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**Broadway's Jeannette Bayardelle, Laura Bell Bundy,
Jay Armstrong Johnson, Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer,
and Ann Morrison Join**

**“HERMITAGE TURNS 20:
Andy Sandberg & Broadway Friends in Concert”
A Benefit Concert for Ongoing Hurricane Repairs
Monday, March 20th at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall**

*Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO Andy Sandberg takes to the stage alongside Tony Award nominee **Jeannette Bayardelle**, Tony Award nominee **Laura Bell Bundy**, Drama Desk winner **Jay Armstrong Johnson**, Lortel Award winner **Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer**, and Sarasota's own **Ann Morrison** to sing a concert in celebration of the Hermitage's 20th Anniversary Season and to raise valuable funds for the Hermitage following the impact of Hurricane Ian. The star-studded company will be accompanied by Hermitage Fellow and 2023 Grammy Award nominee **Rona Siddiqui**.*

February 27, 2023 — **The Hermitage Artist Retreat** (Sarasota County, Florida) today announced the line-up of guest stars for its **one-night-only benefit concert** to celebrate the 20th Anniversary Season of the Hermitage and to raise funds for ongoing repairs to the Hermitage following the impact of Hurricane Ian earlier this season. The announced stars include Broadway veterans **Jeannette Bayardelle, Laura Bell Bundy, Jay Armstrong Johnson**, and **Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer** as well as a Hermitage alumna and Sarasota theater favorite **Ann Morrison**. In town for one night only on **Monday, March 20th at 7:30pm**, this incredible company joins Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg** as he returns to his roots as a performer to sing a concert of Broadway songs at Sarasota's iconic Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, accompanied by Hermitage Fellow and 2023 Grammy Award nominee **Rona Siddiqui**.

Jeannette Bayardelle received a 2022 Tony Award nomination for her role in Bob Dylan and Conor McPherson's *Girl From the North Country*. She has starred on Broadway as Dionne in the Tony Award-winning revival of *HAIR* and as Celie in the original production of *The Color Purple*, produced by Oprah Winfrey. Bayardelle went on to launch the National Tour as Celie, winning the NAACP Theater Award for Best Lead Actress. Bayardelle is also the writer and star of the award-winning musical *SHIDA*, directed by Sandberg, which has played successful engagements in New York, Boston, Los Angeles, and London. She is currently appearing in the Public Theater production of *The Harder They Come*, adapted for the stage by Pulitzer Prize winner Suzan-Lori Parks.

Laura Bell Bundy has originated several legendary roles in the theater including Tina in *Ruthless* (Outer Critics and Drama Desk nominations), Amber in Broadway's *Hairspray*, and most notably Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde: The Musical*, for which she received a Tony Award nomination. Her career also spans international tours of her music, over 100 episodes of television, notable films, a successful podcast, and a dedication to activism. She is perhaps best known to television audiences for her role in "Anger Management," and she can currently be seen in the Paramount Plus live-action series "The Fairly OddParents." She will be returning to Broadway this summer to star opposite Erik McCormack ("Will and Grace") in *The Cottage*.

Currently appearing on Broadway in the highly anticipated revival of *Parade*, **Jay Armstrong Johnson**'s impressive Broadway resume includes leading roles in *On the Town*, *Hands on a Hardbody* (with a book by Hermitage Fellow Doug Wright), *Catch Me If You Can*, *HAIR*, and *Phantom of the Opera*. Johnson earned Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel Award nominations for his role in *Scotland, PA*, written by Hermitage Fellow Adam Gwon. Other notable credits include the Off-Broadway revival of *Working* (Drama Desk Award), *A Chorus Line* at City Center, and concerts Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Kennedy Center, among others. He is best known to television audiences as Will Olsen in ABC's "Quantico."

Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer recently concluded her acclaimed run on Broadway as Delia in *Beetlejuice*, for which she received Drama Desk, Drama League, and Chita Rivera Award nominations. She received the Lucille Lortel Award and Drama League Award for her performance in *The Robber Bridegroom* at Roundabout Theatre. Other Broadway credits include *Something Rotten!*, *Elf*, *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *Legally Blonde: The Musical*, *Hairspray*, and *A Catered Affair*, for which she received a Drama Desk nomination. She has recently appeared on television in "Bridge & Tunnel," "The First Lady," "New Amsterdam," and more.

Sarasota's own **Ann Morrison** is an actor, singer, writer, director, and Hermitage alumna who has starred in original roles on Broadway (*Merrily We Roll Along*, *LoveMusik*); London's West End (*Peg*); Off-Broadway (*Goblin Market*); and leading roles at regional theaters throughout the country. In addition to her performing career, she also founded SaraSolo Productions.

"I could not be more excited to perform alongside some of my favorite people in the world – who also happen to be some of the most talented performers I know," said Hermitage Artistic Director **Andy Sandberg**. "Each of them is moving mountains in their schedules to take part of this special event, and it means the world to me that they are coming down to Florida to support the Hermitage in this way. Audiences are in for a rare treat as these Broadway stars come together for one night in Sarasota. I look forward to each and every one of them upstaging me on March 20!"

While many in Florida know Sandberg for his leadership role at the Hermitage, he has nearly two decades of experience in theater and television. "As Artistic Director and CEO of the Hermitage, Andy spends his professional life nurturing the work of fellow artists," added Hermitage Trustee and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **Doug Wright**. "How thrilling to finally get the chance to see him reveal his own artistry in this remarkable tribute to the world of Broadway and beyond!"

As a performer, Sandberg has traveled the world with the Yale Whiffenpoofs and Alley Cats and has played iconic roles such as Tony in *West Side Story*, Leo Frank in *Parade*, Freddy in *My Fair Lady*, Huck in *Big River*, and many original works. As a director, writer, and producer, his works have been seen on and off Broadway, on London's West End, and recently on the Hallmark Channel, where he wrote the scripts for the movies "Haul Out the Holly," starring Lacey Chabert, and "Five More Minutes," based on the hit song by Scotty McCreery.

As Artistic Director of the Hermitage, Sandberg spends the majority of his time championing leading artists and performers who are developing new work. On March 20th, Sandberg will *perform* a concert of Broadway songs to raise valuable funds for the Hermitage. Bayardelle, Bundy, Johnson, Kritzer, and Morrison are joining him in Florida for this one-night-only event to celebrate the impact of this vital national arts organization on the Sarasota community and beyond.

Tickets for this concert are **\$25**, **\$50**, and **\$75** (additional phone and online booking fees may apply). A limited number of **\$250** VIP tickets, which include a reception following the performance, are available (*\$175 of this \$250 price is a tax-deductible contribution to the*

Hermitage). Thanks to generous underwriting from sponsors, all proceeds from ticket sales will directly benefit the Hermitage Artist Retreat.

Tickets are available at the **Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall box office**, 777 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34236; by calling **(941) 263-6799**; or online at **HermitageArtistRetreat.org** and **VanWezel.org**.

\$15 tickets are available for students and teachers at the Van Wezel box office only; must show proof of valid student or teacher ID.

For more information about the Hermitage, this benefit concert, and other upcoming Hermitage programs, visit **HermitageArtistRetreat.org**.

WHAT HERMITAGE ARTISTS ARE SAYING...

“An organization that does more for artists than any I have encountered.”

—Craig Lucas, Tony Award Nominee & Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner

“The Hermitage is where the work you don’t see getting done is done. It all has to start with an idea – the Hermitage is where those ideas are grown. I’ll be here every time something pummels the Gulf Coast and attacks our beloved Hermitage.

I’m here for the Hermitage until I am no more.”

—Gavin Creel, Tony Award-Winning Broadway Performer and Composer

“The impact of the Hermitage extends far beyond the weeks that artists are in residence. The inspiration that we draw there – we take back home with us. What the Hermitage offers artists and composers like me is truly rare.”

—Adam Gwon, Award-Winning Musical Theater Composer

“Art and theater are our spiritual daily bread, and we’re making it here at the Hermitage... and we go from here to break bread in every community we travel to.”

—Paula Vogel, Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-Winning Playwright

“The Hermitage sparks an authentic creative magic. The campus on Manasota Key fosters the space to dream in ways the rest of the world rarely allows. The lush surrounding nature, the opportunity to connect with other artists, and an enthusiastic audience at the weekly presentations is the perfect alchemy in which to create.”

—Christopher Burney, Hermitage Curatorial Council; Former Artistic Director of NY Stage & Film

“The Hermitage breeds something unique, and without it, I cannot tell you how much work would not happen.”

—Jeanine Tesori, Tony Award-Winning Composer & Pulitzer Prize Finalist

“A spark plug for ideas and collaborations: a miraculous co-mingling of music, literature, visual art, theater, nature, and wildlife”

—Claire Chase, Flutist, MacArthur “Genius” Fellow & Avery Fisher Prize Winner

“The invitation from the Hermitage was like someone opened the door and invited me to create a work that is responsive to this time, a work that can be reflective of this time.”

—Aleshea Harris, Playwright and Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner

The Hermitage Artist Retreat

Artistic Director and CEO: Andy Sandberg
Sarasota County, Florida

The Hermitage is a non-profit artist retreat located in Manasota Key, Florida, inviting accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included 15 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, MacArthur 'Genius' Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the \$30,000 Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the newly announced \$35,000 Hermitage Major Theater Award for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival's Hermitage Prize in Composition.

For more information, visit HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

Underwriters for the March 20th Benefit Concert include:

Emerald Sponsors (\$25,000)

Steve and Dale Adler
Carole Crosby and Larry Wickless
Liz and Duncan Richardson

Sapphire Sponsors (\$10,000)

Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation
Pat Appold
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The Hermitage is supported by:

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues; the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts; as well as the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

BIOS:

Jeannette Bayardelle

(Broadway Guest Performer)

Jeannette Bayardelle received a 2022 Tony Award nomination for her performance in *Girl from the North Country*. Broadway leading roles include *HAIR* (Dionne) and *The Color Purple* (Celie). Off-Broadway: *The Harder They Come*, *SHIDA*, *Rock of Ages*, *Girl from the North Country*. Select Tours/Regional: *The Color Purple* (NAACP Theater Award for Best Lead Actress), *Big River*, *Rent*, *Sister Act*, *Freaky Friday*. As the writer and star of the original musical *SHIDA*, Bayardelle has brought the show to New York (Ars Nova), Los Angeles, Boston (American Repertory Theater), and most recently to London (The Vaults). *SHIDA* received nominations from the AUDELCO Awards and Off West End Awards for Best Musical and Best Director (Andy Sandberg), in addition to Bayardelle's wins for Best Female Performance. Film/TV: *The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning*, "I Take Thee Zoe." Albums include "I Know Who I Am," "Praise Report," and "Transferable." JeannetteBayardelle.com

Laura Bell Bundy

(Broadway Guest Performer)

Laura Bell Bundy made her stage debut at age 9 in the Radio City “Christmas Spectacular.” Since then, she has originated the roles of Tina in *Ruthless* (Outer Critics and Drama Desk nominations), Amber in Broadway’s *Hairspray*, and most notably Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde: The Musical* (Tony Award Nomination); she also played Glinda in Broadway’s *Wicked*. Bundy is a Billboard Top 5 recording artist with multiple albums —*Achin’ & Shakin’* (Universal Music) and *Another Piece Of Me* (Big Machine). A Sony Publishing songwriter from 2008-2013, she toured with her music all over the world. Her most recent critically acclaimed album *Women Of Tomorrow* (and companion podcast on Broadway Podcast Network) delves into the issues women are facing today and has millions of streams on Spotify. Bundy has appeared in dozens of films and over 100 episodes of television including roles on “Call Me Kat,” “The Fairly Odd Parents,” “Perfect Harmony,” “How I Met Your Mother/Father,” “Anger Management,” and “Jumanji,” among others. As a writer/composer she has developed the series *Mashville* for Netflix and *Girlltime* for Freeform. Bundy recently launched the “Womxn of Tomorrow” community and app to help women activate their activism: <https://womxnof tomorrow.org/join>. @laurabellbundy / LauraBellBundy.com

Jay Armstrong Johnson

(Broadway Guest Performer)

Jay Armstrong Johnson is currently appearing on Broadway in the revival of *Parade*. Other Broadway: *On the Town*, *Hands on a Hardbody*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *HAIR*, *Phantom of the Opera*. Off-Broadway/New York credits: *Parade* (City Center), *To My Girls* (2ST), Adam Gwon’s *Scotland, PA* (Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel nominations, and Outer Critics Circle Award honoree), *Darling Grenadine* (Roundabout), *A Chorus Line* (City Center), *Candide* (NYCO), *Sweeney Todd* (NY Philharmonic filmed for PBS), *The Most Happy Fella* (Encores!), Terrence McNally’s *Fire and Air* (CSC), *The Mad Ones*, *Working* (Prospect Theater, Drama Desk Award), *Wild Animals You Should Know* (MCC), *35mm: A Musical Exhibition*. Concert: Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Hollywood Bowl, San Francisco Symphony, Omaha Symphony. TV/Film: ABC’s “Quantico,” *Sex & the City 2*, “Law & Order: SVU.” Album: Jay Armstrong Johnson LIVE at Feinstein’s/54 Below (available on iTunes and BroadwayRecords.com). Jay is also the creator, producer, and star of *I Put A Spell On You*, benefiting Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. @Jay_A_Johnson

Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer

(Broadway Guest Performer)

Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer recently finished her acclaimed run on Broadway as Delia in *Beetlejuice*, for which she received Drama Desk, Drama League, and Chita Rivera Award nominations. Other Broadway credits include *Something Rotten!*, *Elf*, *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *Legally Blonde*, *A Catered Affair* (Drama Desk nomination) and *Hairspray*. Off-Broadway: *The Robber Bridegroom* (Lucille Lortel Award and Drama League Award), *Gigantic* (Lucille Lortel nomination), *ROOMS: A Rock Romance* (Outer Critics Circle nomination), and others. She can be heard on several original casting recordings. TV: “Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” “The First Lady,” “Bridge & Tunnel,” “New Amsterdam,” “Difficult People,” “Kevin Can Wait,” “Younger,” “Vinyl,” and “Law & Order: SVU.” @lesliekritzer

Ann Morrison

(Broadway and Sarasota Guest Performer)

Ann Morrison is an actor, singer, writer, director, and Hermitage alumna who has starred in original roles on Broadway (*Merrily We Roll Along*, *LoveMusik*); London's West End (*Peg*); Off-Broadway (*Goblin Market*); and leading roles at regional theaters throughout the country. In New York, she has performed her plays *Linda Lovely Goes to Broadway* (2012 United Solo Festival Award for Best Actress and *Word Painting: Soliloquies Around an Easel*. Ann is Co-Founder/Artistic Director of SaraSolo Productions. Morrison has made more than a dozen recordings and is recipient of the John Ringling Towers Fund Award, Theatre World Award, Drama Desk nomination, DramaLogue Award, SAMMY Award, HANDY Award, *Sarasota Magazine* Award, the 2020 Outstanding Contribution to Florida Professional Theatre, and the 2023 BISTRO Award for her solo show *Merrily From Center Stage*. She appears in the documentary *Best Worst Thing That Ever Could Have Happened*.

Andy Sandberg

(Featured Performer)

Andy Sandberg was appointed Artistic Director and CEO of the Hermitage in 2019. An accomplished director, writer, and Tony Award-winning producer whose national and international career has been committed to new work and artist development, Sandberg was selected to lead the organization following an extensive national search. Since joining the Hermitage in January of 2020, Sandberg has guided the organization through a period of significant growth and transition, despite the challenges of COVID-19. Over the past three seasons, the organization has dramatically expanded its programming, more than tripled its fundraising, embarked on a new strategic plan, completed a campus-wide restoration, and established dozens of new collaborative partnerships throughout the region and across the country. Under Sandberg's leadership through the pandemic, the Hermitage was one of the nation's earliest and most successful adapters to find safe and innovative opportunities for live programming, creating unique outdoor and virtual experiences for artists and audiences alike.

Sandberg's theatrical work has been represented in New York City, London, and throughout the United States. In 2009, at the age of 25, he became the youngest producer in history to win a Tony Award. Sandberg's Broadway and West End producing credits include the hit revival of *HAIR* (2009 Tony, Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics Circle Awards); the Broadway revival of Gore Vidal's *The Best Man*, starring James Earl Jones, Angela Lansbury, John Larroquette, Candice Bergen, and Eric McCormack (2012 Tony, Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics Circle Nominations); and Will Eno's *The Realistic Joneses*, a critically acclaimed new play starring Toni Collette, Michael C. Hall, Tracy Letts, and Marisa Tomei.

Sandberg directed the London premiere of Jeannette Bayardelle's *SHIDA*, which opened to rave reviews and earned 2019 Off West End Award nominations for Best Musical, Best Director, and Best Lead Actress. He previously directed the world premiere of *SHIDA* Off-Broadway at Ars Nova (four AUDELCO Award Nominations, including Best Director and Best Musical) and at the American Repertory Theater (Cambridge, MA). Sandberg has been represented Off-Broadway as the director of *Straight*, named a Critics' Pick by *The New York Times*, which cited that the production was "directed with polished finesse." He previously wrote and directed the critically acclaimed world premiere of *Application Pending*, a comedy about kindergarten admissions (BroadwayWorld Award: Best Off-Broadway Play, Drama Desk Nomination: Outstanding Solo Show, Winner: Book Pipeline Prize). Additional world premieres that he has directed include Alan Brody's historical drama *Operation Epsilon* (four IRNE Awards, including Best Play and Best

Director), the Off-Broadway comedy *Craving for Travel* (also co-author), and the Off-Broadway musicals *The Last Smoker in America*, *Neurosis*, and *R.R.R.E.D.* In 2020, he directed *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* for the Maltz Jupiter Theater.

As a performer, Sandberg has toured the world with the Yale Whiffenpoofs and the Alley Cats. He has performed leading roles in productions of *Big River*, *West Side Story*, *Assassins*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Last Five Years*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Parade*, and more. He played opposite Golden Globe nominee Lea Michele and Tony Award winner Katie Finneran in the original musical *Hot & Sweet*.

Sandberg has also written original movies for the Hallmark Channel, including the popular films “Haul Out the Holly” (2022, starring Lacey Chabert) and “Five More Minutes” (2021, based on the hit song by Scotty McCreery).

Born and raised in New York, Sandberg is a graduate of Yale University with a B.A. in English and Theater Studies. He is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), Actors’ Equity Association (AEA), and the Off-Broadway League. He has served on the boards of The Browning School (NYC), the Arts & Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, the Yale Dramatic Association, the Whiffenpoof Alumni Association, and the Yale Alley Cats Alumni Organization (founder and longtime president). He also served as President of the Browning Alumni Association. AndySandberg.com

Rona Siddiqui

(Music Director / Piano)

Rona Siddiqui is a Hermitage Fellow who has presented original work on the Hermitage Beach in 2020 and again as part of the “Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens” series in 2021. She is an award-winning composer, lyricist, orchestrator, and music director based in New York City. Siddiqui recently served as music director for the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning musical *A Strange Loop*, written by Hermitage Fellow Michael R. Jackson, for which she received a Grammy Award nomination and an Obie Award, alongside the cast and creative team. The recipient of the Jonathan Larson Grant and the Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award, Siddiqui was named one of Broadway Women’s Fund’s “Women to Watch.” Her musicals include *Salaam Medina: Tales of a Halfghan*, an autobiographical comedy about growing up bi-ethnic in America, as well as *One Good Day*, *Hip Hop Cinderella*, and *Treasure in NYC*. Siddiqui is the recipient of the ASCAP Foundation Mary Rodgers/Lorenz Hart Award and the ASCAP Foundation/Max Dreyfus Scholarship. She has written pieces for *Wicked*’s Anniversary Commemoration, 24-Hour Musicals, Prospect Theater Company, The Civilians, Playwrights Horizons, NYC Gay Men’s Chorus, and 52nd St Project, and has performed concerts of her work at The John F. Kennedy Center and Feinstein’s/54 Below. She has also orchestrated for Broadway Records, Broadway Backwards, NAMT, and Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera. RonaSiddiqui.com