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**Hermitage Announces Second Annual Concert in the
Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series:
“The Pop-Folk World of Zoe Sarnak” featuring Award-
Winning Musical Theater Composer and Lyricist Zoe Sarnak**

*“The Pop-Folk World of Zoe Sarnak” will be presented outdoors at **Nathan Benderson Park** on **Wednesday, April 26th at 7pm** as the second performance in the Hermitage’s annual Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series.*

March 13, 2023 (Sarasota County, Florida) — **The Hermitage Artist Retreat** is pleased to announce the second annual concert in the **Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage**, featuring award-winning composer and lyricist **Zoe Sarnak**. This alumni music initiative was launched last year to a full-capacity crowd at Selby Gardens with “Soulful Strings: An Evening of Harp Music,” featuring celebrated harpist and Hermitage alumna **Ashley Jackson**. This year’s event will be presented in partnership with the **Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy**. Sarnak is a New York City-based Hermitage alum whose songs and musicals have premiered throughout New York, Los Angeles, and across the United States at venues such as the Public Theater, Geffen Playhouse, Roundabout Theatre Company, Williamstown Theater Festival, and more. Joined by Sarasota-based vocalists and musicians, Sarnak will perform her original songs, including some of her latest work. Presented by the water at Nathan Benderson Park, this outdoor event is free and open to the public with a \$5/person registration fee. *Tickets will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis, at which time registrations will shift to a waitlist.*

The Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage offers the opportunity for a distinguished Hermitage alumni composer or musician to return for additional residency time and a special community concert. This initiative is made possible by a generous multi-year gift from the Ruby E. and Carole Crosby Family Foundation. Hermitage Trustee **Carole Crosby** initiated this gift as a special tribute to her mother Ruby, who helped to inspire her own deep love of music. A musician

herself, Carole Crosby graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music and played the harp in both the Atlanta Symphony and Detroit Symphony. Following the success of classical musician Ashley Jackson's performance in 2022, Zoe Sarnak is an exciting contemporary pop-rock-folk composer making waves in the world of musical theater, as well as television and film. Sarnak was a compelling selection for this initiative, as her work combines the Crosby's love of music with an equal passion for theater and storytelling.

"I am continually inspired by the Hermitage's commitment to artists and the impact these magnificent talents are having in our community," said Hermitage Trustee **Carole Crosby**. "Music was always incredibly important to me and to my mother, so it's an honor to celebrate her memory with this initiative spotlighting and supporting some truly extraordinary composers and musicians."

"We are excited to welcome **Zoe Sarnak** back to Sarasota to share her music with our community on the beautiful grounds of Nathan Benderson Park," added Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**. "As we continue to reengage with and provide more opportunities for Hermitage alumni, this generous gift from Carole Crosby in honor of her mother allows us to celebrate some of the exciting musical talents who have come to know Sarasota through their time at the Hermitage and to share their latest work with the members of our community."

Frequently cited for her ability to blend the contemporary music world with other genres like traditional musical theater to create a sound that is uniquely hers, Sarnak's work has been heralded by *Variety*, *BroadwayWorld*, *Seattle Times*, and more. She is the recipient of the Jonathan Larson Award, and a finalist for the Ebb Award, the Kleban Prize, and the Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award. Her works have been performed at such noted institutions as Second Stage, The Public Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Williamstown Theater Festival, New York Stage & Film, The Guggenheim, Geffen Playhouse, Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre, and New York Theatre Workshop, amongst many others. She recently opened the world premiere of *The Lonely Few* starring Tony Award winner Lauren Patten (*Jagged Little Pill*) at L.A.'s Geffen Playhouse for which she created music and lyrics alongside Hermitage Fellow, award-winning playwright Rachel Bonds, as well as film and television projects with Netflix and CBS. Full bio below; also available at ZoeSarnak.com.

Zoe Sarnak's concert and Hermitage residency are made possible through the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage. This second concert in the annual series, "The Pop-Folk World of Zoe Sarnak" will be presented outdoors at Nathan Benderson Park in Sarasota on Wednesday, April 26th at 7pm. (*Estimated running time: 60-70 minutes*).

Hermitage programs like these are free and open to the public with a \$5/person registration fee. Due to capacity limitations and social distancing, **registration is required** at HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

The full program description:

- **“The Pop-Folk World of Zoe Sarnak,” Wednesday, April 26 @ 7pm at Nathan Benderson Park:** In the second exciting iteration of the recently launched Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Initiative, Zoe Sarnak returns to Sarasota and brings a bit of her ‘downtown vibe’ with her. Socially and environmentally aware, Sarnak’s music is driven by evocative voices who see life from the outside and strive to bring a little light through soaring chords and irresistible beats. A recipient of the Jonathan Larson Award, and a finalist for the Ebb Award and Kleban Prize, she is the co-author of the award-winning production of *A Crossing* at Barrington Stage, as well as the book and lyrics writer for the recently opened world premiere of *The Lonely Few* at the Geffen Playhouse starring Tony Award Winner Lauren Patten (*Jagged Little Pill*). Presented in partnership with the Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy. Zoe Sarnak’s concert and Hermitage residency are made possible through the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org** (\$5/person registration fee). Estimated running time: 60-70 minutes. **Nathan Benderson Park, 5851 Nathan Benderson Circle, Sarasota, FL 34235.**

RUBY E. CROSBY ALUMNI ARTIST BIO:

Zoe Sarnak

Hermitage alum **Zoe Sarnak** is a New York City-based composer, lyricist, and writer. She is a recipient of the Jonathan Larson Award, and a finalist for the Ebb Award, Kleban Award, and Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award, as well as co-author of the award-winning 2022 world premiere production of *A Crossing* at Barrington Stage Company. Her work has been developed with and presented by Second Stage, The Public, Roundabout Theatre Company, Williamstown Theatre Festival, New York Stage & Film, The Guggenheim, Geffen Playhouse, New York Theatre Workshop, WP Theatre, MCC, and many others. Current and upcoming productions include: *The Lonely Few* (with Rachel Bonds) premiering at Geffen Playhouse in Spring 2023, *Split* (with Michele Lowe) premiering off-Broadway produced by Transport Group in their 2023/2024 season, with further to be announced. Theatrical projects in development include: *Galileo* (with Danny Strong, Michael Weiner), *Empire Records* (with original screenwriter Carol Heikkinen), *Afterwords* (with Emily Kaczmarek), *Particle Fever* (with David Henry Hwang and Bear McCreary), *Afloat* (with Emily Kaczmarek) and several others to be announced. Zoe has several upcoming television and film projects including a musical television show in development with Sallie Patrick (at CBS Studios) and a Netflix musical film with Liza Chasin (3dot Productions), Margaret Chernin, Molly Sims, and writer/director Lauren Miller Rogen. Her music has been featured by “*NY Times Live*” and the BBC, and in benefit concerts and albums for Everytown, the Ali Forney Center, and more. ZoeSarnak.com

About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:

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.

The Hermitage is supported by:

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts; by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues; and by The State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture (Section 286.25 Florida Statutes), as well as the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

About the Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy:

The Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy is a not-for-profit 501c3 business created to manage Nathan Benderson Park, a community/public asset and world-class, multi-use sports venue. NBPC's mission is to improve the quality of life for our community and be an economic generator for our region. The Conservancy's primary purpose is to develop and promote the park as a world-class event center, team training site and Sarasota County park, while providing outreach programs through recreation, safety training, education and volunteering as a service to our community. See more at NathanBendersonPark.org.

ALL ANNOUNCED HERMITAGE PROGRAMS:

Thursday, March 16th @ 6:30pm, "Sofía Rocha: Making Musical Waves," with Hermitage Prize in Composition as the Aspen Music Festival and School Winner **Sofía Rocha** (Outdoors at Marie Selby Botanical Garden, Downtown Sarasota)
Presented in partnership with the Venice Symphony and the Pops Orchestra

SPECIAL EVENT! – Monday, March 20th @ 7:30pm, "Hermitage Turns 20: **Andy Sandberg & Broadway Friends**," A Benefit Concert supporting ongoing Hurricane Repairs featuring **Jeannette Bayardelle, Laura Bell Bundy, Jay Armstrong Johnson, Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer, and Ann Morrison** (Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, Downtown Sarasota)

RECENTLY ADDED! Wednesday, March 22nd @ 5:30pm, "Craig Lucas: An Open Rehearsal," with Tony Award nominee, Pulitzer Prize finalist, and the inaugural winner

of the Hermitage Greenfield Prize **Craig Lucas** (Booker High School's Outdoor Courtyard, Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with Booker High

Friday, March 24 @ 6:00pm, "Complicated, Beautiful, Messy, and Strange: The Words and Music of Kit Yan," with Hermitage Fellow **Kit Yan** (Asolo Rep's Robert & Beverly Koski Center)

Presented in partnership with Asolo Repertory Theatre

Thursday, March 30 @ 5:00pm, "Creativity for All," with Hermitage Fellows **Tina LaPadula** and **Nandita Shenoy** (Butler Park)

Presented in partnership with Embracing Our Differences and North Port High School

Friday, April 14, 5:30pm, "**Aleshea Harris Presents**" featuring the first public presentation of acclaimed playwright and 2021 Hermitage Major Theater Award Winner Aleshea Harris' commission

Presented in partnership with the Greenfield Foundation, Community Foundation of Sarasota County, and Asolo Rep/FSU Conservatory

Saturday, April 15, 2pm, "**Sandy Rodriguez: Putting Sarasota on the Map**," with 2023 Hermitage Greenfield Prize winner in Visual Art Sandy Rodriguez, joined by **Anne Patterson** and **Christine Kuan**

Presented in partnership with the Greenfield Foundation and Community Foundation of Sarasota County

Saturday, April 15, 6pm, "**Rennie Harris: Street Dance Pioneer**," with 2023 Hermitage Greenfield Prize winner in Dance and Choreography Lorenzo 'Rennie' Harris, joined by **Joseph V. Melillo** and **Charmaine Warren**

Presented in partnership with the Greenfield Foundation and Community Foundation of Sarasota County

GALA DINNER! – Sunday, April 16, 6pm, **The 15th Annual Hermitage Greenfield Prize Dinner**, Honoring 2023 HGP Winners Rennie Harris & Sandy Rodriguez

Wednesday, April 26, 7pm, "**The Pop-Folk World of Zoe Sarnak**," with Crosby Alumni Music Initiative Artist **Zoe Sarnak**, at Nathan Benderson Park

Presented in partnership with the Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy

HermitageArtistRetreat.org