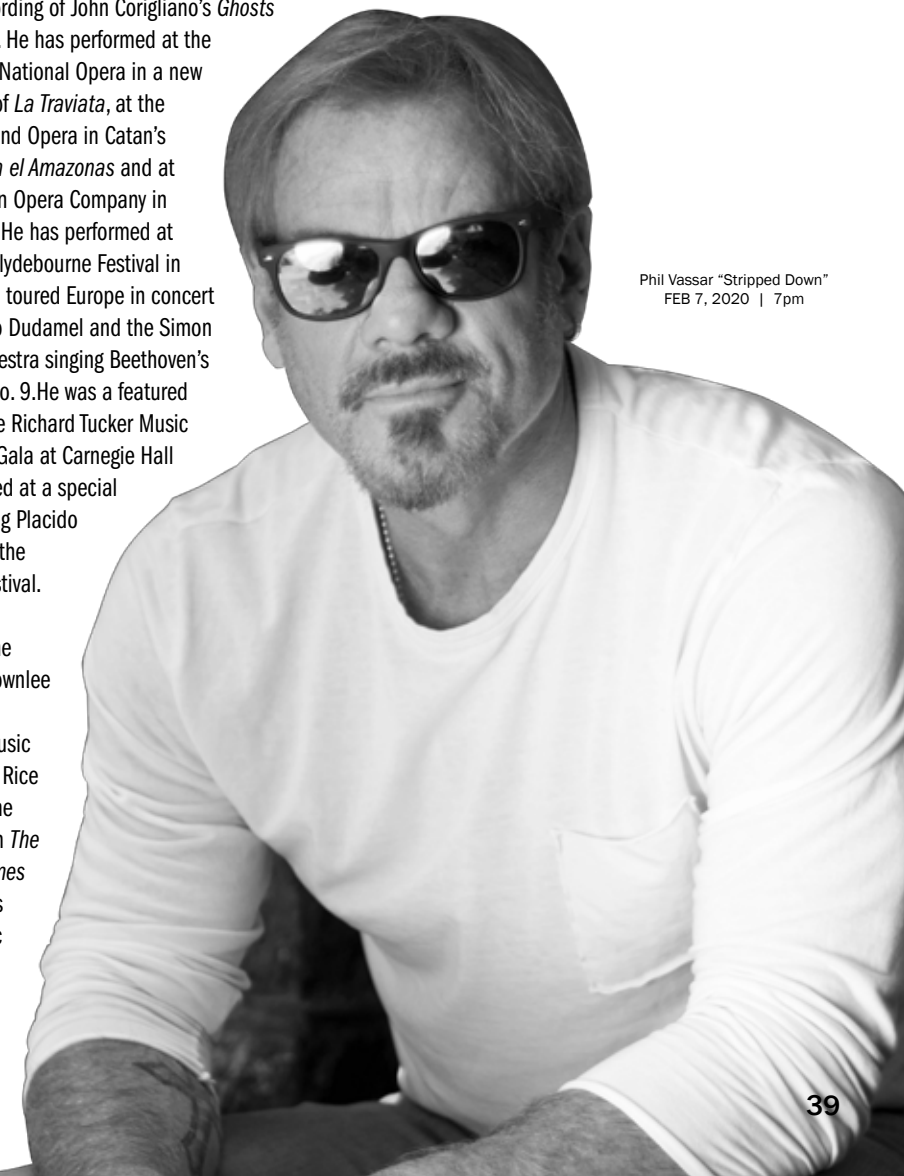
Bass-baritone Nicholas Brownlee received a Master of Music degree from Rice University. The singer, whom *The New York Times* described as "charismatic and charming,"

is a first prize winner of the Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition, winner of the Zarzuela Prize at Operalia and the grand prize winner of the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions. He recently made his Metropolitan Opera debut as the First Soldier in *Salome*. He has performed as Colline in *La Boheme* at the LA Opera, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel and in the same role at the Atlanta Opera. He has an extensive concert background, performing with the Houston Symphony Orchestra in Dvorak's *Te Deum*, and with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, under Gustavo Dudamel, in Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*. He also performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in *Pelleas et Melisande*, under the direction of Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Bel Canto literally means beautiful singing. This is an opportunity to hear some of the world's most beautiful music, sung by some of opera's rising stars. *Proudly Sponsored by Gloria Whittle.*

continued on page 42

Phil Vassar "Stripped Down"
FEB 7, 2020 | 7pm



The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents
Trey McLaughlin
and The Sounds of Zamar (February 11, 2020 7:00pm)

Trey McLaughlin and The Sounds of Zamar are known for their expressive vocals and intricate arrangements of classic gospel hymns, but they have gently pushed the boundaries of gospel to add fresh adaptations of contemporary gospel, pop and musical theater. Their viral videos on YouTube have millions of viewers and they have performed with gospel greats like William McDowell, Kierra "Kiki" Sheard, Brian Courtney Wilson and James Fortune. They are recent competition winners for their rendition of "Chasing After You." This win led to a featured appearance of Grammy nominated artist Vashawn Mitchell's *Triumphant* DVD. Their single, "I Will Praise," taken from the debut album, *Limitless*, is on the *Billboard* Gospel Charts. In 2018, they embarked on their first national tour, "The Zamar Experience."

Behind the sound is Trey McLaughlin, a passionate vocalist, educator, composer and arranger. Known for fusing together an eclectic mix of musical genres, he performs original works with the ensemble he created. He also serves as director of worship and arts at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia and is the artistic director of the non-profit performing arts youth group, Creative Impressions, of which he was once a member and student director. He serves as adjunct faculty at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, teaching graduate level courses in conducting, vocal technique, composing, arranging and piano.

A native of Augusta, Georgia, McLaughlin attended the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia, where he was a member of the University Singer and Chorale and placed second and third in Georgia's National Association of Teachers of Singing competition for two consecutive years. He holds a Bachelor of Music Performance degree with emphasis on vocal pedagogy. He is a member and past president of the professional music fraternity Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and is a former director of G.E.N.E.S.I.S, the Columbia State Gospel Choir.

In 2014, McLaughlin had the honor of conducting a Master Class and performing at the L'Opera de Massy in Massy, France. In 2015, he conducted a 300-voice choir on Krakow, Poland as a guest clinician. He

often serves as guest clinician for Honor Choruses throughout Georgia.

Trey McLaughlin and The Sounds of Zamar are known for their distinctive gospel style and their new arrangements of musical theater tunes. They bring a fresh perspective to their songs, but always capture the essence of the original piece.

Zamar is from the Hebrew and means sing or praise. You will hear songs of praise that will inspire and bring joy to the heart. As the group prepares to produce a second album, the future is "Limitless." Proudly sponsored by The Bauman Family Foundation.

Al Stewart with
Special Guests the
Empty Pockets
Unplugged (February 12, 2020 7:00pm)

When British singer/songwriter Al Stewart told his parents he was going to be a musician, they weren't happy. "My parents said this pop stuff wasn't going to last six months, I was advised to get a job with British Leyland and 40 years of solid income. They went bankrupt, yet the music industry that wasn't supposed to last is pottering along and I still have a job."

Indeed he does. Stewart came to prominence as part of the British folk revival of the late '60s and '70s and had No. 1 hits with "Year of the Cat," "On the Border," "Time Passages," and

"Nostradamus." He performed at the first ever Glastonbury Festival in 1970, worked with Yoko Ono before there was a Lennon and shared an apartment with Paul Simon. He performed alongside Van Morrison and Cat Stevens. He has released 19 studio albums and is a popular touring artist who weaves his love of history and films into his songs. The beginning though, was when he was 11 or 12 and Elvis Presley and rock 'n roll arrived.

"I adored the Everly Brothers," he said. "I loved Eddie Cochran, Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard. When I left school, I thought, 'I'll have a crack at that.' I left school and joined a band as the Beatles came along. They were so successful that every third kid was in a band."

Stewart performed in six different bands in his late teens and realized that he wasn't very good at what he wanted to do. "I was not a good electric guitar player and I didn't look or sound right. I was beginning to despair, and just at that moment, Bob Dylan came along. He couldn't sing or play guitar, but boy, could he write lyrics. I could have a career doing that."

Stewart speaks with a little tongue-in-cheek, self-deprecating British humor. Asked whether he considers himself a singer who writes songs or a songwriter who sings, he has a quick answer. "I'm not a singer at all. I have a range of one octave. There are four things that make you into a pop star. You have to sing, play, have a sense of fashion and look great. Sting has all four. I only have one. I write lyrics and it's enough to have a career with one."

Stewart describes his music as "aural cinema" and "aural geography" and says that movies and atlases are a big influence on him. "I watch an enormous amount of movies, a couple of hundred a year," he said. "I'm taking movies, literature, history, and geography and putting them into a pot and stirring. Those elements are in pretty much every song. If I open an atlas, a song appears. I opened one to China and could see six songs in front of me. It works for me like that. It makes it three-dimensional."

Stewart brings out that self-deprecation in describing his success over 40 years, "You don't get famous writing historical folk rock, but you can make a living," he said. "I think if one history teacher would buy a guitar, they'd have my job. No one has. It's a great mystery."



The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents
 Trey McLaughlin
 and The Sounds of Zamar
 FEB 11, 2020 | 7pm

Robert Klein (February 13, 2020 7:00pm) Robert Klein describes himself as an "uncomedian comedian, talking reality." Uncomedy and reality must be pretty funny, because Klein, who attended the Yale University Drama School and was a member of The Second City comedy troupe, has been nominated for two Emmys, two Grammys and a Tony for Best Actor in a Musical, *They're Playing Our Song*.

A student of history, Stewart began reading Sartre and ended going in reverse order, back to the Trojan War. Historian Barbara Tuchman was one of his idols and figures in how he'd like to be remembered: "I write like Barbara Tuchman and play like Eddie Cochran."

Special Guests the Empty Pockets sound is built upon a strong foundation of the timeless Americana, Blues, and Motown Soul that came before them; an old-school sensibility showcased by multiple lead singers, rich harmonies, and skilled instrumentalists.

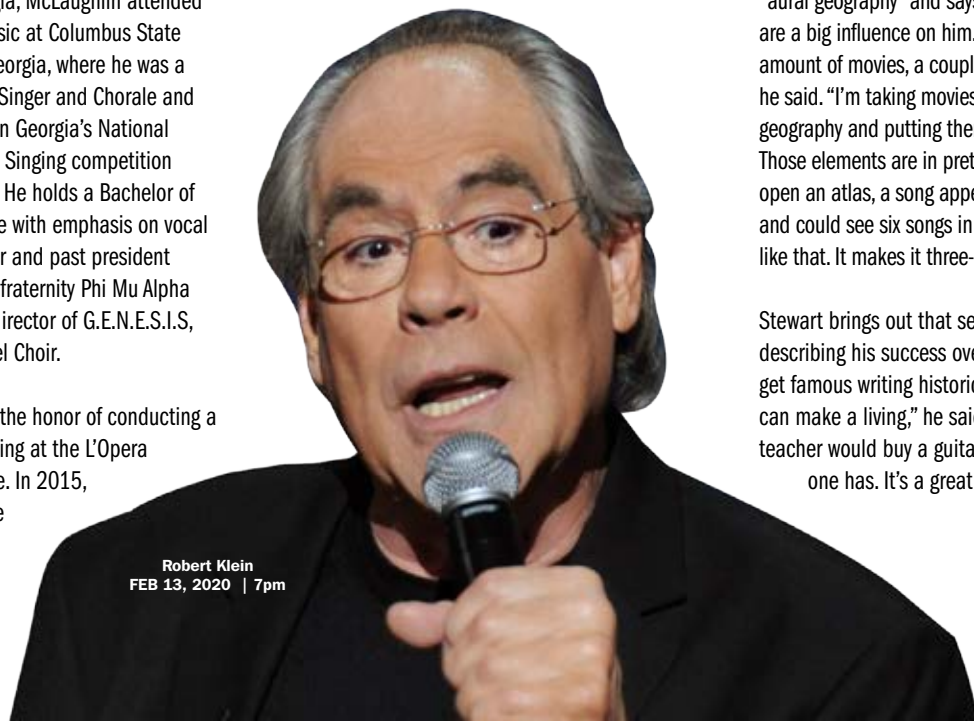
Teaming up with a wide range of legendary artists; Kenny Loggins, Simon Kirke (Bad Company/Free), Al Stewart ("Year of the Cat"), Gary Wright ("Dreamweaver"), and Richie Furay (Buffalo Springfield/Poco), both as direct tour support and backing band, their sound has evolved, influenced not only by these remarkable musicians, but also through collaboration with independent artists and, most importantly, among themselves.

Whether it is the relationship between parents and children, the ubiquitous lawyers who advertise to the injured, the hypocrisy of public figures or his own aging, it is all fodder for his wit.

"The golden years," he has said. "Someone sent me an AARP card on my 50th birthday. I needed that like a hole in the head. You get a nice magazine with great pricing on oxygen and flowers."

In a 1998 interview with Dan Markowitz, Klein reflected on his career to date. "I started with absolutely nothing, no connections," he said. "I think I've made a lot of people laugh, which I think is a reasonably high calling. I think I definably developed a trend in stand-up as an uncomedian comedian, talking reality. It was important to me not to be the guy wearing cufflinks, making fat girlfriend jokes. A lot of people like Seinfeld and Leno and Billy Crystal said I had a certain influence over them."

While Klein mines getting older for laughs and underlying truths, he isn't slowing down. He's having too much fun, skewering the pretentious,



Robert Klein
 FEB 13, 2020 | 7pm

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Monday, January 27th, 2020 | 10:15am & 11:45am

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the pompous and the just plain silly, as he always has. It's fortunate we get to come along for the ride.

The Machine (February 15, 2020 7:00pm) Paying tribute to the seminal band Pink Floyd is about more than playing the music. For more than 30 years, The Machine has extended the legacy of Pink Floyd while creating their own legacy and making the songs their own. The New York-based band focuses on making every show an authentic Floydian experience for the fans. The Machine is known for performing a diverse mix of The Floyd's extensive 16-album repertoire, complete with faithful renditions of popular hits as well as obscure gems.

While founding members Joe Pascarell (guitar, vocals) and Tahrah Cohen (drums) and long-time stage mates Stephen Bard (bass, vocals) and Scott Chasolen (keys, vocals) are top-flight musicians, The Machine has also been about the dramatic lighting and video. In fact, special shows include lasers from the same company that provides classic Pink Floyd laser effects for Roger Waters and David Gilmour tours. The group explores collective improvisation that parallels the work of early 1970s Pink Floyd, and their use of theatrical elements and elaborate stage displays continues in the spirit of later Floyd lineups of the 1980s. The Machine is also known

for recreating entire albums as part of the show, accepting requests from fans and going from A-Z, with one song for each letter of the alphabet.

The Machine has performed at theaters, casinos and movie festivals including Bonnaroo, Riverbend and Gathering of the Vibes, Buffalo's Artpark and Germany's Rock of Ages. They have thrilled audiences in North America, Europe and Asia. The musicians have also shared the stage with the Atlanta, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Jacksonville and San Diego Symphonies and the Buffalo Philharmonic.

The Machine was the first of the Pink Floyd tribute bands and after 30 years, many consider it the best. You'll wish you were here.

The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents Mutts Gone Nuts (February 16, 2020 2:00pm & 5:00pm) If you go onstage with kids or animals, you may well find yourself overlooked. If the animals are the cutest rescue dogs on the planet, it's a given, but that doesn't bother Scott and Jane Houghton of Mutts Gone Nuts. They are happy to share the stage with their

adorable friends for a high-energy, high-wire show that is perfect for the entire family. Kids, parents and grandparents will love the pooches and the adults they let share the stage.

The show is billed a "Canine Cabaret" and that should tell you that you're going to get a little of everything. The Houghtons, who are known as the "disorderly duo," have been performing together

as a comedy team since 1984 and are known for blending physical comedy and circus artistry. They traveled the world and spent several years at Lee Greenwood's theater in Tennessee and as the featured act for Greenwood in Las Vegas and Tennessee. The duo also spent seven years with Dolly

Parton's production, *Dixie Stampede*. In 1996, they adopted their first rescue pooch and began fostering dogs in the off-season for a local rescue group. They brought Chico into their act in 2005 and by 2007, they'd reinvented themselves as Mutts Gone Nuts.

The Houghtons are very serious about keeping their shows funny, and they're also serious about the welfare of the dogs in their care. Their rescue dogs are trained using positive, reward-based methods like toys and praise. They look for what each dog likes to do and cultivates that talent. The dogs live indoors, have two acres of fenced area to run when they are at home and travel in large, padded, climate controlled kennels for safety when on tour.

Chico, who is (probably) a Chihuahua and Pomeranian mix, is only 15 lbs., but he's the top dog. Feather, the group's first Greyhound, is a rescue dog who was saved after she couldn't run fast enough. She may not be a racer, but she has jaw-dropping jumping skills and has the unofficial world record for the highest jump by a dog. Pixel, also known as Wheels, is a Border collie mix. She can run and out-maneuver much bigger dogs and is Chico's understudy.

Charlie is a Jack Russell terrier who was rescued on his last day. He's agile and loves to climb, which makes him the perfect high-wire walking dog. Chuck Taylor is a Frisbee-playing border collie who was given up because he preferred to herd sticks instead of cows. Geronimo is a cattle dog mix who is the only dog in the world to jump into two spinning ropes at the same time. Rox Steady is a Heinz mix who looks just like Geronimo. Her specialties are agility and tricks. Paco, who was picked up as a stray in Wyoming, does everything from high jump to barrel. McNerdy's favorite toy is the Frisbee and he could play all day, dazzling the crowd with his athletic ability.

To even up the sides, the Houghtons have brought some two-legged creatures on board. Samantha Valle is one of the world's top trainers and a spokesperson for animal rescue. She and Geronimo hold the Guinness World's Record for a dog jumping rope Double Dutch. They have appeared with David Letterman and Steve Harvey. Jonathan Burns is a contortionist who became fascinated with magic as a child and learned that he could make a living contorting his body. He has appeared at colleges and festivals around the world.

If you are lucky enough to have a kid in your life, you don't want to miss this show. If you don't have a kid, you might want to rent one. They'll have an awful lot of fun, and you'll laugh yourself silly, even at Scott's corny jokes. Try your doggone best to see this show. You'll be glad you did. Proudly sponsored by The Bauman Family Foundation.

Jim Messina (February 19, 2020 7:00pm) An undisputed expert in the fine art of making hit music, Jim Messina's legacy of musical genius spans five decades, three super groups, a vibrant solo career and scores of producing and engineering credits.

Oh, the stories he'll tell!

Jim Messina was an engineer and bass guitar player for Buffalo Springfield, a band in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He was a founding member of the seminal band Poco, a group credited with creating country rock, and he was one-half of Loggins & Messina, one of the most successful duos of the 1970's. Now, 50 years after stepping into the studio with Stephen Stills, Neil Young and Richie Furay as the recording engineer on *Buffalo Springfield Again*, Messina and his guitar will take the stage with the stories and songs that made Buffalo Springfield, Poco and Loggins & Messina such icons.

When Buffalo Springfield disbanded, Messina signed a contract with Epic Records as a producer and recording artist. With fellow Buffalo Springfield alumnus Richie Furay, he formed Poco, which was originally named "Pogo" after the comic strip. Their debut album, *Pickin' Up the Pieces*, is the only debut album to receive a perfect rating from *Rolling Stone*. The album set out a blue print for a new musical genre uniting country with rock and led the way for future artists like the Eagles.

Poco's second album, called *Poco*, had Messina as producer and writer of the band's first hit single, "You Better Think Twice," one of the group's signature songs. A copy of the album hangs in the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville. After three more albums with Poco, Messina left and signed on as an independent producer with Columbia Records.

Towards the end of 1970, Messina opened up his living room to record a number of compositions for a promising young songwriter named Kenny Loggins. Messina felt that Loggins' music had more of a folk sound. He suggested to Columbia's Clive Davis that he 'sit in' much as jazz artists had in the past and that Loggins try to add more upbeat material. The result was the album *Kenny Loggins with Jim Messina Sittin' In*. It included Messina songs like "Listen to a Country Song," and "Nobody But You." An accidental duo was born.

In the next few years Loggins and Messina would release a series of albums, from the eponymous *Loggins and Messina* to *Full Sail to Mother Lode*, *So Fine*, *Native Sons* and *Finale*. At the end of their time together, they had sold 16 million albums, become one of rock's biggest live draws and cemented their legacy as one of the most successful recording duos ever.

Messina began a successful solo career and reunited with Poco for the 1989 album, *Legacy*. He established the Songwriters' Performance Workshop and said its goal "was to empower the amateur to let go of the fear and embrace the joy of writing and performing their original music."

Loggins and Messina reunited for a benefit in 2004 and it was as if they hadn't been apart. "There was something there I had not been able to duplicate with anyone else," Messina said. "There was a spark I'd completely forgotten about. It's still there!"

Now Messina wants to share the stories and songs that have filled his life.

"The road most traveled in my innocence was with this band of poets and it is the same road that 'Twists and Turns' as I journey along my musical road of life," he said. "For 'I Ride with Sinners' and I sing with 'Saints' and I do what I do to avoid what I can't. I'll pass on the judgment, now you make the call. I'm a playin' my hand. Oh...the way the cards fall."

Bravo Amici (February 20, 2020 7:00pm) Take three handsome tenors and add two stunning sopranos. Add a blend of classical and contemporary songs and arias and you have Bravo Amici. This dynamic group was formed in 2010 by husband-and-

wife team Geoff Sewell and Simone Lanham, founders of Amici Forever, the world's first opera band. Bravo Amici is a tribute to the emerging genre of contemporary classic crossover music, with world-class international performers who take on the best of pop and opera, giving each genre a taste of the classical. Their music has attracted the attention of Queen Elizabeth, Elton John and Paul McCartney.

Geoff Sewell is a native of New Zealand who studied music at the Boston Conservatory. He moved to London and got into the music business with Lanham, eventually forming Amici Forever. The group went on to sell more than 3.5 million albums worldwide and had two No. 1 albums. He had a successful solo career and performed for the Queen, Princes Charles, William and Harry and other

continued on page 54



The Lyric's Family Fun Series presents Mutts Gone Nuts FEB 16, 2020 2pm & 5pm



Jim Messina FEB 19, 2020 | 7pm



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To register for an audition, contact Sue Nauss at 772-220-1942, ext 205 or email at Sue@LyricTheatre.com. Audition instructions and more information can be found at LyricTheatre.com/youth-arts-celebration.

The Youth Arts Celebration is not a contest, but rather an opportunity to recognize area students for their commitment to their craft, the courage to express themselves and their love of the arts. Beyond the appeal of the bright lights and thunderous applause, these talented performers benefit from the sharing and exchange of ideas, exposure to different styles of artistic expression and a sense of camaraderie. Reinforcing how arts education instills discipline and values so vital to becoming a quality human being.

The 2020 Youth Arts Celebration will be held on Saturday, April 4, 2020. Sponsorships and ticket sales for this event raise funds for The Lyric Theatre's Arts & Education programs such as artist master classes and residencies, the Discovery Series for Young Audiences, Family FUN Series, and The Lyric's AWESOME! Summer Camp. Make a difference in young lives by becoming a sponsor and support Treasure Coast's young emerging artists in this dynamic talent showcase. To become a sponsor or to join The Lyric League, contact Niki Norton, Chairperson, at niki@n2archdesign.com. Tickets and Sponsorship information are available online at LyricTheatre.com/youth-arts-celebration.



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If you missed them the first time, you get another chance to hear them. If you know their work, you

Shelée - Natural Woman: A Night of Soul from Aretha to Adele
FEB 25, 2020 | 7pm



won't want to miss the chance to see them again. *Partial proceeds to benefit Little Lights Dentistry, a program of Light of the World Charities.*

John Lodge is Classic Moody Blues

(February 23, 2020 7:00pm) Bass player John Lodge was still in school when the Moody Blues took some songs they'd written to a festival in France. They were a secondary act, but when the main act dropped out just before the festival began, the call came for a band that could play live. The Moody Blues played three new songs, one a longer tune called "Night in White Satin." It went to number one in France within a week and became one of the greatest seduction songs of all time.

John Lodge has been a vocalist, songwriter and bass player with the Moody Blues for more than 50 years. While the band is on hiatus, he is bringing his Classic Moody Blues tour to the United States with the 10,000 Light Years Band behind him.

Lodge and the Blues have sold more than 70 million albums, including the groundbreaking *Days of Future Passed*, and has composed many of their greatest hits. The album, *Seventh Sojourn* was a *Billboard* number one for five weeks and Lodge wrote both singles from the album: the high-energy, "I'm Just a Singer (in a Rock and Roll Band)" and the lovely "Isn't Life Strange." He has also released solo albums including *10,000 Light Years Ago*. A song from it, "In My Mind," was nominated for Anthem of the Year. On this tour, he'll also play songs from his new "best of" album, *B Yond*.

Lodge has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and received the Ivor Novello Award for Outstanding

Contributions to Music. He has also been named one of the 10 most influential bass players. While proud of the honors, what remains uppermost is the music. "Music is my life and I can't wait to get on the road with the 10,000 Light Years Band," he said. "I am a 'Moody Blue,' I always will be, and the fans and I have traveled this road a long time. I hope they will continue with me as we keep the Moody Blues music alive. I hope new fans will discover and explore with us as we go 'B Yond.'"

Joining Lodge on the tour are long-term collaborator Alan Hewitt, the music director and keyboard player; Billy Ashbaugh, from the Moody Blues touring band, on drums; Duffy King on guitar; and Jason Charbonneau on cello. Reviewers have noted the beautifully crafted songs, great energy and a sound that brings the audience to its feet. It's a rare chance to see a rock legend up close and personal.

Long ago, Lodge was banned from music class because he didn't know Beethoven's birthday. He was forced to take woodworking instead and had no aptitude for it. Perhaps that's why, to quote himself, he's just a singer in a rock and roll band.

Shelée - Natural Woman: A Night of Soul from Aretha to Adele

(February 25, 2020 7:00pm) Whitney. Cher. Adele. Aretha. There are those few legends who need only one name to identify them. Singer, songwriter and pianist Shelée seems poised to enter that rarified atmosphere. She performed at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama. Stevie Wonder, a friend and mentor, plays the harmonica on her hit song, "Love Fell on Me," the theme song for the Angela Bassett film, *Jumping the Broom*. Quincy Jones asked her to be the first vocalist at his jazz club at the Palazzo Versace Dubai. She has a sultry sound that blends traditional pop, jazz, R & B and soul with a contemporary edge to classics and a classic touch to contemporary pop standards.

Shelée first began to think of music as a profession at Oakwood University, from which she received a degree in music with an emphasis on piano. She told *singersroom.com* that the college experience set her on her path. "That was my first time being immersed in music culture like that, with late nights in the studio, writing and producing," she said. "That's when I felt like, 'I want to do this on my own.'"



John Lodge is Classic Moody Blues
FEB 23, 2020 7pm

Shelée began her career as a songwriter/vocalist with producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. She wrote and produced for Chanté Moore's album, *Love the Woman*, and recorded vocals for soundtracks for *Hotel Rwanda*, *Akeelah* and *the Bee and Be Cool*. In 2008, she teamed up with the Grammy winning Take 6, singing "Someone to Watch over Me" for their Grammy-nominated album. Her debut album, *Love Fell on Me*, not only featured Stevie Wonder but had Brian McKnight and Narada Michael Walden on board, as well. It charted for more than 22 weeks on *Billboard's* R & B lists.

While Shelée had considerable success in R & B, she was noticed in other arenas and other genres. Her 2012 invitation to the White House was to honor Burt Bacharach and Hal David with the Gershwin Prize. She also performed at the Library of Congress for ASCAP's "We Write the Songs." During rehearsals, she impressed Alan and Marilyn Bergman, who wrote many of Barbra Streisand's hits and her latest album, *Pretty World: Through the Eyes of Alan and Marilyn Bergman*, has songs picked for her by the duo. She made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2017 with a tribute to songwriter Jimmy Webb. Her range truly knows only one imperative: great songwriting.

Shelée is an artist who believes in giving back. In 2012, she joined Herbie Hancock, Patti Austin, the South African Children's Choir and others at the Kennedy Center for the UN International AIDS Conference. She is a staunch advocate for female and empowerment and as a member of The Recording Academy, has shared her insights with

high school students on the value of music, the craft of songwriting, vocal technique and professional development.

You may not yet know her name, but you will. You have the chance to hear her perform live; don't miss it. *Partial proceeds to benefit St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church.*

The Magic of Motown

(February 27, 2020 7:00pm) In the decade from 1961 to 1971, Motown Records had 110 top 10 hits. The company founded by Berry Gordy launched the careers of artists such as Marvin Gaye, The Four Tops, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations and The Jackson 5. *The Magic of Motown* brings the great music of these legendary groups and others beyond the sixties to life with great harmonies and choreography backed up by a six-piece band that is a show in itself. Martha Reeves, Smokey Robinson and more "stop by" as the dazzling dance routines, glittering costumes and outstanding musicianship take you back to the soundtrack of your life.

The music is non-stop, with hit after hit. Songs like "Ain't No Mountain," "Signed, Sealed, Delivered," "Dancing in the Streets," "My Cherie Amour," and "Heatwave" are recreated as audiences, who can't help themselves, turn the show into a party. There are sing-alongs to hits like Lionel Richie's "All Night Long" and The O'Jay's "Love Train," but you don't have to know Motown to be swept away by the high energy and sheer fun of a show that keeps on keeping on.

The Lyric will rock. How sweet it will be if you're there, too.

Stayin' Alive - A Tribute to the Bee Gees

(February 28, 2020 6:00pm & 8:30pm) You know the music. Songs by the Bee Gees like "Staying Alive," "How Deep is Your Love?" "Night Fever" and "You Should Be Dancing" fueled the disco craze and defined a decade. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame band, founded by brothers Barry, Robin and Maurice Gibb, began in 1958, but it wasn't until the early 1970s, when hits like "Lonely Days" and "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart?"

that they hit it big, with appearances on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *The Tonight Show starring Johnny Carson*. In the mid-1970s, at the suggestion of Eric Clapton, the group moved to Miami and started recording fewer ballads and more dance music.

In 1977, a little movie called *Saturday Night Fever* was released. Producer Robert Stigwood had asked the Bee Gees to write the songs for the movie and the soundtrack and film were both phenomenal successes, making international superstars of John Travolta and the Bee Gees. The album was the highest-selling album in history and is among the best-selling soundtracks ever. The Bee Gees, who wrote every song, as they did for their entire career, won five Grammy Awards for the album, production and individual performances.

Stayin' Alive, the foremost Bee Gees tribute band, brings the high energy of the original group to the stage, with the up-tempo dance hits as well as the softer ballads. Starring Mitch Seekins, Todd Sharman and Tony Mattini, Stayin' Alive relives the glory days of disco and the sounds of a group at the height of its power. They perform all the big hits and enhance their show with big-screen video clips, dazzling photos and incredible imagery. Whether you lived through the disco era or just love music, Stayin' Alive will have you dancing.

Stayin' Alive sells out every time the group comes to The Lyric, so get your tickets early. You won't want to mend a broken heart. *Partial proceeds to benefit The Salvation Army of Martin, St. Lucie and Okeechobee Counties.*

Steep Canyon Rangers

(February 29, 2020 7:00pm) It's bluegrass as you haven't heard it before. Since a group of students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill started Steep Canyon Rangers in 2000, the group has been expanding and redefining the parameters of bluegrass. The genre-defying band has brought elements of pop, country, folk and folk rock to music that is very much their own. In 2013, the group won a Grammy for Best Bluegrass album for their solo work, *Nobody Knows You*.

The band consists of Woody Platt on acoustic guitar and lead vocals; Graham Sharp on banjo and harmony vocals; Mike Guggino on mandolin and harmony vocals; Nicky Sanders on fiddle and vocals; Mike Ashworth on box kit, cajon and vocals; and



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The Youth Arts Celebration will be held at The Lyric Theatre on Saturday, April 4 at 7:00pm



Barrett Smith on upright bass. They began performing in festivals and recording. Their fame has spread since 2009, when they began collaborating with actor, comedian and banjo player Steve Martin, and their 2012 album with Martin, *Rare Bird Alert*, featuring guest appearances by Paul McCartney and the Dixie Chicks, was nominated for a Grammy. On July 4, 2011, Steep Canyon Rangers joined with Steve Martin for "A Capitol Fourth" on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol. That same year, the group and Martin were jointly named Entertainers of the Year at the International Bluegrass Music Association Awards. In 2017, the group and Martin, with Edie Brickell, recorded *The Long Awaited Album* and joined Martin and Brickell on tour.

A hallmark of Steep Canyon Rangers has been their ability to produce two distinct bodies of work, with Martin and on their own. They tour 150 dates a year and are considered one of the hardest working bands around. They have worked with a wide range of producers who have brought something new to the table each time the group steps into a studio. In 2017, they arrive at Fidelitorium Recordings in Kernersville, N.C., a facility owned by Mitch Easter, producer for R.E.M, among others. They were surprised to discover the plans their producer, three-time Grammy-winner Joe Henry, had for them. They were going to record *Out in the Open* in classic fashion, with all six members singing and playing in a room with no overdubs. In an interview, Platt admitted that they were nervous.

"We've recorded in a circle before, but with baffles and other ways to isolate yourself," he said. "This record, if I stepped six inches to my left, I'd bump into the mandolin player. Six inches to my right, I'm bumping into the banjo player. Our microphones were all over each other. If you turned over my vocal mic, I was in

12 others. There really was no way to fix anything, just like our live show."

The process allows the group to record the album completely live, tracking a dozen songs in 3 ½ days. Tracks were jammed, rehearsed, played and recorded with no time wasted.

"There's no sleight of hand," Graham Sharp said. "It may not be straightforward, but it's honest." "What you lose in perfection, you gain in energy and authenticity," Platt added.

That pretty well sums up Steep Canyon Rangers, too. ■

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