

Lincoln Center's

January 22–February 29, 2020

American Songbook

Lead Support provided by Holland America Line

The Program

Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 8:30 pm

An Evening with Natalie Merchant

Erik Della Penna, *Guitar*

This evening's program is approximately 75 minutes long and will be performed without intermission.

Please make certain all your electronic devices are switched off.

Endowment support provided by Bank of America

Corporate support provided by Morgan Stanley

This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.

The Appel Room

Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall

American Songbook

Additional support for Lincoln Center's American Songbook is provided by Christina and Robert Baker, EY, Rita J. and Stanley H. Kaplan Family Foundation, The DuBose and Dorothy Heyward Memorial Fund, The Shubert Foundation, Great Performers Circle, Lincoln Center Patrons and Lincoln Center Members

Public support is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature

NewYork-Presbyterian is the Official Hospital of Lincoln Center

Artist catering provided by Zabar's and Zabars.com

UPCOMING AMERICAN SONGBOOK EVENTS IN THE APPEL ROOM:

Thursday, February 27 at 8:30 pm

Kalani Pe'a

Friday, February 28 at 8:30 pm

Ali Stroker

Saturday, February 29 at 8:30 pm

Martin Sexton

For tickets, call (212) 721-6500 or visit AmericanSongbook.org. Call the Lincoln Center Info Request Line at (212) 875-5766 or visit AmericanSongbook.org for complete program information.

Join the conversation: @LincolnCenter

We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.

Meet the Artists



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Natalie Merchant

Over her 30-year career, Natalie Merchant has earned a place among America's most respected recording artists. She began her career as the lead vocalist and lyricist of the pop music band 10,000 Maniacs, which released two platinum and four gold records between 1981 and 1993 (*The Wishing Chair*, *In My Tribe*, *Blind Man's Zoo*, *Hope Chest*, *Our Time in Eden*, and *MTV Unplugged*). In 1994 Ms. Merchant embarked upon a solo career with a self-produced debut album, *Tigerlily* (1995), which sold more than five million copies. She subsequently released *Ophelia* (1998), *Natalie Merchant Live* (1999), and *Motherland* (2001).

In 2003, after 18 years with Elektra Records, she released an album of traditional and contemporary folk music, *The House Carpenter's Daughter*, on her own label, Myth America Records, followed by the double albums *Retrospective* (2005) and *Leave Your Sleep* (2010, Nonesuch Records). This thematic work included 26 musical adaptations of classic and contemporary poems that touched upon various aspects of childhood, including the works of such poets as Robert Louis Stevenson, e.e. cummings, Robert Graves, and Mother Goose. Ms. Merchant published an 80-page book with biographical sketches and portraits of each poet, earning the prestigious Library Lion Award from the New York Public Library in 2010. An eponymous album of original material followed in 2014, and in 2015 she celebrated the 20th anniversary of her first solo album by releasing *Paradise Is There*, reinterpretations of the songs from *Tigerlily* with a string quartet. A documentary film memoir was also included. Most recently, Nonesuch released a 10-CD box set of Ms. Merchant's complete solo work plus a new album entitled *Butterfly* (2017).

Ms. Merchant has collaborated on stage and in the studio with a wide range of artists including Philip Glass, Wynton Marsalis, David Byrne, The Chieftains, Mavis Staples, REM, Daniel Lanois, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Tracy Chapman, Lokua Kanza, The Klezmatics, Lúnasa, Yungchen Lhamo, Billy Bragg, and Wilco. Throughout her career, she has been dedicated to

supporting a variety of non-profit organizations by lending both financial support and raising public awareness. Scenic Hudson, Doctors Without Borders, Tibet House, Greenpeace, and Planned Parenthood are among the social justice groups to which she has been devoted. In 2007 Ms. Merchant was appointed to a five-year term on the New York State Council on the Arts.

Ms. Merchant is currently an artist-in-residence with Commission on Economic Opportunity in the Hudson Valley. During her four-year residency, she will be developing a music, poetry, and dance curriculum for CEO's Head Start program. As part of this effort, she has written, rehearsed, and produced a musical theater piece with 160 low-income pre-school children called *Happy Birthday Mother Goose*.

Erik Della Penna

Erik Della Penna is a songwriter, composer, and guitarist living in New York City. He has written for and performed extensively with Hazmat Modine, Joan Baez, Natalie Merchant, Joan Osborne, and Tony Award-winning composer David Yazbek. He has also written music for the New York Historical Society, A&E television, and dozens of documentary films.

His guitar-and-drum duo, Kill Henry Sugar, is currently recording its seventh collection of original songs. As a member of Hazmat Modine, Mr. Della Penna is one of the primary songwriters and provides vocals, guitar, and banjo. In addition, he is working on a musical with Yazbek, based on the bizarre life and death of failed train robber Elmer McCurdy. He also has a musical for young people, *Kitty Hawk*, now in production at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts in Miami.

American Songbook

In 1998, Lincoln Center launched American Songbook, dedicated to the celebration of popular American song. Designed to highlight and affirm the creative mastery of America's songwriters from their emergence at the turn of the 19th century up through the present, American Songbook spans all styles and genres, from the form's early roots in Tin Pan Alley and Broadway to the eclecticism of today's singer-songwriters. American Songbook also showcases the outstanding interpreters of popular song, including established and emerging concert, cabaret, theater, and songwriter performers.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community engagement, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. A presenter of thousands of free and ticketed events, performances, tours, and educational activities annually, LCPA offers a variety of festivals and programs, including American Songbook, Avery Fisher Career Grants and Artist program, David Rubenstein Atrium programming, Great Performers, Lincoln Center Emerging Artist Awards, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Lincoln Center Vera List Art Project, LC Kids, Midsummer Night Swing, Mostly Mozart Festival, White Light Festival, the Emmy Award-winning *Live From Lincoln Center*, which airs nationally on PBS, and Lincoln Center Education, which is celebrating more than four decades enriching the lives of students, educators, and lifelong learners. As manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and the 11 resident organizations: The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Film at Lincoln Center, Jazz at Lincoln Center, The Juilliard School, Lincoln Center Theater, The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Ballet, New York Philharmonic, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, School of American Ballet, and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

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For American Songbook

Matt Berman, *Lighting Design*

Scott Stauffer, *Sound Design*

Paloma Estevez, *Company Manager, Contemporary Programming*

Roshni Lavelle, *House Seat Coordinator*

Matt Berman

Matt Berman is the resident lighting designer for Lincoln Center's American Songbook. He most recently designed the lighting for Kristin Chenoweth's *For the Girls* at the Nederlander Theatre. In the summer he designs in Provincetown for producer Mark Cortale's concerts and shows at the both the Art House and Town Hall. This past spring, Mr. Berman had the honor of designing the lighting and sound for South Florida Symphony Orchestra's remarkable production of *Porgy & Bess*, directed by Richard Jay-Alexander. This past summer he designed a small promotional tour of the U.S. with Meow Meow and Thomas Lauderdale of Pink Martini for their collaboration album, *Hotel L'Amour*. Additionally he has designed shows with Meow Meow for the London Philharmonic Orchestra and many other concert appearances.

Mr. Berman's international touring with stars such as Liza Minnelli, Kristin Chenoweth, Alan Cumming, Meow Meow, and Elaine Paige has allowed him to design for such iconic venues as Royal Albert Hall, the Paris Opera, Olympia Theater in Paris, Royal Theatre Carré in Amsterdam, the Sporting Club in Monte Carlo, The Acropolis, the famed amphitheater in Taormina, Sicily, Luna Park in Buenos Aires, the Sydney Opera House and, closer to home, the Hollywood Bowl, Alice Tully Hall, and Carnegie Hall. Other Broadway credits include Kristin Chenoweth's *My Love Letter to Broadway* at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, the

Tony Award-winning *Liza's at the Palace*, *Bea Arthur on Broadway* at the Booth Theatre, Nancy LaMott's *Just in Time for Christmas*, and *Kathy Griffin Wants a Tony* at the Belasco Theater.

Scott Stauffer

Scott Stauffer has been the sound designer for Lincoln Center's American Songbook since 1999. His Broadway design credits include *A Free Man of Color*, *The Rivals*, *Contact* (also in London and Tokyo), *Marie Christine*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Jekyll & Hyde*. Off-Broadway Mr. Stauffer has worked on *Mother Freaking Hood*, *Subverted*, *Promises*, *Hereafter*, *A Minister's Wife*, *Bernarda Alba*, *Third*, *Belle Epoque*, *Big Bill*, *Elegies*, *Hello Again*, *The Spitfire Grill*, *Pageant*, and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. His regional credits include productions at the Denizen Theater, Manhattan School of Music, Capitol Repertory Theatre, University of Michigan, Hanger Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and Alley Theatre. His concert credits include many Lincoln Center galas, as well as the Actors Fund concerts of *Frank Loesser*, *Broadway 101*, *Hair*, and *On the Twentieth Century*. At Carnegie Hall he has worked with Chita Rivera and Brian Stokes Mitchell. As a sound engineer, Mr. Stauffer has worked on *The Lion King*, *Juan Darién*, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, *Carousel*, *Once on This Island*, and the original *Little Shop of Horrors*.