

SEP 7

Sunday
6:00pm | Baker Hall

THE BACON BROTHERS

FREESTANDING TOUR 2025



**ZOELLNER
ARTS CENTER**
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY



2025.2026
SEASON

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THE BACON BROTHERS

Ballad Of The Brothers



For The Bacon Brothers, music is all about exploration.

The siblings have spent the better part of three decades creating their own mix of folk, rock, soul, and country music. They call that diverse sound “forosoco,” and it’s taken them around the world, from headlining gigs in Japan to American performances at iconic venues like Carnegie Hall, the Grand Ole Opry and Gruene Hall.

The exploration continues with the band’s twelfth release, *Ballad Of The Brothers*. It’s a record that highlights not only the similarities between Kevin Bacon (known worldwide as an A-list Hollywood actor) and Michael Bacon (celebrated as an Emmy-winning composer), but the differences, too. The two siblings may be bound together by blood and a mutual love of American roots music, but they’ve grown into sharp songwriters and cinematic storytellers with their own distinct approaches. *Ballad Of The Brothers* makes room for both of those approaches, offering a mix of edgy alt-rock (“Take Off This Tattoo”), Motown-inspired soul (“Put Your Hand Up”), fingerpicked folk (“Let That Be Enough”), and everything in between.

“We’re two musicians who write songs very differently, and we’ve grown to really appreciate those differences,” says Michael. “Whenever I go see a band play live, I’d much rather see them do a thousand things than just one thing. We take a similar approach to our albums.”

While writing new material for *Ballad Of The Brothers*, the Bacons made several trips to Tennessee, where they teamed up with Nashville-area songwriters like Casey Beathard, Brett Tyler, and Kimberly Kelly. They continued to travel once it came time to record the album, too. “Live With The Lie” was tracked in New Jersey, where the band abandoned the use of a click track in favor of capturing a raw, real performance with their touring band. “Put Your Hand Up,” a brassy soul song that splits the difference between Memphis grit and Motown groove, was recorded in Philadelphia. “Take Off This Tattoo” was produced in Los Angeles by Kevin’s son, Travis Bacon. “It sounded like a country song when we wrote it,” Michael remembers, “but once we decided to give it to Trav, who has more of a rock and electronic sensibility, it became something new.” The band even added a fiddle solo to “Take Off This Tattoo” — an unexpected choice for a rock song, perhaps, but one that emphasizes the Bacon Brothers’ willingness to break new ground. “We worked with fiddle player Brian Fitzgerald on that song,” explains Kevin, “and the direction we gave him was: ‘Imagine that you’re playing an electric guitar, but it just looks like a fiddle.’ He absolutely crushed it.”

Like much of the Bacon Brothers’ work, *Ballad Of The Brothers* offers a mix of autobiography and richly-detailed fiction. The tongue-in-cheek “Old Bronco” finds Kevin turning a song about his 1969 Bronco truck into a metaphor for aging. “Airport Bar,” one of the most gorgeous tracks in the Bacons’ catalog, compares a doomed

relationship to a sports bar in an airport terminal. On the album's title track (inspired by Gruene Hall, the historic dancehall where Willie Nelson played some of his most memorable shows), the brothers deliver a Wild West narrative about two East Coast city slickers who take a road trip to Texas. Whether by fate or by Faust, they find themselves onstage at a Texas honky-tonk, blessed with musical talent they didn't know they had. "I wanted to write a Faustian story set in one of my favorite states ever," says Michael. "It's sort of like Texas' own version of Charlie Daniels' 'The Devil Went Down to Georgia.'"

For Michael and Kevin Bacon, *Ballad Of The Brothers* marks the continuation of a musical partnership that began long ago in Philadelphia, where the two siblings were raised on a soundtrack of 1970s singer/songwriters, Philly soul bands, and classic rock acts. They're creating their own soundtrack now, and like many artistic endeavors, the work is never truly done.

"We're still exploring the sound we began making all those years ago; we've just gotten a lot better at it," Michael says. "Music is a life's work. It's a universe of things yet to know. We're still making new discoveries."

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