

THE SORAYA ANNOUNCES ITS FULL 2026-27 SEASON

Featuring Eight Major Debuts, Soraya Original Programs, and
the Return of the Jazz at Naz
and LA Seen Festivals

2026-27 Season Will Also Introduce Chad Hilligus
as The Soraya's New Executive & Artistic Director

Debuts Include Opening Night – Sutton Foster with the Pacific Jazz Orchestra (Sept. 19)
Snarky Puppy (Oct. 3)

Majo Aguilar con Mariachi y Banda (World Premiere, Oct. 29)

Dance Theatre of Harlem (Nov. 14)

National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine (Jan. 23)

LA Phil (March 26, 2027)

Audra McDonald (April 3, 2027)

National Symphony Orchestra (April 29, 2027)

**Membership package presale begins TODAY; Single tickets on sale to the public
July 15. Learn more and view the season calendar at [TheSoraya.org](https://www.thesoraya.org).**

(Los Angeles, CA) **May 7, 2026** – Eight prominent debuts will be among the 45 performances to be featured in **The Soraya's 2026-27 Season**, highlighting the performing arts center's ongoing commitment to the breadth and excellence of its programs. Additionally, The Soraya's Great Hall will welcome world-class symphony orchestras as well as jazz greats, offerings that have defined the venue since it opened 15 years ago.

The Soraya's reputation, both for excellence and innovation, has been rewarded with growing loyalty from audiences across the vast and vibrant communities of Los Angeles. The current season and the one preceding have seen record-breaking attendance and ticket revenue.

"Thor Steingraber has curated an absolutely brilliant lineup for 2026-27 and I think it beautifully encapsulates his 12 years of visionary artistic leadership," said incoming Executive & Artistic Director Chad Hilligus. "I look forward to watching the season unfold and working with these incredible artists."

The Soraya's 2026-27 Major Debuts

- Ever since **Sutton Foster** stepped into the title role of the Broadway production of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* in 2009, earning her first Tony Award, she has established herself as one of the greatest talents in the industry. A fixture on Broadway, she has originated numerous roles in notable musicals including *Shrek the Musical*, *Mel Brooks' Young Frankenstein*, and *The Drowsy Chaperone*, as well as bringing her signature comedic leading lady talents to major revivals such as *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Music Man*, and *Anything Goes*. Sutton led the critically acclaimed TV Land series "Younger" and the beloved ABC Family series "Bunheads," became a first-time author and has released three solo albums in addition to her 11 Broadway cast albums. Now she makes her Soraya debut on Sept 19, 2026, with the **Pacific Jazz Orchestra** and 40 of the finest L.A. studio musicians led by Hollywood veteran **Chris Walden**.
- Since winning their first of five GRAMMY Awards in 2014, **Snarky Puppy** has become one of the most in-demand ensembles of their generation, with bassist Michael League leading a collective of 20 musicians who rotate through their ranks, in ever-changing fresh combinations. The announcement of their Soraya debut on Oct 3, 2026, aligns with another milestone, as Snarky Puppy is the cover feature of February's issue of *DownBeat* magazine, demonstrating the band's widely recognized talent.
- **Majo Aguilar con Mariachi y Banda** will present a World Premiere collaborative performance on Oct 29, 2026. A Mexican singer and songwriter, **Majo Aguilar** comes from a prestigious musical family, being the granddaughter of legends Antonio Aguilar and Flor Silvestre. Majo made her debut in 2017 and is known for her powerful voice and her blend of traditional ranchera and mariachi music with modern influences. Her music often explores themes of love and heartbreak. As part of the Aguilar family legacy, Majo is recognized as a rising star in regional Mexican music, carrying forward her family's musical traditions while also shaping her own unique style.
- Renowned in the ballet world, **Dance Theatre of Harlem** makes its debut at The Soraya with the Los Angeles premiere of Robert Garland's *Higher Ground* (2022) on Nov 14, 2026. *Higher Ground* is a joyous, critically acclaimed piece that combines classical ballet and vernacular Black dance to sharpen the social commentary found in six influential Stevie Wonder songs from the 1970's.
- **Audra McDonald**—winner of an Emmy Award, two GRAMMY Awards and a record-setting six Tony Awards—will make her debut at The Soraya on Apr 3, 2027. Described by *Time* magazine as "the greatest living stage actor," McDonald most recently headlined the Broadway revival of *Gypsy* in her Tony nominated role as Mama Rose (2024-25). Currently, McDonald can be seen in Julian Fellowes' historical drama "The Gilded Age" on HBO.

Symphony Orchestra Debuts at The Soraya

- The **LA Phil** will make its debut at The Soraya on Mar 26, 2027. Guest conductor and L.A. Opera's newly appointed Music Director **Domingo Hindoyan** will lead a program featuring the world premiere of an LA Phil commission, **Miguel Farias' *Mistralianas*** with soprano **Sonya Yoncheva**.
- Two additional major orchestras will make their debuts at The Soraya in 2027. The **National Symphony Orchestra** is based at The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC which will shut down for renovation beginning the summer of 2026. The orchestra will tour the United States in 2027 and make its debut at The Soraya on Apr 29, 2027, with Music Director **Gianandrea Noseda** on the podium and guest violin soloist Ray Chen.
- Considered one of the finest symphony orchestras in Eastern Europe, the **National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine** with conductor **Volodymyr Sirenko** and featuring pianist Antonii Baryshevskiy will make their debut at The Soraya on Jan 23, 2027, with a Liszt Piano Concerto, Beethoven, and Silvestrov.

Jazz at The Soraya

In 2025 and 2026, *DownBeat* magazine named The Soraya as one of the "World's Great Jazz Venues," and its annual Jazz at Naz festival is featured in the magazine's yearly "not to miss" guide. In its brief five-year history, the festival has featured a who's who of jazz greats and debut artists alike.

- This season The Soraya will join the centennial of John Coltrane and Miles Davis' birth with a festival opener headlined by two of the most esteemed jazz artists: **Terence Blanchard & Ravi Coltrane** on Feb 11, 2027. The two modern-day giants have deep lifelong relationships with the artists they honor and have come together in a once-in-a-generation partnership both to pay tribute and to continue the spirit of creativity and innovation.
- A Soraya favorite, the **Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra** will follow with special guest **José James** on Feb 13, 2027. The concert will bring to the stage a project that John Clayton is currently collaborating with James on to write arrangements for a new album paying tribute to the music of Frank Sinatra.
- **Jazz Club** returns as The Soraya's mainstage transforms into an intimate supper club for the final three concerts with **Alfredo Rodriguez Band featuring Pedrito Martinez**; and opener the **Hamilton de Holanda Trio** on Feb 17-18, 2027; the **Emmet Cohen Trio** with rising star vocalist **Ekep Nkwelle** on Feb 20-21, 2027; and then the festival wraps up with the **Linda May Han Oh Quintet** featuring saxophonist Melissa Aldana and vocalist Sara Serpa on Feb 24-25, 2027.

The Soraya's Original Programs

- In March, two Los Angeles companies will collaborate on a double bill of groundbreaking works. **Jacob Jonas The Company** & Etienne Gara's chamber ensemble **Delirium Musicum** will each present monumental works. Choreographer, filmmaker, and artistic director **Jacob Jonas** will expand his piece *River*, and Delirium Musicum founder and violinist

Etienne Gara will premiere his first-ever piece composed for movement, *As Eternity Flows*, complete with musicians, dancers and soloist **Shu Kinouchi**.

Both artists figured prominently in The Soraya's pandemic-era programming. The Soraya joined Brooklyn Academy of Music, Stanford Live, and Chicago's Harris Theater to commission Jacob Jonas's global project, *films.dance*, which garnered viewers world-wide, receiving more than ten million views across 45 short films. Meanwhile Etienne Gara and fellow musician YuEun Kim hit the road in a 1971 VW bus for six months traversing the west coast from Mexico to Canada, to bring live music to essential workers during the pandemic. The Soraya commissioned the resulting video series, *The MusiKaravan* project. The San Francisco Classical Voice's Audience Choice Award named Best Streaming Series of 2020 - 2021.

The collaboration between these two burgeoning artists, Jonas and Gara will be the first to be funded by the newly established **Thor Steingraber Fund for Artistic Innovation**. Since 2014, The Soraya has produced **more than 120 original programs - commissions, premieres, or newly produced programs**. The Soraya has built its reputation as an organization that supports deep and creative relationships with multi-disciplinary artists, many from Los Angeles. A number of these performances, like *Treelogy* (Soraya Original Program) and The Martha Graham Dance Company's *En Masse* (Soraya Co-Commission) have gone on to tour venues around the U.S. and internationally.

About Membership at The Soraya

Members strengthen the dynamic community that lives at the heart of The Soraya. With continued positive feedback from Members, The Soraya is pleased to provide the same benefit packages this year as last. Unmatched ticket discounts, exclusive Membership seating at every performance, and special Membership appreciation events are just a sampling of the valued benefits you will continue to enjoy. More information about [Membership](#).

About The Soraya

Established in 2011, the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya) has become one of Los Angeles' prominent performance venues, recognized as the intellectual and cultural hub of the San Fernando Valley and its 1.8 million residents. The stunning architecturally significant building was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and launched as the Valley Performing Arts Center. In 2017, a transformative gift from Los Angeles residents Younes and Soraya Nazarian resulted in the venue being renamed The Soraya.

Today, The Soraya remains committed to innovation and amplifying access by presenting diverse performances representing LA's many distinctive communities, along with new works from local and global artists.

The Soraya's upcoming 2026-27 Season continues its journey by presenting the world's finest symphonic orchestras, innovative dance companies, the freestyle and vast vibes of jazz, innovations of dance luminaries, and as always — a vast array of global voices.

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 opportunities in the arts and performing arts. This partnership fosters academic opportunity and artistic excellence, elevating the talents of CSUN's students. A \$5 million contribution from record producer and former California Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb was pivotal in ensuring The Soraya was completed and opened 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.

The relationship between The Soraya and the Mike Curb College continues to grow, with robust offerings for students through master classes, student tickets, concerts of student ensembles, and students appearing alongside renowned artists such as jazz legends Wynton Marsalis and Jason Moran, Queen of Ranchera music Aida Cuevas, superstar violinist Joshua Bell, and the Martha Graham Dance Company whose Centennial Celebration was launched at The Soraya in 2025.

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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