



Marcus Performing Arts Center Announces 16th Annual BASH presented by Johnson Financial Group

June 25th event will honor Donald & Donna Baumgartner, Dr. Laura Cassidy, and Martha Love with a special performance from SAG and Tony Award[®] Nominee, Norm Lewis

MILWAUKEE, WI (March 18, 2021) – In a one-of-a-kind arts and culture event, Milwaukee-area business and community leaders will come together for the [16th Annual BASH](#) on Friday, June 25 to raise funds for the [Marcus Performing Arts Center's](#) education and community engagement programs. Honorary Chairs for the 16th Annual BASH are Cecelia Gore & Randy Bryant and Nickie & Rick Schmidt. As part of the BASH, civic leader Martha Love, noted Epidemiologist Dr. Laura Cassidy, and Greater Milwaukee philanthropists Donald & Donna Baumgartner will be honored. The evening will conclude with an exclusive performance from Broadway favorite, SAG and Tony Award[®] Nominee [Norm Lewis](#).

As the community moves through the COVID-19 pandemic, the event will be structured with the option for either in-person or virtual attendance. A city-approved safety plan adhering to local and CDC guidelines will be in place to ensure a safe, socially distanced and enjoyable event for all guests.

The in-person event will include a pre-show dinner hosted outside on the Center's updated grounds, followed by the auction, program and exclusive performance from Norm Lewis in the newly renovated Uihlein Hall. The program will include the presentation of the Visionary iMPACT Award to Donald & Donna Baumgartner for their philanthropic commitment to developing and enhancing the arts in Milwaukee, the Dynamic Leadership Award to Dr. Laura Cassidy for the leadership and service she has provided the arts sector during the pandemic, and the Community Legacy Award to Martha Love for her long-standing dedication to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration at the Marcus Center.

"We're excited to continue our partnership with the Marcus Center as the presenting sponsor of the 16th Annual BASH," said Johnson Financial Group CEO Jim Popp. "We are all looking forward to safely gathering together to celebrate the mission of the Marcus Center and these distinguished honorees."

In fall, the Marcus Center announced a re-envisioned [Phase One](#) of its Campus Master Plan. The \$4 million project made investments in the Center's physical spaces, including renovation of Uihlein Hall, featuring new seats, a new seating configuration utilizing multiple aisles, increased public health and safety amenities, and enhanced ADA accommodations. The project also included creation of a dynamic and vibrant new outdoor public space to serve as a

forum for safe, accessible and socially-distanced programming for the Marcus Center, as well as enhanced cleaning practices in all high-traffic patron and artist spaces focusing on quality, efficiency, health and safety. The BASH will be the first program presented by Marcus Center to be held in the newly renovated Uihlein Hall and Outdoor Grounds.

“Last week marked a full year since Broadway and the live performing arts went dark,” said Marcus Center President & CEO Kendra Whitlock Ingram. “We are so grateful to our community of supporters who have stood with us throughout this past year to ensure that the Marcus Center continues to serve as a gathering place for all. We are excited that our official return to live performing arts will take place at the BASH, and we look forward to bringing our community together for this celebratory evening.”

The 16th Annual BASH is presented by Johnson Financial Group. Single ticket prices for the BASH are \$300 and sponsorships are available ranging from \$3,000 to \$25,000. For more information or to sponsor the BASH, contact Jennifer Grokowsky at jgrokowsky@marcuscenter.org or (414) 502-7206.

About Norm Lewis

NORM LEWIS can currently be seen starring in the SAG, Critic's Choice, and NAACP Image Award-nominated Netflix film "Da 5 Bloods" by Spike Lee and in the Hulu miniseries, *Mrs. America*. He was previously seen in the NBC television special, "Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert!," alongside John Legend, Sara Bareilles, and Alice Cooper. He recently appeared in the Broadway revival of *Once on This Island* and as Sweeney Todd in the Off-Broadway production of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* at the Barrow Street Theatre, receiving the AUDELCO Award for his performance. In May 2014, he made history as *The Phantom of the Opera's* first African American Phantom on Broadway.

He has been seen on PBS in the Live From Lincoln Center productions of *Showboat* with Vanessa Williams, *Norm Lewis: Who Am I?*, and *New Year's Eve: A Gershwin Celebration* with Diane Reeves, as well as *American Voices* with Renée Fleming and the PBS Special *First You Dream – The Music of Kander & Ebb*. He can be seen recurring in the VH1 series, *Daytime Divas*, also alongside Vanessa Williams. His additional television credits include *Better Things*, *The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, *Bull*, *Chicago Med*, *Gotham*, *The Blacklist*, and *Blue Bloods*, as well as in his recurring role as Senator Edison Davis on the hit drama *Scandal*.

Mr. Lewis is a proud founding member of Black Theatre United, an organization which stands together to help protect Black people, Black talent and Black lives of all shapes and orientations in theatre and communities across the country. He received Tony, Drama Desk, Drama League, and Outer Critics Circle award nominations for his performance as Porgy in the Broadway production of *The Gershwins' Porgy & Bess*. Other Broadway credits include *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Les Misérables*, *Chicago*, *Amour*, *The Wild Party*, *Side Show*, *Miss Saigon*, and *The Who's Tommy*. In London's West End, he has appeared as Javert in *Les Misérables* and *Les Misérables: The 25th Anniversary Concert*, which aired on PBS.

Off-Broadway, Mr. Lewis has performed in *Dessa Rose* (Drama Desk nomination, AUDELCO Award), Shakespeare in the Park's *The Tempest*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Drama League nomination), *Captains Courageous*, and *A New Brain*. His regional credits include Porgy in *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* (A.R.T.), *Ragtime*, *Dreamgirls* (with Jennifer Holliday), *First You Dream*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *The Fantasticks*.

His additional film credits include *Magnum Opus*, *Winter's Tale*, *Sex and the City 2*, *Confidences*, and *Preaching to the Choir*.

Norm's albums, "The Norm Lewis Christmas Album" & "This is The Life," can be found on Amazon.com as well as cdbaby.com.

About Marcus Performing Arts Center

Established in 1969, the Marcus Performing Arts Center (MPAC) is the premier performing arts community gathering space in Southeastern Wisconsin, bringing high-quality arts and cultural programming to the region. As a mission-based

501(c)3 non-profit organization, MPAC strives to act as a bridge between cultures and an energizing force for collaboration and advocacy in the community. The touring Broadway series, sponsored by Johnson Financial Group, is recognized as bringing the best of Broadway entertainment to Milwaukee since 1996, and provides opportunities to educate, entertain, and engage audiences. As a presenter, MPAC offers its own diverse arts and cultural programming and outreach, such as MC Presents, Live At Peck, KidZ Days, ArtsConnect, and additional performances from internationally-renowned performing artists. The Marcus Center is also home to a variety of resident arts partners, including First Stage, Milwaukee Ballet, Florentine Opera Company, Black Arts MKE, Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, and more. MPAC is proud to be a dedicated War Memorial facility, honoring those who bravely served our country. For more information, visit www.marcuscenter.org.

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