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**“The Peanuts Movie” Jazz Pianist David Benoit to Perform Christmas Tribute
to Charlie Brown Dec. 19**

*The performance reunites Mr. Benoit with the All-American Boys Chorus, and now features
sultry jazz singer Jane Monheit.*

LONG BEACH, California —For the past 50 years, audiences have enjoyed Vince Guaraldi’s music from the enduring TV classic “A Charlie Brown Christmas.” On Dec. 19 at 8 p.m., five-time Grammy-nominated jazz pianist David Benoit will play Guaraldi’s holiday songs of the Peanuts gang with Christmas standards and his own original music in “David Benoit Christmas Tribute to Charlie Brown” at the Carpenter Performing Arts Center on the campus of Cal State Long Beach.

Mr. Benoit returns for his third Carpenter Center performance with the All-American Boys Chorus of Costa Mesa. New to the show this year is jazz singer Jane Monheit, who played two sold-out Carpenter Center cabaret performances in October. Mr. Benoit, Ms. Monheit and the chorus recently recorded the holiday-themed album “Believe,” released in October.

Mr. Benoit is considered a founding father of contemporary jazz and has recorded 35 albums since his 1980 debut. He received a lifetime achievement award from the American Smooth Jazz Awards in 2010. He also hosts a morning jazz radio show on KKJZ 88.1-FM.

His relationship with the Peanuts franchise began with a miniseries in the late ‘80s. Several talented jazz musicians were considered for the soundtrack, including Dave Brubeck and Wynton Marsalis. In the end, television producer Lee Mendelson preferred Mr. Benoit’s take on the material, and the pianist went on to perform on soundtracks for several Peanuts animations, including “It’s Christmastime Again, Charlie Brown,” “Charlie Brown’s Christmas Tales,” and “I Want a Dog for Christmas, Charlie Brown.”

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Earlier this year, Mr. Benoit performed Peanuts theme song “Linus and Lucy” in “The Peanuts Movie,” now in theaters.

Benoit credits “A Charlie Brown Christmas” with inspiring him to become a jazz musician. His love of the original Vince Guaraldi tunes, including the classic “Linus and Lucy,” led him down the path to eventually arranging and playing much of the music for the Peanuts cartoons.

"It was such a landmark thing back in the '60s to use jazz in animation," Benoit said. "I remember I was 10 years old when it came out. It was a lot of the reason I became a jazz pianist. It captured a spirit; it's just genius."

Tickets for David Benoit Christmas Tribute to Charlie Brown start at \$35. For tickets and more information, visit CarpenterArts.org or call the Carpenter Center Ticket Office at (562) 985-7000. This series is made possible in part by Season Media Partner KPCC 89.3-FM.

MORE ABOUT DAVID BENOIT

For three decades, the Grammy-nominated pianist/composer/arranger David Benoit has reigned supreme as one the founding fathers of contemporary jazz. Mr. Benoit was born in Bakersfield and grew up in Los Angeles. At the age of thirteen, Benoit studied privately with pianist Marya Cressy Wright and continued his training with Abraham Fraser, who was the pianist for famed conductor Arturo Toscanini. He also studied music theory and composition, and later studied orchestration with Donald Nelligan at El Camino Junior College and film scoring from Donald Ray at UCLA. He studied conducting from Heiichiro Ohyama, assistant conductor of the L.A. Philharmonic, and furthered his musical education with Jan Robertson, head of the conducting department at UCLA, and UC Santa Barbara symphony orchestra music director Jeffrey Schindler.

After working with Lainie Kazan as her musical director/conductor in 1976, Benoit released albums on the AVI label from 1977 to 1984. He later released several chart-topping recordings for GRP, including “Freedom at Midnight” (1987), “Waiting for Spring” (1989) and “Shadows” (1991), which topped Billboard’s Contemporary Jazz Charts at #5, #1 and #2, respectively. His other noteworthy recordings include “Letter to Evan” (1992), his tribute to another piano influence, Bill Evans, and “Here’s to You, Charlie Brown: Fifty Great Years” (2000). Benoit also recorded with Russ Freeman on their album The Benoit/Freeman Project (1994), and on their follow-up collaboration, “2” (2004), which was released on Peak Records. His other recordings for the label include “American Landscape” (1997) and “Orchestral Stories” (2005), which featured his first piano concerto, “The Centaur and the Sphinx,” and a symphonic work, “Kobe.” In 2012, he released “Conversation” on Concord’s Heads Up International imprint.

Benoit received three Grammy nominations in the categories of Best Contemporary Jazz Performance for "Every Step of the Way" (1989), Best Large Ensemble Performance for GRP All-Star Big Band (1996), and Best Instrumental Composition for "Dad's Room," the latter from the album "Professional Dreamer" (2000). In 2010, Benoit received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Smooth Jazz Awards, and he's worked with an impressive potpourri of musicians including the Rippingtons, Emily Remler, Alphonse Mouzon, Dave Koz, Faith Hill, David Sanborn, CeCe Winans and Brian McKnight.

Benoit's film scores include "The Stars Fell on Henrietta" (1995), produced by Clint Eastwood, and "The Christmas Tree," produced by Sally Field, which was voted Best Score of 1996 by Film Score Monthly. He has served as conductor with a wide range of symphonies including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Asia America Symphony Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra. A long-time guest educator with the Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation, he received that organization's Excellence in Music Award in 2001. His musical selections have been featured on The Weather Channel and his version of Vince Guaraldi's "Cast Your Fate to the Wind" is included on compilation "The Weather Channel Presents: Smooth Jazz 11" (2008).

ABOUT JANE MONHEIT

"Everything I'm singing now is a reflection of my truest self," says Jane Monheit. "After all this time in the industry, after touring for 13 years, it's time to just be me, with complete and utter freedom."

At age 20, New York vocalist Jane Monheit was the first runner-up in the 1998 Thelonious Monk Institute vocal competition, winning a \$10,000 scholarship to further her musical education. Judges couldn't exactly place her sound, which blended natural elegance with a potent yet impressively controlled presentation, and by 2000, Monheit had joined Diana Krall as one of the most highly-touted female talents in jazz.

That May, Monheit signed to N-Coded and released her debut, "Never Never Land." Angelic and traditional, Monheit's structured set of 10 popular standards illustrated her vocal talents. "Come Dream with Me" arrived in 2001; it consisted of several standards as well as a few lesser-known jazz compositions. She released "In the Sun" in 2002, "Taking a Chance on Love" in 2004, the holiday-themed "Season" in 2005, and "Surrender" in 2007. Along the way she picked up two Grammy nominations, one for the song "Since You Asked," and another for "Dancing in the Dark."

"The Lovers, The Dreamers and Me" arrived in 2009, featuring her version of the classic Muppets ballad "The Rainbow Connection." A year later she released "Home" on Emarcy, and in 2013, she released her ninth studio album, the Gil Goldstein-produced "Heart of the Matter." In 2015, celebrated jazz pianist David Benoit chose her for his first collection of vocal songs, "2 in Love."

ABOUT ALL-AMERICAN BOYS CHORUS

The All-American Boys Chorus, America's quintessential professional boys chorus, has delighted audiences worldwide for more than 40 years. Based in Costa Mesa, the chorus is comprised of more than 100 boys ages 8–15 drawn from throughout Southern California. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Wesley Martin, a veteran of Hungary's renowned Kodaly Institute, the chorus provides boys with comprehensive musical training and unsurpassed performance and touring opportunities.

ABOUT THE CARPENTER CENTER

Founded in 1994, the Carpenter Performing Arts Center serves as the premier presenting theatre in Long Beach. Seating 1,062 patrons, the Center is named after pop music duo Richard and Karen Carpenter, who both attended California State University, Long Beach. For more than 20 years, the Carpenter Center has brought hundreds of professional performances to the CSULB campus. Both established stars and the gifted talent of the future have delighted Carpenter Center audiences with music, dance, comedy and much more.

The Carpenter Center's Arts for Life initiative provides comprehensive education and free arts events for all ages. Often complementing the performances by national and international performing artists presented on the Carpenter Center stage, Arts for Life engages elementary schools through Classroom Connections, links artists and CSULB students through Campus Connections, and offers arts experiences to patrons of all ages with Community Connections.

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