



NEWS RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Marie Estrada | (818) 677-6691
marie.estrada@csun.edu

Gary Murphy | (213) 700-9645
gmurphypr@gmail.com

"Noblezada is utterly mesmerizing to watch. It's not just that she has a voice rivaling Liz Callaway...it's that it feels like she's every bit herself on stage: a bit silly, very funny, and extremely relatable," — [Broadway World](#)

Broadway Star Eva Noblezada Joins Pacific Jazz Orchestra to Launch The Soraya's 4th Annual Jazz at Naz Festival

*The GRAMMY Award-winner and Two-Time Tony Award
Nominee will launch LA's only month-long jazz festival*

*Saturday, Feb 1 at 8pm; Single Tickets, Jazz Memberships, and Livestream Passes are now
Available at TheSoraya.org.*

(Los Angeles, CA) September 20, 2024 — Powerhouse singer and actress **Eva Noblezada** will open the 2025 **Jazz at Naz** festival on Saturday, Feb 1 with Chris Walden's **Pacific Jazz Orchestra (PJO)**, marking the start of The Soraya's 4th-annual festival and her Soraya debut. PJO's debut at the Soraya in May 2024 garnered a wildly enthusiastic response from a sold-out audience which featured Broadway megastar, Aaron Tveit. One of the notable aspects of PJO is the unparalleled musical arrangements crafted by Walden, who shapes every number individually. This kind of bespoke programming highlights the thrilling expertise of both the band and the singer.

Eva Noblezada was discovered at 13 years old during a high school singing competition in her hometown of San Diego that led to her performing the title role in *Miss Saigon* in both London and New York. The performances garnered the young actress her first Tony Award nomination and her Broadway debut. Her second came following her starring role as Eurydice in the Anaïs Mitchell musical *Hadestown*, alongside Reeve Carney.

"Noblezada has amassed an impressive list of accomplishments in her young career, including a Grammy award and two Tony nominations. She is best known for her leading roles in *Hadestown* and *The Great Gatsby*. I was recently able to catch one of her performances in *Gatsby* on Broadway, and her portrayal of the iconic American figure, Daisy Buchanan, was riveting. She

brings such depth and complexity to both her acting and singing,” said Thor Steingraber, Soraya Executive and Artistic Director. “In addition to Broadway and jazz fans, we are proud to introduce her to the Valley’s extensive Filipino American and Mexican American audiences. Noblezada is a Southern California native with deep roots in these vibrant communities.”

Seven-time Grammy-nominated composer and arranger Chris Walden is the founder, artistic director and conductor of the 42-piece Pacific Jazz Orchestra (PJO) based on Los Angeles. PJO’s inaugural season began in October 2023 and closed in May 2024 at The Soraya with Broadway star Aaron Tveit. The group’s highly successful first season featured guest artists such as Rufus Wainwright, TAKE 6, Katharine McPhee, Billy Valentine, and David Foster and has since been received by the community as, “the only such ensemble in the country” (*Montecito Journal*) as it blends the elements of the jazz big band with a string section while also integrating singers of all genres.

The Feb. 1 concert is the first in the 4th-annual Jazz at Naz festival, which features a robust array of talented jazz musicians from around the world and right here with CSUN’s own Jazz “A” Band performing and working directly with Jason Moran. In addition to PJO with Eva Noblezada, the 2025 festival includes:

- **Jazz Club (230 seats):** Lakecia Benjamin with Phoenix & Christian McBride with Ursa Major
- **Great Hall (1700 seats):** Jason Moran with CSUN Jazz “A” Band; Kurt Elling with Peter Erskine (also of PJO) and Yellowjackets; Chucho Valdès with Arturo Sandoval

The festival will conclude on Feb. 20, 2025 with *Chucho Valdès: Irakere 50* where Valdès will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Irakere, the band he formed in 1973. The concert comes on the heels of two major accolades for both Valdès and Sandoval—with Valdès becoming a 2025 inductee of the NEA Jazz Masters and Sandoval being named in the 2025 class of the Kennedy Center Honors. *Read more, [here](#).*

For story development and interview requests, please contact:

The Soraya Communications Associate Marie Estrada (marie.estrada@csun.edu)

PR Consultant Gary Murphy (Garymurphypr@garymurphypr.com)

Click [HERE](#) to access your press kit.

About Eva Noblezada

Eva Noblezada is currently starring on Broadway as “Daisy” in *The Great Gatsby*. She won a GRAMMY© and was nominated for a Tony for *Hadestown*. It was Eva's second Tony nomination in her first two Broadway roles, following her earlier nod in 2017 for the title role of *Miss Saigon*. She was featured in the Amblin feature, “Easter Sunday,” and as the lead in the AppleTV+

animated film, “Luck.” Previously, she starred for director Diane Paragas in the acclaimed Sony Pictures film, “Yellow Rose.” She also starred in the West End revivals of *Miss Saigon* and *Les Misérables*.

About Pacific Jazz Orchestra

The Pacific Jazz Orchestra (PJO) is Los Angeles’ new resident 40-piece ensemble for jazz and beyond, presenting an annual concert season consisting of five projects, each with different guest artists. Spread out over a select few venues in L.A., the program reaches far beyond the boundaries of jazz, as it features music of a diverse range of styles, genres, and backgrounds. The PJO, which launched its first season in October 2023, is the only orchestra of its kind in the country, and with its talent pool of musicians, Los Angeles is the only city where an ensemble like this can be put together, representing jazz, the uniquely American art form. A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the members of the advisory board of the PJO include names like David Foster, Quincy Jones, Monica Mancini, Alan Bergman, Rickey Minor, Harvey Mason Jr., and Ledisi. The artistic director and conductor of the orchestra is seven-time Grammy-nominated composer/arranger Chris Walden, who has worked for artists such as Rufus Wainwright, Michael Bublé, Josh Groban, Paul McCartney, Diana Krall, Aretha Franklin, Rihanna, Seal, Barbra Streisand, John Legend, Herb Alpert, and many more. He has been the lead arranger at the Oscars, the Kennedy Center Honors, and has conducted the LA Phil, Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, Metropole Orkest, Boston Pops, Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, WDR Big Band Cologne and many more. Walden’s vast experience in writing orchestral and big band arrangements in many different styles and working with artists from different backgrounds makes him uniquely qualified to serve as music director, as he can draw from his many connections to artists he has worked with to attract talent for a program.

About The Soraya’s Jazz at Naz festival

Long before the 2011 opening of The Soraya, CSUN Jazz Studies was a national standard bearer—winning awards and training the next generation of artists. Since opening its doors, The Soraya has furthered CSUN’s profile with a nonstop procession of jazz greats performing in both The Soraya’s Great Hall and its innovative Jazz Club.

Now, the annual [Jazz at Naz festival](#) has been recognized as one of the best winter jazz festivals on the West Coast as well as the jazz epicenter in Los Angeles. Jazz at Naz has showcased major debuts for emerging artists such as two-time GRAMMY-winner Samara Joy and created a home for the world’s jazz legends such as John Pizzarelli, Branford Marsalis, Dianne Reeves, Chucho Valdés, and Charles Lloyd, and turned the spotlight on influential crossover artists such as Bobby and Taylor McFerrin, Diana Krall, Jon Batiste, Gregory Porter, and Herb Alpert and Lani Hall.

The Soraya’s Great Hall, with 1700 seats, has become home to the Big Band sound with Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, Christian McBride, The Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra, Maria Schneider Orchestra, Vince Giordano & The Nighthawks, Buena Vista Social Club, and Delfeayo Marsalis’ Uptown Orchestra. Its pioneering **Jazz Club**, a unique and intimate setting for jazz performances complete with food and drink, is built on The Soraya’s main stage and has featured a wide breadth of talent, including Terence Blanchard, Gerald Clayton, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Luciana Souza, Antonio Sánchez, Lisa Fischer, Booker T. Jones, and Vijay Iyer. Since the inception of the festival **The Soraya’s multi-camera livestream**

has expanded availability for audiences around the world. The virtual streams feature behind-the-scenes content and backstage interviews with the artists, in addition to the complete concert.

About the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)

The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for The Performing Arts (The Soraya) is an award-winning, state-of-the-art 1,700-seat theatre designed and built by HGA Architects and Engineers and opened in January 2011 as the Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC). Through a transformative gift by Younes and Soraya Nazarian, the venue was renamed The Soraya in 2017. Vibrant programming has served to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley and its 1.8 million residents and as one of the top arts and culture venues in Southern California. Since its inaugural season, The Soraya has presented over 500 artists and companies across the genres of music, dance, theater, and film and is a highly in-demand location for filming and rental events.

The Soraya's 2024-25 Season boldly advances the expansive sound of orchestras both traditional and contemporary; the freestyle vibe of jazz; an array of dance luminaries, and a cultural bounty drawn from the musical well of global voices. The Soraya continues its vigorous commitment to innovating, excelling, and amplifying access by offering a wide variety of performances that reflect Los Angeles' many distinctive communities and featuring new and original work and artists from the local region as well as nationally and around the world.

Located on the vibrant campus of California State University Northridge (CSUN), The Soraya and the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication share an integral link that enhances student access and opportunities in the arts and performing arts. A \$5 million contribution from record producer and former California Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb was pivotal in ensuring the completion and opening of The Soraya in 2011. For his founding support and in acknowledgment of the integral relationship between the Mike Curb College and The Soraya, Mike Curb is recognized as one of The Soraya's Cornerstone Benefactors. This partnership fosters academic and artistic excellence, elevating the talents and the future growth of CSUN's students through master classes, student tickets, concerts of student ensembles, and students appearing alongside renowned artists such as Wynton Marsalis, Aida Cuevas, and Martha Graham Dance Company.

Calendar Listing

What:

Returning after their sold-out debut last season, **Pacific Jazz Orchestra (PJO)** opens the **Jazz at Naz** festival's fourth season headlined by GRAMMY® Award-winning and two-time Tony nominated Broadway and West End star, **Eva Noblezada**. Following her riveting performances in London's revivals of *Miss Saigon* and *Les Misérables*, she dazzled Broadway as Eurydice in the original production of the mega-hit *Hadestown*, and is currently wowing audiences as Daisy Buchanan in the new Broadway musical adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*. On screen, she starred alongside Lea Salonga in *Yellow Rose* and voiced the lead role of Sam in Apple TV+'s *Luck*. Noblezada joins Hollywood veteran **Chris Walden** and 40 of the finest musicians in Los Angeles for a concert of jazz, Broadway, and pop songs hand-picked and newly arranged by Walden for his big band and Noblezada's soaring vocals. The PJO concert in May 2024 was heralded as the "Best Jazz Performance" by San Francisco Classical Voice's Reader's Choice Awards.

Date: Saturday, Feb. 1 at 8 p.m.
Tickets: Starting at \$55
Where: Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330
Website: www.TheSoraya.org
Ticket Office: 818-677-3000

Soraya Press Contacts

Marie Estrada, Communications Associate, The Soraya
P: 818-677-6691 | E: marie.estrada@csun.edu

Gary W. Murphy, Consultant
P: 213-700-9645 | E: gmurphypr@gmail.com

#