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THE HERMITAGE
artist retreat



**Andy Sandberg & Broadway Guest Stars Raised their Voices
to Celebrate the Hermitage's 20th Anniversary Season with**

“HERMITAGE TURNS 20:

Andy Sandberg & Broadway Friends in Concert”

\$200,000 Raised for the Hermitage and Ongoing Hurricane Repairs

*Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg** took to the stage on Monday night as the featured performer at Sarasota's iconic **Van Wezel Hall** to raise nearly **\$200,000** for the Hermitage following the impact of Hurricane Ian. He was joined by Tony Award nominee **Jeannette Bayardelle**, Tony Award nominee **Laura Bell Bundy**, Lortel Award winner **Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer**, and Sarasota's own **Ann Morrison** and **Raleigh Mosely II** to celebrate the Hermitage's 20th Anniversary Season, with music direction by Hermitage Fellow and 2023 Grammy Award nominee **Rona Siddiqui**.*

March 22, 2023 (Sarasota County, Florida) — On Monday evening, March 20th, the Hermitage celebrated its 20th Anniversary Season with a concert featuring Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**, returning to his roots as a performer.

“This is my first time doing anything like this in about twelve years,” Sandberg shared from the stage. He performed an evening of classic and contemporary Broadway songs, with a few other pop favorites, as well as original songs by Hermitage alumni, including award-winning composers **Adam Gwon** and **Rona Siddiqui**.

Siddiqui also served as music director for the event and accompanied Sandberg on piano. “Rona is a brilliant composer and dream collaborator, and I am so honored that she agreed to be a part of this special evening,” Sandberg added.

Sandberg announced up front that the evening was not going to be a retrospective. “If we were to attempt to celebrate the two decades of Hermitage history, the nearly 700 Hermitage alumni, and the *thousands* of original works that were created in this time, we'd be

here for a lot longer than 90 minutes!” He went on to say that this would be an evening of music and celebration, and that’s exactly what was delivered.

In addition to performing a number of the evening’s songs himself, Sandberg was joined throughout the evening by Broadway stars who are also friends and collaborators of his. The evening featured performances from recent Tony Award nominee **Jeannette Bayardelle** (*Girl from the North Country, The Color Purple, Shida*), Tony Award nominee **Laura Bell Bundy** (*Legally Blonde, Hairspray, Wicked*), Lucille Lortel Award winner **Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer** (*Beetlejuice, A Catered Affair, Something Rotten*), and Sarasota’s own **Ann Morrison** (*Merrily We Roll Along, LoveMusik*), who is also a proud Hermitage alum. Jay Armstrong Johnson had to bow out due to an illness, so **Raleigh Mosely II**, a frequent performer at Hermitage events and known to Sarasota audiences from his work with Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, stepped in on just one day’s notice. The 90-minute concert featured showstopping solo performances, along with memorable duets that Sandberg shared with Bayardelle, Kritzer, Morrison, and Mosely. In addition to Siddiqui on piano, the cast was joined by **Beth Callen** on guitar. Both Siddiqui and Callen recently worked on the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning musical *A Strange Loop*, written by Hermitage Fellow **Michael R. Jackson**. Tony Award-winning Broadway star **Gavin Creel** (*Hello Dolly, Into the Woods, Hair*) introduced Sandberg via video. Additional short video tributes celebrated the impact of the Hermitage, displayed the unparalleled beauty of its Manasota Key campus, and spotlighted a number of Hermitage alumni wishing the organization a “Happy 20th Birthday!”

“It’s a rare and special thing,” stated **Gavin Creel** in his introduction, “that an Artistic Director and CEO like Andy has the talent and the willingness to get up and do a very daring thing – to sing and perform with a bunch of his friends and inspirations who are also some *my* favorite Broadway performers, in order to raise more money to help this amazing place... I will always love the Hermitage.”

“It was an absolutely unbelievable evening that blew us all away,” added Hermitage Board President **Robyn Citrin**. “We knew it would be something special, but this was one of the most entertaining nights I have ever had in Sarasota. Andy’s incredible voice surprised us all, and the guest stars were extraordinary. The energy and talent in that hall was something that can’t be captured in words. This event was pure magic, as only the Hermitage can deliver!”

Between sponsorships and ticket sales, the event raised nearly \$200,000 for the Hermitage and its ongoing hurricane repair efforts. “I’d say \$200,000 for a great cause and a one-night benefit concert is something to celebrate!” Sandberg added. “The number of people

who came out to celebrate the Hermitage on Monday night is a testament to the reach and impact of this one-of-a-kind organization – and we're just getting started!"

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

For more information about the Hermitage and its 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:

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BIOS:

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, Sandberg was selected to lead the organization following an extensive national search. Since joining the Hermitage in January of 2020, he has guided the organization through a period of significant growth and transition. Over the past three seasons, the Hermitage has dramatically expanded its programming, tripled its operating budget, completed a campus-wide restoration, and established dozens of new collaborative partnerships throughout the region and across the country.

Sandberg's theatrical work has been represented in New York, 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 Award); the Broadway revival of Gore Vidal's **The Best Man**, starring James Earl Jones and Angela Lansbury (2012

Tony nomination); and Will Eno's *The Realistic Joneses*. Sandberg has directed the New York and London premieres of Jeannette Bayardelle's *SHIDA* (Off West End Award and AUDELCO Award nominations: Best Musical, Best Director, and Best Actress). He has been represented Off-Broadway as the director of *Straight* (*NY Times* Critics' Pick) and as the writer and director of *Application Pending* (BroadwayWorld Award: Best Off-Broadway Play; Drama Desk nomination: Outstanding Solo Show; Winner: Book Pipeline Prize). Additional world premieres as director include Alan Brody's historical drama *Operation Epsilon* (four IRNE Awards, including Best Play, Best Director), the Off-Broadway comedy *Craving for Travel* (also co-author), and the Off-Broadway musicals *The Last Smoker in America* and *Neurosis*, among others. In 2020, he directed *How to Succeed...* at the Maltz Jupiter Theater. As a performer, Sandberg has toured the world with the **Yale Whiffenpoofs** and the **Alley Cats**, and 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. 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), Writers' Guild of America (WGA), and the Off-Broadway League. He has served on the boards of The Browning School (NYC), Sarasota Arts & Cultural Alliance, Yale Dramatic Association, Whiffenpoof Alumni Association, and the Yale Alley Cats Alumni Organization (founder and longtime president). AndySandberg.com / IG: @ASandbergA

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

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 *Girlytime* 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

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*.

Raleigh Mosely II
(Sarasota Guest Performer)

Raleigh Mosely II has performed at multiple Hermitage programs and benefits. He made his Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe debut in the summer production of *Broadway in Black* and is currently co-starring in their production of *Dreamgirls*. Originally from Miami, he earned his BFA in musical theater from the University of Central Florida. His theater credits include *Jesus for the People: Our Passover Lamb*, *Spunk and the Harlem Literati*, *HAIR*, *Ragtime*, and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. “You can win as long as you keep your head to the sky.”

HermitageArtistRetreat.org