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The Richard and Karen Carpenter Performing Arts Center Announces its

2015-16 Season

presenting

The First Annual President's Gala with Jane Lynch

Neil Gaiman*

Lily Tomlin

Sir Roger Moore†

Cirque Zuma Zuma

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy's Swingin' Holiday Party

Jane Monheit's A Jazz Celebration of Judy Garland

Boston Brass & Enso String Quartet, Notes from the Balcony*

LONG BEACH, California – Following its highest-earning season to date, the Richard and Karen Carpenter Performing Arts Center will present 27 performances in its 21st season, which opens Sept. 24. Performers include Golden Globe and two-time Emmy award winner Jane Lynch, who will be featured in the theater's first President's Gala.

The Carpenter Center on the Cal State Long Beach campus at 6200 Atherton Street will feature a lineup of music, comedy, dance and family entertainment while continuing to mirror the diversity of the Greater Long Beach community. Highlights include American roots crooner AJ Croce, dance legend Bill T. Jones and, opening the season, an irreverent three-man contemplation of race entitled "N*gger Wetb*ck Ch*nk."

* Southern California Exclusive

† Southern California Premiere

“For more than 20 years, the Carpenter Center has enriched the CSULB campus and our broader community with high-caliber artists from around the world,” Executive Director Michele Roberge said. “Our reputation for delighting audiences should continue into ’15-’16 with this array of performers for our loyal, returning patrons, as well as newcomers just discovering the joy of seeing a performance in this beautiful theater.”

Find all of the season’s upcoming events below, along with artist links and date information.

The Carpenter Center continues to present a variety of popular, quality performances, grouped for purchase into five series, which are complimented by nine single-event performances.

President’s Gala

The first-ever **President’s Gala** salutes the contributions of the Carpenter Center through performances and Arts for Life activities in furthering the university’s art and community engagement goals. CSULB President Jane Close Conoley will host gala VIP ticket holders for a private pre-show dinner on the Carpenter Family Terrace. Proceeds support Arts for Life, a comprehensive education initiative that provides free, interactive and hands-on arts activities for all ages.

For the debut gala, hot on the heels of her hit TV series “Glee”—and just as her new comedy “Angel from Hell” debuts this fall—Emmy and Golden Globe award winner **Jane Lynch** will show off her song repertoire. The performance “See Jane Dance” leverages her gift for song, comedy and acting as Lynch explores her love of the beauty and absurdity of the American standard and show tunes. Following the show, gala VIP ticket holders will join Lynch and President Conoley in an exclusive artist reception.

- [The President’s Gala Featuring Jane Lynch in “See Jane Sing”](#)
Saturday, Oct. 3, 2015 at 8 p.m.

Dance Series

The Carpenter Center theater was specifically designed for staging dance performances, and is a remarkable venue for seeing dance as well. The **Dance Series** continues the Center’s reputation as a leading home for dance in all forms. This season, New York City dance doyen **Bill T. Jones** (winner of two Tony awards and many other major honors) presents a new show concept called *Story/Time*. Inspired by the work of John Cage, *Story/Time* tells 90 one-minute stories through dance interpolated by a randomized musical score. * * * The much beloved **Les Ballets Trockadero**, who emerged out of the New York underground drag scene of the 1970s, are known internationally for providing a unique mix of grand comedy and enormous technical prowess. * * * **Rhythmic Circus** concludes the series with high-energy tap dancing backed by a live band.

- [Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance, Story/Time](#)
Saturday, Oct. 10, 2015 at 8 p.m.
- [Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo](#)
Saturday, Jan. 23, 2016 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 24, 2016 at 2 p.m.

- [Rhythmic Circus, Feet Don't Fail Me Now](#)
Saturday, March 5, 2016 at 8 p.m.

WOW! Series

The **WOW! Series** presents dazzling feats, daring stunts and that special something that makes for an evening to remember—the wow factor. This year's WOW! acts represent three world cultures: Japan, Scotland and Africa. **Cirque Zuma Zuma** brings performers from 16 African nations for a show that combines acrobatics, circus stunts and street performance. * * * Tradition and innovation collide when **San Jose Taiko** joins forces with the six-member DJ group known as **The Bangerz**. This show is a cross-cultural mashup of traditional Japanese taiko drumming surrounded by a hip hop music mix. * * * If you think you've heard Avicii's "Wake Me Up" or AC/DC's "Thunderstruck" before, wait until you've heard these songs expertly performed on bagpipe by the **Red Hot Chilli Pipers**. This feel-good band of bagpipers have sold hundreds of thousands of albums in the United Kingdom and have performed for Ewan McGregor, Samuel L. Jackson and Queen Elizabeth.

- [Cirque Zuma Zuma](#)
Saturday, Oct. 17, 2015 at 8 p.m.
- [San Jose Taiko x Bangerz](#)
Saturday, Jan. 30, 2016 at 8 p.m.
- [Red Hot Chilli Pipers](#)
Saturday, March 19, 2016 at 8 p.m.

Wit and Wisdom Series

The popular **Wit and Wisdom Series** will bring three celebrity entertainers to Long Beach in 2015 and 2016. **Lily Tomlin** will return to the Carpenter Center for an evening of comedy. Tomlin first performed at the Carpenter Center in 2012, and ever since fans have clamored for her return. Tomlin has been a major force in American comedy since the 1960s, and her long list of appearances include the movies "9 to 5" and "I Heart Huckabees" and the TV shows "Saturday Night Live" and "The West Wing." * * * After regaling sold-out British audiences last season 007 himself, **Sir Roger Moore**, will make his Southern California premiere at the Carpenter Center. The man made famous in the United States for such films as "The Spy Who Loved Me," "Moonraker" and "For Your Eyes Only," will discuss his astonishing life and career, including his work on the iconic British TV series "The Saint." * * * Comedian **Kathleen Madigan** will have Long Beach in stitches May 7. Madigan has starred in her own HBO comedy special and sat opposite Jay Leno and David Letterman on late-night television.

- [An Evening with Sir Roger Moore](#)
Saturday, Nov. 21, 2015 at 8 p.m.
- [An Evening with Lily Tomlin](#)
Saturday, March 12, 2016 at 8 p.m.
- [An Evening with Kathleen Madigan](#)
Saturday, May 7, 2016 at 8 p.m.

Cabaret Series

Four diverse musical groups will be featured in this season's intimate **Cabaret Series**, where patrons sit on the main stage less than 40 feet from the performers. Table seating comes with the option to enjoy dinner or bar service before the show. **Jane Monheit** will lead off the season with a jazz tribute to Judy Garland. * * * The **AJ Croce Band** will bring American roots music to the Carpenter stage. AJ Croce is the son of chart-topping singer/songwriter Jim Croce. * * * **Joshua Carswell** will bring his masterful, melodic voice to the stage for the series finale. Carswell draws from a wide assortment of singers for inspiration, from Billy Joel and Hank Williams to the Carpenters. * * * The a cappella quartet known as **The Alley Cats** will perform in January 2016. The group currently opens for Jay Leno in Las Vegas, and promises tight harmonies and good times.

- [Jane Monheit, *Hello Bluebird: Celebrating the Jazz of Judy Garland*](#)
Wednesday-Thursday, Oct. 7-8, 2015
- [AJ Croce Band](#)
Wednesday-Thursday, Nov. 11-12, 2015
- [The Alley Cats](#)
Wednesday-Thursday, Jan. 27-28, 2016
- [Joshua Carswell, *The Monet of Melody*](#)
Wednesday-Thursday, March 23-24, 2016

All Cabaret performances start at 7 p.m. Optional dinner service 6-6:50 p.m.

Sunday Afternoon Concert Series

This season's **Sunday Afternoon Concert Series** opens with **the Edwards Twins**, identical twin brothers gifted with powerful voices and a knack for impersonating celebrities—more than 100 celebrities, in fact. * * * Next, Gene Kelly's widow, **Patricia Ward Kelly**, presents rare and familiar film clips of her late husband, along with never released audio recordings, memorabilia and personal insights culled from hours of interviews with her husband. * * * The Carpenter Center welcomes back **Allan Harris**, a jazz musician known for applying his smooth vocals and laid-back guitar chords to jazz standards. Harris has cultivated a global following with his dynamic stage presence. It's no wonder Tony Bennett described him as "my favorite singer."

- [The Edwards Twins](#)
Oct. 4, 2015
- [Gene Kelly: The Legacy, with Patricia Ward Kelly](#)
Nov. 22, 2015
- [Wellington International Ukulele Orchestra](#)
Jan. 31, 2016

- [Allan Harris, *Black Bar Jukebox*](#)
March 13, 2016

All Sunday Afternoon Series performances start at 2 p.m.

Single Events

The Carpenter Center offers something for everyone with this eclectic mix of performances that are not part of a subscription series. Season opener **N*gger Wetb*ck Ch*nk** confronts racial prejudice in a musical comedy that contrasts a playful cheekiness with the serious message that racism impacts Americans every day. * * * Best-selling author **Neil Gaiman** is booked for his first Carpenter Center appearance Nov. 14. This writer has done it all, from music journalism to comic books (“Sandman”), and has written song lyrics, drama, screen plays and novels. Plus he has the awards from it, including multiple Hugo awards, a Newbery Medal and a Carnegie Medal. * * * From exciting classical arrangements to burning jazz standards, **Boston Brass** aims to provide audiences with a wide selection of musical styles in unique arrangements, provided in a friendly and fun atmosphere. They are exclusively booked for Southern California at the Carpenter Center. * * * For the holidays, Southern California’s most enduring swing revival band **Big Bad Voodoo Daddy** will provide their inimitable take on Christmas standards from “We Three Kings” to “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch.”-

- [N*gger Wetb*ck Ch*nk](#)
Thursday, Sept. 24, 2015 at 8 p.m.
- [Neil Gaiman](#)
Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015 at 8 p.m.
- [Stunt Dog Experience](#)
Sunday, Nov. 15, 2015 at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.
- [Big Bad Voodoo Daddy’s Wild and Swingin’ Holiday Party](#)
Saturday, Dec. 5, 2015 at 8 p.m.
- [David Benoit Christmas Tribute to Charlie Brown](#)
Saturday, Dec. 19, 2015 at 8 p.m.
- [Capitol Steps](#)
Saturday, Jan. 16, 2016 at 8 p.m.
- [Pete Seeger: The Storm King](#)
Saturday, Feb. 6, 2016 at 8 p.m.
- [Boston Brass & Enso String Quartet, *Notes from the Balcony*](#)
Thursday, March 10, 2016 at 8 p.m.
- [Arturo Sandoval](#)
Saturday, May 14, 2016 at 8 p.m.

Patrons get the best seats in the house when they subscribe to a subscription series. Series subscribers also enjoy other benefits, including significant discounts on single tickets. A 2015-16 advance priority

subscription order form is available online at CarpenterArts.org.

The WOW! Series three-event subscription is \$99, the Wit and Wisdom Series three-event subscription is \$125, the Dance Series three-event subscription is \$99, the Sunday Afternoon Concert Series four-event subscription is \$99, and the Cabaret Series four-event subscription with dinner is \$284 for Section A seating. A Cabaret series subscription for the show only can be purchased for \$200. Advance single tickets will be available online starting May 20 at a discount of \$5 off each ticket through July 22, Cabaret events not included. All programs, performers, prices, dates and times are subject to change. Presentations are made possible in part by Season Media Partner KPCC 89.3-FM and Season Hospitality Sponsor Gelson's Market.

For additional information, contact the Arts Ticket Office at (562) 985-7000 or visit the box office on the Cal State Long Beach campus at 6200 Atherton St. Box office hours are Monday-Friday from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. and select Saturdays from noon-4 p.m.