



NEWS RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

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

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

The Soraya Announces Select Highlights of the 2025-26 Season!

- **Opening Weekend:** West Coast Premiere of National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene’s Off-Broadway hit *Fiddler on the Roof* concert performance in Yiddish, directed by Broadway Legend Joel Grey and starring original Tevye, Steven Skybell
- **Legendary Maestro Riccardo Muti conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for The Soraya’s 15th Anniversary Celebration**
- **The Soraya launches the global celebration of Martha Graham Dance Company’s 100th year with a world premiere danced to music by Christopher Rountree**
- **Jazz at Naz Returns for Fifth Season with Mainstage and Jazz Club performances**

(Los Angeles, CA) February 4, 2025—Last week, on the occasion of The Soraya’s anniversary, Executive and Artistic Director Thor Steingraber announced select highlights for the upcoming 2025-26 Season, which will once again feature performances from every genre, including jazz, dance, Broadway, chamber and orchestral music, and LA’s foremost performance series of Spanish-language artists.

“Northridge is not a stranger to natural disasters like the fires that recently ravaged our nearby communities,” said Steingraber. “This venue stands as a testament of what can emerge from such a devastating occasion, the culmination of the rebuilding of the CSUN campus following the 1994

earthquake. In that same spirit, we keep our sights focused on the future and the many ways we can serve our students and audiences with world class performances.”

For story development and interview requests, please contact:

- Soraya Communications Associate Marie Estrada (marie.estrada@csun.edu)
- PR Consultant Gary Murphy (garymurphypr@garymurphypr.com)

About the Opening Weekend Performances of *Fiddler on The Roof* in Yiddish in Concert

In 2018, Broadway audiences fell in love with a new version of ***Fiddler on the Roof***, presented in Yiddish with English supertitles. The production, directed by Broadway legend Joel Gray, received rave reviews, especially for the performances of its cast. Returning from that original production, Tony-nominated actor **Steven Skybell** will reprise his leading role as Tevye.

This West Coast premiere of the production will be presented in a concert format in the tradition of last season’s opening weekend hit production of *Randy Newman’s Faust: The Concert*. “To bring this Yiddish version of ***Fiddler on the Roof*** to the West Coast for the first time, The Soraya partnered with the National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene to create a concert version of the production that could transfer easily from New York and accommodate the busy schedules of its original stars,” explains Steingraber.

In the tradition of the multi-year *Violins of Hope* project, The Soraya reaffirms its commitment to programming that celebrates Jewish culture. ***Fiddler on the Roof*** centers on Tevye, a milkman in the Russian village of Anatevka, who attempts to maintain his Jewish religious and cultural traditions as outside forces encroach upon his family's lives.

The 2018 production by the National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene “strikes a deep emotional chord” and “offers a kind of authenticity no other American *Fiddler* ever has” (*The New York Times*). This production “speaks to us all” (*Newsday*). It has been hailed as “a richer, deeper interpretation” by *The Wall Street Journal*, “a mitzvah” by *Time Out New York*, and *AM New York* gives it four stars, calling *Fiddler on the Roof* “perfect.” Harold Prince, the original producer of *Fiddler on the Roof* on Broadway (1965 Winner of 9 Tony® Awards, including Best Musical) says, “If you have seen *Fiddler* before, you must see this production because it will make you feel you are seeing *Fiddler* for the first time.”

Chicago Symphony Orchestra Makes its debut with an all-Brahms program at The Soraya’s 15th Anniversary celebration with Maestro Riccardo Muti

The Soraya has a long tradition of presenting the finest symphony orchestras in the world as well as leading conductors. On the occasion of The Soraya’s 15th Anniversary in January 2026, a new

milestone will be reached when **The Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO)** comes to The Soraya, led by **Riccardo Muti**, one of the world's preeminent conductors.

Muti first conducted the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1973, eventually assuming the role as Music Director in 2010. He also led orchestras in Philadelphia, Salzburg, and Milan's La Scala. A prolific recording artist, one of Muti's most notable accomplishments is the complete Brahms symphonies.

"Muti is known for his tireless pursuit of perfection, which will imbue his tenure in Chicago with unmatched historical significance," said Steingraber. "To witness him lead the CSO in his farewell tour will also be a historic moment for Soraya patrons. Personally, the CSO holds an important place in my life, being the first symphony orchestra concert I attended as a child nearly 50 years ago. The memory of that moment left an indelible mark on my life and eventual career."

The all-Brahms program was chosen by Muti, in no small part because of the orchestra's long and close association with the composer's works. The rich and big sound of Brahms will highlight the orchestra itself as well as The Soraya's acoustics. "For our opening nights and significant anniversaries, I choose performances that represent the breadth of Soraya programming," said Steingraber. "On this occasion, in addition to artistic excellence, I felt it was appropriate to celebrate the fact that The Soraya was designed and built as a world class concert hall, with exceptional acoustics suitable for the world's greatest orchestras."

The Soraya Presents GRAHAM100 and a World Premiere Commission

The 2025-26 Season continues The Soraya's ongoing creative collaborative partnership with the **Martha Graham Dance Company**. These performances will include a **World Premiere** work commissioned by The Soraya with new music arranged by **Wild Up** Artistic Director/Conductor **Christopher Rountree** to accompany new choreography. Further details will soon be available about this monumental creation which will launch MGDC's 100th year, beginning at The Soraya and travelling worldwide.

"The October 2025 performances will mark the 9th collaboration between Martha Graham Dance Company and The Soraya, most of which featured live music performed by Wild Up, and several of which were world premieres," said Steingraber. "Following a decade of collaboration, we are proud that the Martha Graham Dance Company entrusts us with the presentation of new works, utilizing our state-of-the-art facility, our excellent production and artistic teams, plus our willingness to support these works with live music, much of which was subsequently recorded on our stage so that the works could tour worldwide."

Steingraber continued, “Live music and original compositions were central to Graham’s work starting a century ago. In that spirit, The Soraya introduced the company to conductor/composer Rountree, a partnership that has been fruitful here in Los Angeles and far beyond. We are pleased to further support their work together on the major occasion of America’s oldest dance company turning 100, a continuation of the company’s long tradition of innovation.”

Also, on the program will be “Night Journey,” (1947) a rarely staged work from Graham’s pivotal Greek cycle that tells the story of Medea from the female protagonist’s point of view. “In her lifetime, Martha Graham created over 180 works for her company. It has been our privilege over the past decade to present a number of those gems that are seen less frequently,” said Steingraber.

Jazz at Naz Festival Returns for the Fifth Season in February 2026

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 and was voted “Best Festival” by *San Francisco Classical Voice’s* 2024 Audience Choice Awards. The Soraya was also named by *DownBeat* magazine as one of the world’s top jazz venues for 2025. 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, and Charles Lloyd, and turned the spotlight on influential crossover artists such as Bobby and Taylor McFerrin, Diana Krall, Jon Batiste, Gregory Porter, Herb Alpert and Lani Hall.

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 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

Ticket Office: 818-677-3000

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