



NEWS RELEASE

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*"This strikingly beautiful concert hall on the campus of CSUN easily has the best sound of any large performance venue that I have ever experienced in the U.S.,"*

*—Stage & Cinema*

## Celebrate the Holidays at The Soraya! Seven Performances Starting on Dec. 7 Include:

*Nochebuena: A Christmas Spectacular*

*Dorrance Dance: The Nutcracker Suite*

*Glenn Miller Orchestra: In the Holiday Mood*

*Lea Salonga | Sounding Joy: The Holiday Tour*

*SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK® 50th Anniversary Tour*

*Tickets to Holiday Concerts Start at \$43 and are Now Available at [TheSoraya.org](https://www.thesoraya.org).*

(Los Angeles, CA) Nov. 15, 2024 —Holiday traditions continue at The Soraya with a wide variety of seven performances for all ages. The Holiday series begins on Dec. 7 and 8 with the ninth edition of The Soraya's original production, [\*Nochebuena: A Christmas Spectacular\*](#)—featuring **Ballet Folklórico de Los Ángeles** and **Mariachi Pueblo Viejo**. In the 2024-25 Season, **Camila Fernández**, the daughter of Mexican Singer Alejandro Fernández, and granddaughter of the late great Vicente Fernández, joins as a special guest.

On Dec. 12, **Michelle Dorrance** returns to The Soraya (following her 2023 debut in *Turn it Out with Tiler Peck*) with [\*Dorrance Dance: The Nutcracker Suite\*](#). The performance, co-created by Dorrance with Josette Wiggan and Hannah Heller, caught attention in the news following its [\*White House invitation\*](#) by First Lady Jill Biden. The jazzy new vision of the classic holiday tradition is set to **Duke Ellington** and **Billy Strayhorn's** arrangement of the Tchaikovsky classic.

“It’s a unique telling of this classic story, living very much in a very traditional jazz and vernacular space and percussive, rooted in the tap dance space,” Michelle Dorrance said [in an interview](#) with Soraya Executive and Artistic Director Thor Steingraber. “It couldn’t be more of a literal dream to work with Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn’s interpretation of Tchaikovsky...because it’s such an unbelievably swingin’ version...there’s horn, a funky baseline, a swingin’ feel.”

Co-creator **Josette Wiggan**, in the same interview, echoed Dorrance’s sentiments, saying the whimsical and fun show pays homage to their elders, but also bridges the gaps between the jazz and tap worlds in a way that “creates a fun space for kids to imagine and adults to reimagine a (more traditional) Nutcracker they may have seen growing up.”

Following the *Nutcracker Suite* is the [World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra](#), with a concert on Dec. 14 filled with timeless arrangements and holiday classics that made the Glenn Miller Orchestra an icon for all ages.

One day later on Dec. 15, **Lea Salonga** makes her fourth visit to The Soraya, this time with two performances of [Sounding Joy: The Holiday Tour](#) at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. The all-new holiday concert, sure to be a hit with fans of all ages, features songs from Lea Salonga’s new holiday album (just released on Nov. 1) *Sounding Joy*. The album, featuring original music and classic Christmas songs reimaged in Salonga’s original style, is the star’s 14th recording, and marks a milestone as her very first holiday release in 20 years.

Best known for her Tony Award-winning role in *Miss Saigon*, Salonga most recently starred in the West End production of Stephen Sondheim’s musical revue *Old Friends*, and as Aurora in *Here Lies Love* on Broadway, which she also produced. Salonga’s Soraya performance this December is just ahead of her Broadway-bound starring role in Stephen Sondheim’s *Old Friends*, in which she and Bernadette Peters will reprise their roles from the concert’s West End bow. Previews for the show will begin in March 2025.

The Soraya’s Holiday Series closes on Dec. 19, with [SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK®](#). On its 50th anniversary tour, the a cappella gospel group brings to The Soraya a concert to celebrate the “HolyDays,” brimming with vocal improvisations, and gospel traditions for a powerful celebration of the season. The group continues its work and the 50th anniversary tour despite the passing of its founder, Bernice Johnson Reagon, at the age of 81 in July. The civil rights activist co-founded the Freedom Singers and later started SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK® in 1973.

“It is impossible to separate liberation struggles from song. And in the 1960s — at marches, and in jailhouses — the voice leading those songs was often Bernice Johnson Reagon,” NPR wrote

about Reagon in a [July 2024](#) article. “Her work as a scholar and activist continued throughout her life, in universities and concert halls, at protests and in houses of worship.”

Reagon was a leading scholar of Black musical life well recognized for her work, according to NPR. In 1974 she received a music history appointment at the Smithsonian; in 1989, she won a "genius grant" from the MacArthur Foundation; In 1994, she created a 26-part NPR documentary called “Wade in the Water” that won a Peabody award, and in 1995, Reagon was awarded the Presidential Medal and the Charles Frankel Prize.

**For story development and interview requests, please contact:**

- The Soraya Communications Associate Marie Estrada ([marie.estrada@csun.edu](mailto:marie.estrada@csun.edu))
- PR Consultant Gary Murphy ([Garymurphypr@garymurphypr.com](mailto:Garymurphypr@garymurphypr.com))
- Click [HERE](#) to access your press kit with photos and press release information.

**For Calendar Listings: Holiday Programming at The Soraya**

**Sat Dec 7 | 3PM**

**Sun Dec 8 | 3PM**

**Nochebuena: A Christmas Spectacular**

**Featuring Ballet Folklórico de Los Ángeles**

**Mariachi Pueblo Viejo**

**Special Guest Camila Fernandez**

The Soraya Holiday tradition continues for its eighth year with a special guest vocalist. Camila Fernández, the granddaughter of the legendary Vicente Fernández and daughter of Alejandro Fernández, will join the Mariachi-infused holiday performance that celebrates Mexico’s many vibrant regions. This year Mariachi Pueblo Viejo joins longtime Soraya favorite Ballet Folklórico de Los Ángeles to bring music, dance, and sumptuous traditional costumes to life. In Person Tickets: \$43 - \$138.

*Sponsored by Premier America Credit Union*

**Thu Dec 12 | 8PM**

**Dorrance Dance: The Nutcracker Suite**

**Duke Ellington & Billy Strayhorn, arrangement Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky, composer**

Tap shoes kick pointe shoes aside in this American version of the holiday classic, The Nutcracker Suite. Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn reimagined Tchaikovsky’s score in 1960, providing today’s preeminent tap company a platform to jazz up the holidays. The colorful fantasy was featured as the nation’s Nutcracker in 2023 with appearances at the Kennedy Center. Tickets: \$48 - \$118.

**Sat Dec 14 | 3PM The World Famous**

**Glenn Miller Orchestra**

**In the Holiday Mood**

With timeless melodies and swinging arrangements that made the Glenn Miller Orchestra an icon of the Big Band era, the program features a blend of beloved holiday classics reimagined in the orchestra's signature style. With spirited brass sections and lush saxophone solos, In the Holiday Mood celebrates the magic and nostalgia of the holiday season in the inimitable American style. Tickets: \$43 - \$95.

**Sun Dec 15 | 2PM**

**Sun Dec 15 | 7PM**

**Lea Salonga**

**Sounding Joy: The Holiday Tour**

Ring in the holidays with one of Broadway's biggest stars, Tony Award-winner Lea Salonga. Best known for her leading roles in *Miss Saigon*, *Les Misérables*, *Once On This Island*, and *Allegiance*, this global artist was bestowed the honor of "Disney Legend" for her signature singing roles in *Aladdin* and *Mulan*. Star of the 2023 PBS special "Christmas with the Tabernacle Choir," and acclaimed for her 2020 release "Lea Salonga: Live from Sydney Opera House," Lea returns to The Soraya with this brand-new show for all ages sure to get you in the holiday spirit. Tickets: \$57 - \$157.

**Thu Dec 19 | 8PM**

**SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK®**

**50th Anniversary Tour Celebrating the HolyDays**

Described as "one of the most dynamic, versatile, and still relevant a cappella musical collectives today," the GRAMMY©-nominated African American vocal ensemble is known around the world for its blended voices, vocal improvisations, and choral-stacked spiritual/gospel and jazz traditions. SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK® continues its 50th Anniversary tour at The Soraya with a powerful celebration of the "HolyDays." Tickets: \$43 - \$95.

*Sponsored by Kathleen P. Martin*

**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.

**Where:** Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)  
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

**Website:** [www.TheSoraya.org](http://www.TheSoraya.org)

**Ticket Office:** 818-677-3000

### **Soraya Press Contacts**

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