NJPAC Announces 2014-15 Season with Over 100 Events, Including New Series, Unique Collaborations and World-Class Artists

American Song, Jazz, Theater, Dance, Comedy, Classical, Conversations, Family Shows and More Fill the New Season

Season Highlights Include:

Metropolitan Opera Rising Stars, a recital series piloted with the Met

The Great American Songbook

The second season of the public television series “American Songbook at NJPAC,” taped before a live audience and airing on WNET, NJTV and WLIW

A jazz season filled with the next generation of stars and current luminaries, including the third annual, week-long TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival featuring first-time collaborations between Christian McBride and Béla Fleck in one concert and Fantasia, and Philip Bailey with the Christian McBride Big Band in another; GRAMMY-winning trumpeter/composer Chris Botti; the Keith Jarrett/Gary Peacock/Jack DeJohnette trio; NJPAC’s own Brick City Jazz Orchestra; the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, Dorthaan’s Place brunch series and much more

Conversations and the Spoken Word: NJPAC Stage Exchange, a new series featuring the work of New Jersey playwrights about issues such as immigration, radical Islamism and racial integration; Trending with Scott Simon presented by U.S. Trust, a new three-part moderated series led by the NPR Weekend Edition Saturday host with the country’s leading thinkers; a three-program extension of the biennial Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival; and The New Jersey Speakers Series featuring lectures by Madeleine K. Albright, Steve Wozniak, David Gergen, Dan Rather, Alan Alda, Olympia Snowe and David McCullough

A summer full of stand-out free events, including the hallmark Newark Summer Series, Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City featuring artists such as Living Colour, Third World, Eddie Palmieri, the Funky Meters and more, and the second annual Family Fair at Theater Square
(May 14, 2014) NEWARK, NJ – John Schreiber, NJPAC’s President and CEO, and David Rodriguez, Executive Producer of the Arts Center, announced today a 2014-15 season packed with new, NJPAC-created, season-long series, collaborations with renowned artists and companies, an expansion of diverse programming, further integration of NJPAC’s arts education programs within mainstage performances, and a continuation of the Arts Center’s 17-year tradition of presenting world-class artists. With over 100 performances and special events announced for the acoustically superb 2,800-seat Prudential Hall, intimate 514-seat Victoria Theater, 250-seat Chase Room, and outdoors in Theater Square, by artists ranging from Patti LaBelle to The Metropolitan Opera Rising Stars; from Chris Botti to Potted Potter: The Unauthorized Harry Experience; from Golda’s Balcony with Tovah Feldshuh to the Brick City Jazz Orchestra; from Bela Fleck to Lula Washington Dance Theatre; from Beres Hammond to Audra McDonald; and from The Second City to Dinosaur Train Live!, NJPAC’s new season has something for everyone.

A full 2014-15 season schedule is available here.

“This season reflects who we are as a performing arts center, uniquely situated in an urban setting: reveling in our diversity and celebrating it with our most varied season ever,” said John Schreiber. “Every member of our community wants an arts center that resonates for them, and NJPAC offers that.”

In a strategy inaugurated under the Schreiber/Rodriguez team, NJPAC will add more than 60 performances throughout the season as well as a variety of special events.

“Artistic excellence is always our first criteria for programming decisions,” said David Rodriguez. “World-class dance and classical music remain the building’s foundation, but NJPAC has built on that to create the region’s foremost home for families of all diverse cultures. There’s something for everyone.”

American Song

NJPAC has quickly become known for its celebration of American Song, featuring icons in the industry and today’s brightest stars. In Jonathan’s Choice: An Evening of Music and Conversation, an exciting new three-part concert and conversation series that will be taped before a live Victoria Theater audience and broadcast at a later date on WNYC 93.9FM and The Jonathan Channel, iconic radio personality Jonathan Schwartz will host today’s leading ladies of American Song: Six-time
GRAMMY-nominee Tierney Sutton (Oct. 17), Tony-nominated Broadway leading lady Rebecca Luker (Apr. 10) and cabaret and Broadway star Jessica Molaskey (May 30) performing her Portraits of Joni Mitchell project. A champion of the masters of the American Songbook, Schwartz has been a fixture of New York radio for 50 years and a host on WNYC for the past 14 years.

In a co-presentation with “Broadway’s Supper Club,” 54 Below, the Arts Center will offer three nights of the top Broadway and cabaret stars celebrating Stephen Sondheim, Jerry Herman and Rodgers and Hammerstein. The month of Halloween, NJPAC’s Chase Room plays host to Into Sweeney Todd’s Woods (Nov. 1), a monster mash-up of two landmark musicals by Stephen Sondheim – Sweeney Todd and Into the Woods – performed by a wickedly talented cast that knows both works intimately. The cast includes Joanna Gleason, the Tony Award-winning “Best Actress in a Musical” for her portrayal of The Baker’s Wife in Into the Woods, her castmate, Chip Zien, the Baker in the original cast of Into the Woods, and Sarah Rice, the original Johanna in Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street on Broadway.

The series continues with a glittering lineup of Broadway and cabaret stars – featuring Tony and Emmy Award winner Leslie Uggams (Alex Haley’s Roots, Hallelujah, Baby!) and multiple Tony nominee Dee Hoty (The Will Rogers Follies) – who pay homage to Mame, one of American theater’s most cherished musicals, in It’s Today: Mame at NJPAC (Dec. 6). The special holiday soiree salutes the great Jerry Herman score and also features more of Broadway’s finest, including Tony Award winner Beth Leavel (The Drowsy Chaperone), Donna Lynne Champlin (Sweeney Todd), Eric Michael Gillett (Kiss Me, Kate), Annie Golden (Xanadu), Hunter Ryan Herdlicka (A Little Night Music), Pamela Myers (Company), Lee Roy Reams (Hello, Dolly!) and a 15-member chorus.

And on January 24, 2015, the incomparable Rodgers and Hammerstein are feted in The Sound of Their Music: Rodgers & Hammerstein, a tribute to the two men who paved the way for modern musical theater with hit after hit: The Sound of Music, South Pacific, Oklahoma! and more. The evening features some of Broadway’s most intriguing voices – Telly Leung (Flower Drum Song), Emily Skinner (Side Show), Judy Kaye (Nice Work If You Can Get It) and Howard McGillin (The Phantom of the Opera).

Returning for its second season, American Songbook at NJPAC – a words-and-music series co-presented with NJTV, New Jersey’s public television network – is an exciting offshoot of NJPAC’s success as a broadcast venue. Performances by the country’s best-loved Broadway and cabaret artists, followed by a conversation with theater sage Ted Chapin, President and Executive Director of Rodgers & Hammerstein: An Imagem Company, will be taped before a live audience for future broadcast on
WNET, NJTV and WLIW. A full roster of artists in the *American Songbook at NJPAC* series will be announced at a later date.

The magnificent **Audra McDonald** (Apr. 19), one of today’s most highly regarded performers, winner of five Tony Awards and two GRAMMY Awards, and fresh off a Tony nomination for her portrayal of Billie Holiday in *Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill*, returns to NJPAC in an evening of songs from Broadway and beyond.

International superstar soprano **Sarah Brightman** (Aug. 24) is acclaimed for her roles in *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. Beloved for her staggering, multi-octave vocal range, Brightman is enjoying a three-decade career of film and stage performance, selling more than 30 million records worldwide. She is credited with pioneering the classical crossover genre, allowing music once reserved for conservatories and concert halls to seep onto the pop charts. Brightman – an official cosmonaut in training – will explore feelings and experiences connected to her plans to become the first recording artist to travel to the International Space Station.

**In Stephen Schwartz & Friends: Defying Gravity**, Schwartz will lead the audience through the development of his most loved works. Award-winning vocalists **Debbie Gravitte**, **Scott Coulter** and **Kelli Rabke** will perform exquisite songs by the musical theater legend (Mar. 14). From *Godspell* and *Wicked* to *Pippin* and *Enchanted*, the music of the Grammy- and Oscar-winning Stephen Schwartz will make for an unforgettable evening.

**Jazz Series Sponsored by TD Bank**

Béla Fleck, Bill Charlap Trio, Carrie Jackson & Her Jazzin’ All-Stars, Catherine Russell, Charles McPherson, Chris Botti, Christian McBride and his Big Band, Cyrus Chestnut Trio, Fantasia, Jesse Davis, Junior Mance Trio, Keith Jarrett/Gary Peacock/Jack DeJohnette Trio, Michael Franks with Raul Midón, NJMEA All-State Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Choir, NJPAC’s Brick City Jazz Orchestra, Pat Metheny Unity Group and Bruce Hornsby, Phil Woods, Philip Bailey (of Earth, Wind & Fire), Ray Mantilla, **Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition**, Stefon Harris, Steve and Iqua Colson, Vanessa Rubin and Her Trio

**Presented with media partner WBGO Jazz88.3FM/WBGO.org**

“We’ve been curators of the State’s finest classical music season for 17 years; now we aim to extend that curatorial leadership to America’s classical music - jazz,” said **John Schreiber**. “As far as we’re concerned, it’s going to be a festival all year long. We want everyone to know that Newark is the place to go for the world’s finest jazz artists.”

Jazz is at the heart of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center’s 2014-2015 season. With renowned bassist, bandleader and composer **Christian McBride** as the Arts Center’s Jazz Advisor, NJPAC’s season-long jazz programming is filled with today’s most listened to luminaries on the jazz scene and
the next generation of jazz’s brightest stars, rounding out a stellar lineup of only-at-NJPAC concerts and collaborations.

The 20-time GRAMMY winner Pat Metheny and his Unity Group join forces with multi-GRAMMY nominated singer and pianist Bruce Hornsby on a Campfire Tour stop in Newark on Aug, 8, 2014.

The new season features the third annual TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival (Nov 9-16) with all-star performances by GRAMMY-winning trumpeter and composer Chris Botti (Nov. 14) and Jazz and Soul (Nov. 13), an NJPAC exclusive collaboration between Fantasia, the GRAMMY and American Idol (“I Believe”) winner, Philip Bailey, the GRAMMY-winner and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer from Earth Wind & Fire, and Christian McBride with his Big Band. The festival kicks off with a special edition of Dorthaan’s Place brunch series in NJPAC’s restaurant, NICO Kitchen + Bar, featuring the Arts Center’s own jazz ambassadors, the year-old Brick City Jazz Orchestra, and special guest Stefon Harris, the GRAMMY-nominated vibraphonist and artist-in-residence of the orchestra. Brick City Jazz Orchestra is a collective of the most gifted high school jazz musicians in the Greater Newark area and is part of NJPAC’s Arts Education Department.

In addition to the young talent that makes up the orchestra, the Festival continues to highlight jazz’s next generation of artists when the NJMEA All-State Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Choir (Nov. 14) perform. A free Day of Swing (Nov. 15) for kids and their families, filled with performances and hands on activities for all ages, returns to the NJPAC’s Center for Arts Education. Other events include performances by sensual song writer and singer Michael Franks (“When I Give My Love To You”) with blind singer/songwriter/guitarist Raul Midón (Nov. 15); Vanessa Rubin, who played the title role in the one-woman stage show Yesterdays: An Evening with Billie Holiday, with her Trio (Nov. 16), and free performances around Newark with Ray Mantilla (Nov. 10) and Steve & Iqua Colson (Nov. 12). As in previous years, the culmination of the Festival is the finals of the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, at which five finalists will perform before a Victoria Theater audience and an esteemed panel of jazz artists and industry executives who will bestow the SASSY Award to one winner.

Also in November, NJPAC will present three additional blockbuster jazz concerts, “Moody Encores.” On November 22, Christian McBride is joined by GRAMMY-winning banjo player Béla Fleck and Brooklyn Rider for All Strings Attached, a first-time collaboration between the artists on what will be a genre-bending, cross-over concert to remember. The five-time GRAMMY-nominated, iconic jazz trio composed of Keith Jarrett, Gary Peacock and Jack DeJohnette brings its 30-plus years of experience playing together and traveling the world with its innovative jazz sound to NJPAC on Nov.
30 for the final announced stop of its world tour. And NJPAC’s relationship with premier jazz pianist Bill Charlap continues when Charlap presents Bird Lives! A Salute to Charlie Parker with a veritable who’s who of the jazz scene: multi-GRAMMY-winning NEA Jazz Master Phil Woods, Charles McPhearson and Jesse Davis. They will be joined by Charlap and his own trio.

_Dorthaan’s Place_ Sunday brunch series, which opens the TD James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival, also ends the jazz season, with a total of five jazz brunches over the year. Hosted by “Newark’s First Lady of Jazz,” Dorthaan Kirk, the two-set brunches feature performances by jazz pianist Cyrus Chestnut and his trio (Jan. 25), vocalist Catherine Russell (Feb. 22), one of today’s foremost interpreters of jazz, who can also be heard on the Boardwalk Empire soundtrack, New Jersey’s own Carrie Jackson & Her Jazzin’ All-Stars (Mar. 22), and Junior Mance and his trio (Apr. 19).

WBGO Jazz 88.3 FM, the nation’s premier jazz radio station, is NJPAC’s season-long jazz media partner.

_Conversation_
_Trending with Scott Simon presented by U.S. Trust_, New Jersey Speakers Bureau featuring Madeleine K. Albright, Steve Wozniak, David Gergen, Dan Rather, Alan Alda, Olympia Snowe, David McCullough. Also see NJPAC’s _Stage Exchange, American Songbook at NJPAC, Jonathan’s Choice_ and The Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival.

As a leading urban-based arts center, NJPAC is programming unique events with social relevance and conversations that challenge and engage intellects. In addition to the discussion components of _Jonathan’s Choice_ and _American Songbook at NJPAC_, words and ideas will flow all season long.

_Trending with Scott Simon presented by U.S. Trust_, a new, three-part series of conversations moderated by the host of _Weekend Edition Saturday_ on NPR, features some of the country’s leading thinkers discussing provocative issues of the day: health care (Nov. 18), education reform (Mar. 10) and women in corporate America (May 12). As previously announced here, the Arts Center will also host _The New Jersey Speakers Series_, presented by Fairleigh Dickinson University. Each of the seven Prudential Hall lectures includes a question and answer session with the keynote speakers: Madeleine K. Albright (Oct. 9), Steve Wozniak (Nov. 20), David Gergen (Feb. 19), Dan Rather (Apr. 23), Alan Alda (Oct. 30), Olympia Snowe (Jan. 8) and David McCullough (Mar. 19).
Poetry
The Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival and Dodge Poetry at NJPAC

As announced in April, the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival (Oct. 23-26), the largest poetry festival in North America, returns to Newark and NJPAC for the third time. The vibrant gathering of writers, storytellers, slam champions and musicians from around the globe transforms New Jersey’s largest city into a “poetry village” for four days. The dozens of acclaimed poets in this year’s lineup, the 15th biennial festival, include U.S. Poets Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winners Billy Collins, Rita Dove and Robert Pinsky and Pulitzer awardees Yusef Komunyakaa, Sharon Olds and Gary Snyder. Richard Blanco, chosen by President Barack Obama to read a poem at his second inauguration, is also among the distinguished readers. Highlights of the festival include “Another Kind of Courage” – a reading by veterans and their families – a tribute to the late Newark author Amiri Baraka, and “PoemJazz,” an innovative crossroads of music and dialogue with Robert Pinsky.

Because of the success of the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival, NJPAC and Dodge have created an extension of the festival to offer poetry throughout the season. Award-winning poets from throughout New Jersey will gather for Dodge Poetry at NJPAC, three evenings of curated poetry readings and performance. In Shuffle, Cramroll, Paradiddle and Stomp (Mar. 6), Newark resident and world-class tap dancer Maurice Chestnut will accompany poet and griot Kurtis Lamkin and other regional poets in duets of poetic and tap dance rhythms. Walt Whitman, William Carlos Williams, Amiri Baraka, Allen Ginsberg and many other influential poets have called New Jersey home. In Jersey Voices (Apr. 24), U.S. Poet Laureate and Long Branch native Robert Pinsky and a handful of other New Jersey poets will read their Garden State-influenced poetry. Poets Martin Espada, Patricia Smith and others will read in the final installment of the series, Poetry Like Bread: Poems of Political and Social Consciousness (May 15).

Dance
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, State Ballet Theatre of Russia’s Swan Lake and NJPAC’s Jersey Moves! Festival of Dance featuring Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company and other companies to be announced at a later date.

Dance at NJPAC continues to grow, bringing in the classics that NJPAC audiences have come to love and forging new relationships with other world renowned companies. After a triumphant return to NJPAC last season for the first time over a decade, Dance Theatre of Harlem and NJPAC have begun a new tradition, with the company celebrating the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s birthday in Prudential Hall each season. Dance Theatre of Harlem returns this year (Jan. 16) with guest speaker Pastor Jerry Sanders from Fountain Baptist Church in Summit, NJ. The company was founded as a means of turning despair into hope following the assassination of Dr. King, and this annual
engagement is a perfect way to pay tribute to the life and legacy of the 20th century’s most inspiring civil rights leader.

NJPAC brings to its stage another of the most admired African-American dance companies in the country when Lula Washington Dance Theatre returns to NJPAC (Feb. 26) for the first time since 2005. The innovative dance company from Los Angeles will perform a jazz-inspired program, including “Reign” (Rennie Harris, choreographer), “Love Is …” (Christopher Huggins, choreographer), “Dances for McCoy” (excerpts; music by McCoy Tyner, choreography by Lula Washington), “Random Thoughts” (excerpts; music by Terence Blanchard, choreography by Lula Washington), and “We Wore the Mask” (with live jazz drumming by Marcus L. Miller, choreography by Lula Washington).

New Jersey is filled with classic and contemporary dance companies of the highest caliber. Each season, the Arts Center showcases the best that the state has to offer with its annual Jersey Moves! Festival of Dance. This season, the festival will include Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company (Mar. 13), hailed for its bold athleticism, sensuous musicality and theatrical range, and other companies to be announced. And another New Jersey favorite, the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company (Feb. 7), will ring in the Chinese New Year, the Year of the Sheep, with children and families at NJPAC.

The season also features two other dance audience favorites: the Arts Center’s Principal Resident Dance Company, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, will perform works from the company’s classic repertoire as well as new pieces on Mother’s Day weekend (May 8-10), and the State Ballet Theatre of Russia, with its full 50 corps de ballet, performs the classic Swan Lake on (Feb. 15).

Bank of America Classical Series
André Watts, L’Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Metropolitan Opera Rising Stars, Montclair State University Chorus, New Jersey Symphony Chamber Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Trilogy: An Opera Company’s Robeson, Yuja Wang

NJPAC’s 2014-15 Bank of America Classical Series was announced this past January. However, a new series has been added to the mix. As a pilot program with the Metropolitan Opera, NJPAC hosts Metropolitan Opera Rising Stars, a Sunday recital series featuring gifted performers chosen by the Metropolitan Opera. The three-part series features artists who are on the cusp of extraordinary careers through their association with the Met or its Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. Three singers, accompanied by a pianist, will appear in each of the themed recitals: Mozart & Company (Nov. 9), Bel Canto Showpieces (Mar. 15) and Romantic Treasures (May 10).
The season also includes performances from a pair of Europe’s most distinguished ensembles: the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and, in its NJPAC debut, the L’Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Returning for its first appearance in 10 seasons, the renowned Philadelphia Orchestra will perform under the leadership of its new Music Director, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and GRAMMY-nominated Chinese pianist Yuja Wang will make her NJPAC debut in a solo recital. NJPAC’s resident orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO), will perform accompanied by National Medal of Arts recipient André Watts. In a magnificent holiday presentation of Handel’s majestic Messiah oratorio, the New Jersey Symphony Chamber Orchestra will perform with vocal soloists Nathalie Paulin, Mireille Lebel, Isaiah Bell, and Gordon Bintner, plus the glorious voices of the Montclair State University Chorus. This Messiah will be NJPAC’s first.

Internationally acclaimed bass Kevin Maynor performs the title role of Robeson (Nov. 23), a stirring new opera about activist, singer, lawyer, athlete and actor Paul Robeson. Composer Adolphus Hailstork and librettist Shaunelle Perry are the creators of this important tribute to Robeson’s life and repertoire, presented by Newark’s own Trilogy: An Opera Company.

Theater
Evil Dead – The Musical, Golda’s Balcony with Tovah Feldshuh, NJPAC Stage Exchange, Potted Potter: The Unauthorized Harry Experience, A Parody by Dan & Jeff, Spank! The Fifty Shades Parody,

For two performances (Oct. 18-19), four-time Tony nominee Tovah Feldshuh recreates her award-winning performance as Golda Meir, the Milwaukee schoolteacher who became Prime Minister of Israel, in Golda’s Balcony, the longest running one-woman show in Broadway history.

The Arts Center inaugurates NJPAC Stage Exchange, a new series where cutting-edge new play development meets insightful community dialogue. Over five evenings spanning the season, prestigious playwrights from New Jersey and plays developed in the Garden State – with panels of artists, scholars, community leaders and newsmakers – will use a work in-progress to spur discussion on important issues in the state and nation. Playwrights Martyna Majok (Oct. 10), Ramoon Maharaj (Jan. 17), Richard Wesley (Feb. 27), Pia Wilson (Mar. 27) and Emily Mann (May 22) of McCarter Theatre Center will tackle topics central to their plays, such as the choices immigrants make to participate in the American Dream, racial integration, radical Islam, patriotism and re-entry into life at home through the lens of veterans returning from Afghanistan.

Fans of Fifty Shades of Grey, Evil Dead and Harry Potter will be pleased this season as three straight-from-pop-culture theatrical parody pieces will fill the NJPAC stages. Spank! The Fifty Shades Parody (Nov. 1-2) is a hilarious musical that brings the naughty fun of the best-selling book to life, while Evil Dead – The Musical (Nov. 28-30), the record-breaking Canadian production, pays homage to the cult
classic film, *Evil Dead*. And *Potted Potter: The Unauthorized Harry Experience, A Parody by Dan & Jeff* (May 2-3) takes on the challenge of condensing all seven Harry Potter books into a spirited 70-minute show.

**World Music Series sponsored by American Express**

Beres Hammond, Carmané, Celtic Woman, Dead Combo, *Mystic India: The World Tour*, SalsaPalooza with La Sonora Ponceña and Ismael Miranda

In addition to the world music at this summer’s *Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City* series (see below), NJPAC hosts six ticketed world music concerts and events during the *World Music Series* sponsored by American Express. From Jamaica to India, Ireland to Portugal to Puerto Rico, the sounds and scenes from around the world come to Newark. Jamaica’s undisputed king of “lover’s rock,” *Beres Hammond*, returns to NJPAC (Aug. 23) after a sell-out engagement last summer. *SalsaPalooza* (Nov. 22), an annual celebration of the hottest artists in salsa today, features *La Sonora Ponceña*, one of Puerto Rico’s best loved salsa orchestras, celebrating its 60th anniversary with special guest and former Fania All-Stars member, *Ismael Miranda*. “The greatest fadista since Amalia Rodrigues and Maria de Fe,” *Carmané* (Mar. 15) is the leading male fadista of his generation. At NJPAC, he will be joined by Portuguese folk band *Dead Combo*.

Featuring more than 60 musicians, dancers, aerialists and acrobats, as well as more than 1,500 different costumes, *Mystic India: The World Tour* (Mar. 6) is an internationally acclaimed Bollywood dance spectacular that showcases the cultural transitions from ancient India to modern day. And rounding out the Arts Center’s trip around the world, PBS favorite *Celtic Woman* (Mar. 18) brings its traditional Irish tunes, timeless pop anthems and inspirational songs, filled with celestial vocals, mesmerizing violinists and step dancing, to Prudential Hall.

**Comedy**


Over the past few seasons, the hottest comedians on the scene have performed at NJPAC, from Stephen Colbert, Jimmy Fallon and Kevin Hart to Louis C.K., Jerry Seinfeld and Bill Cosby. The new season keeps Newark laughing. Hollywood’s first family of comedy, *The Wayans Brothers* (Aug. 1), inaugurate the stand-up season when Damon, Shawn, Marlon and Keenan Ivory Wayans come to the Arts Center for a first ever family reunion. They are followed, in a return to NJPAC due to popular demand, by *Gabriel Iglesias* (Aug. 2) in a New Jersey exclusive performance. Television and stand-up comedian *Wanda Sykes* (Sept. 19), named one of the “25 funniest people in America” by *Entertainment Weekly*, holds court in Prudential Hall. Known for his weekly rants on *The Daily*
Show, the Emmy-nominated and GRAMMY-winning Lewis Black (Sep. 28) hilariously illustrates the absurdity of our world and provides a release of anger and disillusionment for the audience. Less than a month later (Oct. 17), Comedy Central presents Inside Amy Schumer’s Back Door Tour stops in Newark for the television star’s NJPAC debut, filled with her own provocative and wicked brand of humor.

After only one year of honing his comedic skills following his first exposure to stand-up comedy, Danny Bhoy (Nov. 9) won the UK’s largest competition for comedy newcomers. His NJPAC performance is part of his largest North American tour to date. Robert Klein (Dec. 6), a GRAMMY nominee, former Second City member, and a Broadway, TV, film and stand-up comedian, brings his well-honed craft to NJPAC with over four decades of making audiences laugh.

In The Second City Does New Jersey: Paved and Confused (Nov. 7-8), the legendary Chicago comedy troupe uses sketches, songs and its trademark improvisation, along with a handful of customized sketches, to take aim at all things Jersey. This summer, The Second City will also offer three comedy camps through NJPAC’s Arts Education Department, one for teens, one for teens on the autism spectrum, and one for adults. For more information, read the press release here.

Pop
Freestyle Extravaganza, Patti LaBelle, The Piano Guys

While a majority of the pop concerts at NJPAC are booked on an ongoing basis throughout the season, three stand-out performances are already scheduled. The GRAMMY-winning queen of rock and soul, three-time Emmy winner and best-selling author Patti LaBelle will celebrate Thanksgiving weekend at NJPAC (Nov. 28) bringing her hits, including “If Only You Knew,” “Lady Marmalade” “On My Own” and more. And after a sold-out concert event in the 2013-14 season, Freestyle Extravaganza (Dec. 6), a tribute to the electronic dance music from the late 1980s and 1990s New York, returns, featuring artists from the New York-based Fever Records. An internet sensation with over 293 million views on YouTube, The Piano Guys (Dec. 12) step out of the computer and onto the Prudential Hall stage to perform their mix classical and pop music in imaginative mash-up arrangements.
Children and Families


One of the founding missions of NJPAC revolves around serving children of all ages and families, and with one of the largest arts education programs in the country, NJPAC delivers fun, engaging and educational performances for thousands of kids in the region each season. The 2014-15 season includes the live tour of Nickelodeon’s supergroup for preschoolers, The Fresh Beat Band (Aug. 29), making its only New Jersey appearance at NJPAC. The band brings the hit TV series to life by teaching music appreciation to children and allowing them to express themselves through movement, song and instrumental music. Choo-Choo Soul with Genevieve! (Oct. 5) is a staged adaptation of Disney Junior’s short-form music video series that teaches children ABCs and 123s through travel to magical lands and a soundtrack, performed live, to the songs of classic Disney films. In Haunted Illusions Starring David Caserta (Oct. 26), master illusionist Caserta treats families to mind-blowing Halloween magic and comedy in a ghoulish, holiday-decorated Victoria Theater. For the 35th Anniversary of the Wharton Music Center’s New Jersey Youth Symphony (Nov. 23), 400 of New Jersey’s talented young performers from 13 ensembles across the state take the Prudential Hall stage for a special celebration performance.

NJPAC will celebrate the holidays with the revered African American women’s a cappella group, Sweet Honey In The Rock, through a concert (Dec. 20) as part of the Arts Center’s annual Kwanzaa celebration, and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical (Dec. 26-27), the New Jersey exclusive of a musical production that faithfully recreates the colorful characters and excitement of the 1964 television special.

Families are invited to the free, second annual Embodying the Dream festival (Jan. 17) celebrating the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through interactive and entertaining arts workshops. The festival also includes the Dance Theatre of Harlem performance and the NJPAC Stage Exchange conversation and reading of Ramoon Maharaj’s Little Rock, a play based on the true story of the Little Rock Nine and the contentious integration of their Arkansas high school in 1957.

In Lyrics from Lockdown (Jan. 24), spoken word champion Bryonn Bain performs a one-man multimedia tour de force. Executive produced by Gina and Harry Belafonte, the true story begins when Bain, a hip-hop theater innovator from Brooklyn, is wrongly imprisoned. Weaving together the voices of more than 40 characters, Bain’s critically acclaimed show uses a live band and video DJ and
fuses hip-hop, theater, spoken word poetry, R&B, calypso and classical music to tell a provocative story that exposes racial profiling and wrongful incarceration.

In *Sleeping Beauty Dreams* (Mar. 28), Marionetas de la Esquina, a puppet theater company from Mexico, takes a contemporary and whimsical look at the classic tale of *Sleeping Beauty*. Jim Henson’s *Dinosaur Train Live! Buddy’s Big Adventure* (Apr. 25) takes preschoolers on a fun-filled and interactive trip back in time to an age when dinosaurs roamed the Earth. Characters from the hit PBS series take a fascinating journey about natural history and paleontology. Also onstage for children and families are *Swingin’ Holidays* (Dec. 13), *Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse* (Feb. 21), *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* (May 9) and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Jun. 6).

**Summer 2014**

*Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City*, NJPAC’s free, outdoor concert series, returns to the Arts Center’s Theater Square as a favorite community event that offers attendees a taste of what they can expect to hear on the mainstage in the upcoming season. With reggae, funk, bhangra, salsa, jazz, world music, hip-hop, rock and pop on the bill, Thursday evenings (5-9pm) at NJPAC between July 10 and August 28 will showcase many of the hottest artists in a variety of genres.

Leading off on July 10 will be the return of the popular *Rhythm Revue Dance Party with Felix Hernandez*, complete with a dance floor and all the grooves heard each week on Hernandez’s popular radio show. The following week, July 17, 10-time GRAMMY-nominated reggae band *Third World*, which has been entertaining fans around the globe for four decades, brings hits such as “Now That We Found Love” and “96 Degrees in the Shade.” The pioneering, Brooklyn-based, eight-piece *Red Baraat* (Jul. 24) is up next, melding hard-driving North Indian bhangra with elements of jazz, go-go, brass funk and hip hop. Bandleader, pianist, nine-time GRAMMY winner and NEA Jazz Master *Eddie Palmieri*, last year’s recipient of the Latin Recording Academy’s Lifetime Achievement Award, performs on July 31 with his Salsa Orchestra.

Throughout a 31-year history, the *Funky Meters* (“Fiyo on the Bayou”) have grooved their way around the globe as the founding fathers of funk. They perform on August 7. In a special *Sounds of the City* evening on Aug. 14, NJPAC’s own *Brick City Jazz Orchestra* opens for *Black Violin*, the classically-trained violinists Kev Marcus and Wil B, who make classical music “cool” and sell out each time they perform at NJPAC. The hard-rocking, GRAMMY-winning *Living Colour* (“Cult of Personality”) reunite for an Aug. 21 concert. And in the culminating concert of the series (Aug. 28),
Burnt Sugar the Arkestra Chamber, featuring guitarist Vernon Reid of Living Colour and conductor Greg Tate, freely move among many styles, eras and genres to devise an exciting hybrid of musical traditions and cutting-edge technology.

NJPAC’s Family Fair at Theater Square takes place July 26 in the Arts Center’s outdoor Theater Square. The free day of activities features arts and crafts, yummy refreshments, tours, contests and demonstrations. Onstage entertainment, beginning at 1pm, includes dance, music, drumming, zumba and much more.

Tickets
Tickets for all performances go onsale this Friday, May 16, at 10am and may be purchased by calling 1-888-GO-NJPAC (1-888-466-5722), online at www.njpac.org, or in person at the NJPAC box office located at One Center Street in downtown Newark. Through NJPAC’s Create Your Own series, patrons may combine three or more performances and save up to 15% per ticket on performances. For more information on the Create Your Own series, parking, or other questions, please go to www.njpac.org/CYO or call NJPAC Ticket Services at 1-888-MY-NJPAC (1-888-696-5722).

New Jersey Performing Arts Center is grateful to the following partners for their commitment to NJPAC’s 2014-15 Season: Women’s Association of NJPAC and Prudential Foundation


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NJPAC is a wheelchair accessible facility and provides assistive services for patrons with disabilities.

New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), located in downtown Newark, New Jersey, is among the largest performing arts centers in the United States and is the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey -- where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day. As New Jersey’s Town Square, NJPAC brings diverse communities together, providing access to all and showcasing the State’s and the world’s best artists while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city. Through its extensive Arts Education programs, NJPAC is shaping the next generation of artists and arts enthusiasts. NJPAC has attracted over seven million visitors (including more than one million children) since opening its doors in 1997, and nurtures meaningful and lasting relationships with each of its constituents. Visit www.njpac.org or call 1-888-GO-NJPAC for more information.