



Photo By John Kish IV

DEAR FRIENDS,

This season, I am thinking about our future makers and ways to make art together. The stories on our stages, both inside and beyond the building, offer an opportunity to hear new voices and diverse perspectives from world-class artists and talented Lehigh students.

Sphinx Virtuosi opens the Presenting Series with an exciting program highlighting the excellence of Black and Latinx performers and

composers. The San Diego Symphony graces our stage to premiere a new work by Carlos Simon, the Kennedy Center's composer-inresidence, the night before they debut it in Carnegie Hall.

The imaginative Momix celebrates its 40th anniversary with a fantastical version of *Alice in Wonderland*. The Vienna Boys Choir rings in the holidays with traditional songs in Packer Memorial Church. Mermaid Theater's *The Rainbow Fish* is a delight for audiences of all ages. Lehigh Music Department Chair Paul Salerni conducts a live orchestra for Nimbus Dance's contemporary interpretation of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*.

The university's music and theatre departments continue to amplify students' talents with the artistic vision of our esteemed faculty. See the future makers share their creativity this season.

We understand the importance of building our future audiences. Our Family Series partnership with the Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital ensures engagement continues with our second annual fun-filled Family Day.

Strike Anywhere Performance Ensemble joins us for a year-long residency, building dialogue and collaboration in the community beyond our building. The ensemble activates spaces with art by listening to individuals and turning their stories into a devised play that will be seen throughout Bethlehem's South Side neighborhood, weaving the campus and community together with a beautiful performance.

How excited I am that Zoellner Arts Center's 2023-2024 season adds to the vibrant arts scene in the Lehigh Valley and is a conduit to bring the area's rural, suburban and urban communities together. Thank you for your continued support. Arts have an impact in our community because of you.

Mark Fitzgerald Wilson

Executive Director

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Leadership Funding: Victoria E. and Robert E. Zoellner '54

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OCT 6 Fri 7:30pm | Baker Hall







2023.2024 SEASON

Zoellner Arts Center receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



Bound by blood and a mutual love of American roots music, The Bacon Brothers have spent the past quarter-century in a creative whirl, funneling their shared DNA into a genre-bending sound. They call that sound "Forosoco" — a blend of folk, rock, soul, and country influences, delivered by two songwriters who were born to collaborate — and it's taken the siblings across the world, from shows in Japan to performances at American landmarks like Carnegie Hall and the Grand Ole Opry.

The Bacon Brothers turn a new page with their eleventh release, *Erato*, whose five songs showcase the duo at their diverse peak. It's an EP of dynamic contrasts: quiet moments and big payoffs, organic instrumentation and electronic textures, self-penned songs and high-profile collaborations. For Michael and Kevin Bacon, it's also the continuation of a story that began long ago in Philadelphia, where the two siblings were raised on a soundtrack of 1970s singer/songwriters, Philly soul singers, and classic rock bands.

"We're still exploring the sound we began making 25 years ago; we've just gotten a lot better at it," says Michael, whose success as an Emmy-winning composer mirrors his brother's own accolades as an A-list Hollywood actor. "Music is a life's work. It's a universe of things yet to know. It's exciting to be doing stuff we couldn't have done 20 years ago — to know that we've come so far, yet still have so much left in the tank."

On *Erato's* title track, the brothers appeal directly to the goddess of romantic poetry for inspiration. "Send me lightning in a bottle, Erato," they sing, their voices stacked together in harmony, their melodies flanked by layers of jangling guitar and folk-pop instrumentation. Unfolding like a summoning of the muse herself, it's one of countless highlights on a record that also makes room for the stripped-back soul of "Dark Chocolate Eyes," the atmospheric acoustics of "Karaoke Town," and the summery island-pop of "Let Me Happen To You."

"We're a songwriting band, and the songs lead the way," Kevin explains. "We're not beholden to a specific sound. We just write the songs and let them point us in the right direction. That's how we've done it since the very beginning."

This time around, The Bacon Brothers' songs point the duo toward unexplored territory. "Let Me Happen To You" grew out of a piece of unused music Michael had originally composed for a television show two decades earlier. "Michael has another musical life as a composer," Kevin notes, "and turning one of his instrumental compositions into a lyrical song is not something we've ever done before." Likewise, "In Memory (Of When I

Cared)" finds the siblings teaming up with songwriting legend Desmond Child for a track that splits the difference between minor-key rock & roll and modern-day pop. "Desmond has a gift for writing magnetic songs that people get trapped inside of," Michael says of Child, a Songwriters Hall of Fame icon whose songwriting credits include Bon Jovi's "Livin' on a Prayer," Aerosmith's "Crazy," and Joan Jett's "I Hate Myself For Loving You." Working with a co-writer was a rare experience for the Bacons, whose previous 10 albums were almost exclusively written by Kevin and Michael. In Desmond Child, they found more than just a collaborator — they found validation in their strengths as prolific craftsmen, too.

Another unexpected collaborator was Kevin's son, Travis Bacon, who produces the track "Karaoke Town." "I wrote it on acoustic guitar," Kevin remembers, "but I also knew that I could support the song's simplicity with a bigger, darker, more electronic arrangement, which is right in my son's wheelhouse." With its balance of warm acoustics and digital flourishes, "Karaoke Town" represents a rare collaboration between father and son, proof that the apple doesn't fall far from the family tree.

Erato was recorded in various cities across the country, from producer Joe Nicolo's studio in Pennsylvania to Travis Bacon's studio in Los Angeles. Two songs were finished in Atlanta, their recording sessions sandwiched between shoots for one of Kevin's film projects. From his home studio in New York, Michael added cello and autoharp to several other tracks. Members of The Bacon Brothers' longtime road band appear on the record's title track, while a handful of first-time collaborators contribute to other songs, turning Erato into one of the band's most diverse records yet.

"We're always trying to break out of our specific habits and try something new," Kevin says. "We're two songwriters who have a lot of different influences, and we've learned to embrace that reality. As long as it comes from us, it sounds like us."

"If you're an athlete or a dancer, you usually have to launch a new career by the time you're 40," Michael adds. "We're lucky. We're still moving forward and getting better, and that's where we like to be."

The family that picks together sticks together. With *Erato*, Michael and Kevin Bacon — brothers, songwriters, frontmen, and multi-instrumentalists — prove their staying power once again.

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Schumann Quartet

Friday, March 1, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

Apollo Piano Trio with Misha Amory, violist

Sunday, April 21, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. Tapestry Vocal Ensemble

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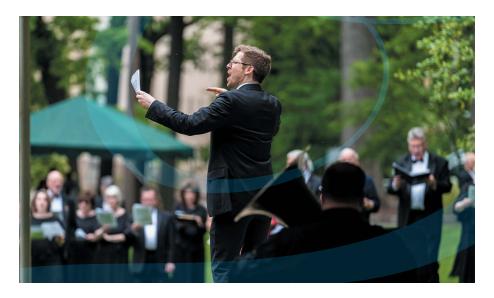
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- Christmas in Allentown + Bethlehem ((⑤)) *Livestream option Sat. & Sun., December 9 & 10* at 4pm
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- Spring in Bethlehem BACH INSPIRED Sun., March 17 at 4pm Bach Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, BWV 80 + Selections from our June European tour
- + 116th Bethlehem Bach Festival May 10-11 & 17-18, 2024
- Recorder-phenom Vincent Lauzer, Festival Artist-in-Residence
- The immortal Mass in B Minor (((•))) Live-stream option May 11
- + Our Community & Educational Programs
- Bach at Noon Free and open to the public, second Tuesdays
- Greg Funfgeld Family Concert: Dancing with Bach In collaboration with the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts & Muhlenberg College Dance Department Sun., February 18 at 3pm
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THIS IS NOT THE PLAY	OCT 4-7
THE BACON BROTHERS	ОСТ 6
NEIL GAIMAN	OCT 8
SAN DIEGO SYMPHONY	OCT 12
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Reilly Children's Hospital FAMILY SERIES	OCT 14
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY CHORAL ARTS Sacred and Profane	OCT 21-22
MOMIX Alice	OCT 28
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY JAZZ REPERTORY ORCHESTRA	OCT 29
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY STRING QUARTET Impression, Sunrise	NOV 5
RAGS PARKLAND SINGS THE SONGS OF THE FUTURE	NOV 10-17
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LEHIGH UNIVERSITY WIND ENSEMBLE Come Dance with Us	NOV 19
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY PHILHARMONIC A Dance Across Life	DEC 1-2
FANCY NANCY SPLENDIFEROUS CHRISTMAS	
Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital FAMILY SERIES	DEC 3
CHERISH THE LADIES A Celtic Christmas	DEC 8
POSTMODERN JUKEBOX Life in the Past Lane	DEC 9
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY CHORAL ARTS Christmas Vespers	DEC 10
VIENNA BOYS CHOIR	DEC 15
THE NUTCRACKER	DEC 16-17

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