

***Holiday Programming at The Soraya******A Michael Feinstein Holiday Celebration*****Friday, December 8 at 8:00pm**

(Los Angeles, CA | November 16, 2017) Valley Performing Arts Center (The Soraya) welcomes back two-time Emmy nominee and five-time Grammy nominee Michael Feinstein to perform in a Holiday Celebration including Classic Standards as well as selections from his album, *A Michael Feinstein Christmas* on Friday, December 8 at 8:00pm

Michael Feinstein has built a dazzling career over the last three decades bringing the music of the Great American songbook to the world: recordings that have earned him his Grammy nominations, his Emmy nominated PBS-TV specials, his acclaimed NPR series and concerts spanning the globe, appearances at The White House, Buckingham Palace, Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall and Sydney Opera House – and his work as an educator and archivist – all of this defines Feinstein as one of the most important musical forces of our time.

Although Feinstein was raised in a conservative synagogue in Columbus Ohio, he has a deep affinity for traditional Christmas songs, many of which were written by Jewish songwriters. He explains in an interview with the *Chicago Tribune*, “The Christmas songs that are popular are not about Jesus, but about sleigh bells, Santa and the trappings of Christmas. Any singer who is a singer of the American songbook will sing Christmas songs. We all sing them.”

Over his storied career, Feinstein has worked with some of culture’s biggest names including Broadway legend Barbara Cook, Dr. Maya Angelou, Bette Midler, Liza Minnelli, Oscar winner Andre Previn and many more. Through his live performances, recordings, film and television appearances, and his songwriting (in collaboration with Alan and Marilyn Bergman, Lindy Robbins, Bob Merrill and Marshall Barer), Feinstein is an all-star force in American music.

Tickets for *A Michael Feinstein Holiday Celebration*, which start at \$38, can be purchased by calling 818.677.3000 or visiting [www.valleyperformingartscenter.org](http://www.valleyperformingartscenter.org). Additional holiday programming for VPAC (The Soraya) includes *Fiesta Mexicana: Feliz Navidad* (December 9) and *The Klezmatics* (December 16).

**More About Michael Feinstein**

In 2007, Feinstein founded the Great American Songbook Foundation, dedicated to celebrating the art form and preserving it through educational programs, Master Classes, and the annual High School Songbook Academy. This summer intensive open to students from across the country has produced graduates who have gone on to record acclaimed albums and appear on television programs such as NBC’s “America’s Got Talent.” Michael serves on the Library of Congress’ National Recording Preservation Board, an organization dedicated to ensuring the survival, conservation and increased public availability of America’s sound recording heritage.

Feinstein earned his fifth Grammy Award nomination in 2009 for *The Sinatra Project*, his CD celebrating the music of “Ol’ Blue Eyes.” *The Sinatra Project, Volume II: The Good Life* was released in 2011. He released the CDs *The Power Of Two* – collaborating with *Glee* and *30 Rock* star Cheyenne Jackson – and *Cheek To Cheek*,

recorded with Broadway legend Barbara Cook. For Feinstein's CD *We Dreamed These Days*, he co-wrote the title song with Dr. Maya Angelou.

His Emmy Award-nominated TV special *Michael Feinstein – The Sinatra Legacy*, which was taped live at the Palladium in Carmel, IN, aired across the country in 2011. The PBS series *Michael Feinstein's American Songbook*, the recipient of the ASCAP Deems-Taylor Television Broadcast Award, was broadcast for three seasons and is available on DVD. His most recent primetime PBS-TV Special, *New Year's Eve at The Rainbow Room*, written and directed by *Desperate Housewives* creator Marc Cherry, aired in 2014. For his nationally syndicated public radio program *Song Travels*, Michael interviews and performs alongside of music luminaries such as Bette Midler, Neil Sedaka, Liza Minnelli, Rickie Lee Jones, David Hyde Pierce and more.

Feinstein was named Principal Pops Conductor for the Pasadena Symphony in 2012 and made his conducting debut in June 2013 to celebrated critical acclaim. Under Feinstein's leadership, the Pasadena Pops has quickly become a premier orchestral presenter of the Great American Songbook with definitive performances of rare orchestrations and classic arrangements. He launched an additional Pops series at the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in Palm Beach, Florida in 2014.

Michael's book *The Gershwins and Me*, the *Los Angeles Times* best-seller from Simon & Schuster, features a new CD of Gershwin standards performed with Cyrus Chestnut at the piano.

Feinstein serves as Artistic Director of the Palladium Center for the Performing Arts, a \$170 million, three-theatre venue in Carmel, Indiana, which opened in January 2011. The theater is home to diverse live programming and a museum for his rare memorabilia and manuscripts. Since 1999, he has served as Artistic Director for Carnegie Hall's *Standard Time with Michael Feinstein* in conjunction with ASCAP. In 2010, he became the director of the Jazz and Popular Song Series at New York's Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Feinstein's at the Nikko, Michael's nightclub at San Francisco's Nikko Hotel, has presented the top talents of pop and jazz since 2013. He debuted at Feinstein's/54 Below, his new club in New York, late in 2015. His first venue in New York, Feinstein's at the Regency, featured major entertainers such as the late Rosemary Clooney, Glen Campbell, Barbara Cook, Diahann Carroll, Jane Krakowski, Lea Michele, Cyndi Lauper, Jason Mraz and Alan Cumming from 1999 to 2012.

He has designed a new piano for Steinway called "The First Ladies," inspired by the White House piano and signed by several former First Ladies. It was first played to commemorate the Ronald Regan centennial on February 6, 2011.

In 2013, Michael released *Change Of Heart: The Songs of Andre Previn* in collaboration with four time Oscar and eleven time Grammy Award-winning composer-conductor-pianist Andre Previn. The album celebrates Previn's pop songs and motion picture classics. Earlier album highlights include *Hopeless Romantics*, a songbook of classics by Michael's late friend Harry Warren, recording with legendary jazz pianist George Shearing. His album with songwriting icon Jimmy Webb, *Only One Life – The Songs of Jimmy Webb*, was named one of "10 Best CDs of the Year" by *USA Today*.

Feinstein received his fourth Grammy nomination for Michael Feinstein with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, his first recording with a symphony orchestra. The year before, Rhino/Elektra Music released *The Michael Feinstein Anthology*, a two-disc compilation spanning 1987 to 1996 and featuring old favorites and previously-unreleased tracks.

Michael was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, where he started playing piano by ear as a 5-year-old. After graduating from high school, he moved to Los Angeles when he was 20. The widow of legendary concert pianist-actor Oscar Levant introduced him to Ira Gershwin in July 1977. Feinstein became Gershwin's assistant for six years, which earned him access to numerous unpublished Gershwin songs, many of which he has since performed and recorded.

Gershwin's influence provided a solid base upon which Feinstein evolved into a captivating performer, composer and arranger of his own original music. He also has become an unparalleled interpreter of music

legends such as Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer, Duke Ellington and Harry Warren. Feinstein has received three honorary doctorates

### **About Valley Performing Arts Center (The Soraya)**

The Soraya opened its 2017-2018 season on September 16 with a performance of *AMADEUS Live* (Milos Forman's 1984 Academy Award-winning Best Picture with live orchestra) with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and members of the LA Opera Chorus. The evening honored the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Foundation in recognition of the family's recent \$17 million gift that will rename VPAC as the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center, known as The Soraya. The gift is one of the largest in the history of the California State University and the system's largest single gift to support the arts; gift to support the programming and operations of the award-winning Valley Performing Arts Center – which has become one of the cultural jewels of the region in the six years since it opened.

The 2017-18 Soraya season signals a new era for the premier event venue. Under the leadership of Executive Director Thor Steingraber, the renamed Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center expands its programming and outstanding multidisciplinary performances. The mission of The Soraya is to present a wide variety of performances that not only includes new and original work from the Los Angeles region but also work from around the world that appeal to all of LA's rich and diverse communities. Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, The Soraya's season offers a vibrant performance program of nearly 50 classical and popular music, dance, theater, family and international events that will serve to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley, and further establish itself as one of the top arts companies in Southern California. The award-winning, 1,700-seat theatre was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and was recently cited by the Los Angeles Times as "a growing hub for live music, dance, drama and other cultural events."

### **Calendar Listing for A Michael Feinstein Holiday Celebration**

**Date:** Friday, December 8 at 8:00pm

**Venue:** Valley Performing Arts Center (The Soraya)  
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

**Tickets:** **Prices:** Starting at \$38. Prices subject to change.  
**By Phone:** (818) 677-3000  
**Online:** [ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org](http://ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org)

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