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**Hermitage Announces Third Annual Concert in the
Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series:
“Piano Classics Remade” Featuring Award-Winning
Pianist and Composer Conrad Tao**

*“Piano Classics Remade” with renowned pianist **Conrad Tao** will be presented outdoors at **Selby Gardens** (Downtown Sarasota) on **Thursday March 28th at 7pm** – the third performance in the Hermitage’s annual Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series.*

January 31, 2024 — **The Hermitage Artist Retreat** (Sarasota County, Florida) is pleased to announce the third annual concert in the **Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage**, featuring award-winning composer and pianist **Conrad Tao**. This event will take place on Thursday, March 28th at 7pm at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. This alumni music initiative was launched in 2022 to a full-capacity crowd at Selby Gardens with “Soulful Strings: An Evening of Harp Music,” featuring celebrated harpist and Hermitage alumna **Ashley Jackson**. Last year’s concert, “The Pop-Folk World of Zoe Sarnak,” featured award-winning New York City-based Hermitage alum **Zoe Sarnak**, with Sarasota-based vocalists and musicians performing Sarnak’s original songs at Nathan Benderson Park.

This year, the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage returns to classical music with world-renowned pianist, composer, and Hermitage Fellow **Conrad Tao**. Tao has appeared worldwide as a pianist and composer – including acclaimed performances with the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, and more. He has been dubbed “the kind of musician who is shaping the future of classical music” by *New York Magazine* and an artist of “probing intellect and open-hearted vision” by *The New York Times*.

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. Current Hermitage Board President **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.

“The Hermitage brings some of the most impressive performers in the world to our community,” said 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. I am continually inspired by the Hermitage’s commitment to these artists and the impact these magnificent talents are having in our region.”

“We are incredibly excited to welcome Conrad Tao back to Sarasota to share his talents with our growing Hermitage audience,” added Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**. “Anyone who has seen Conrad perform knows that is one of *the* most extraordinary and innovative pianists of his generation. 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 groundbreaking 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.”

Hermitage Fellow **Conrad Tao** captures and energizes the essence of popular classical music through his undeniably gifted lens of improvisation and imaginative composition to elevate the future of music. He has amassed a steady stream of awards and critical acclaim for his performances, compositions, and recordings with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, and symphonies around the world. A returning Hermitage Fellow, Tao is the recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and was named a Gilmore Young Artist – an honor awarded only once every two years to highlight the most promising American pianists of the new generation.

“Piano Classics Remade” will be presented outdoors at Selby Gardens (Downtown Sarasota) on Thursday, March 28th at 7pm. This program is free and open to the public with a \$5/person registration fee. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org**. *Capacity will be limited, and registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis, at which time registration will shift to a waitlist. Early registration is strongly encouraged.*

(Full program details are provided below.)

A leading national arts incubator, the Hermitage is the only major arts organization in Florida’s Gulf Coast exclusively committed to supporting the development and creation of new work across all artistic disciplines. The Hermitage hosts artists on its Gulf Coast Manasota Key campus for multi-week residencies, where diverse and accomplished artists from around the world and across multiple disciplines create and develop new works of theater, music, visual art, literature, dance, film, and more. As part of their residencies, Hermitage Fellows participate in free community

programs, offering Gulf Coast audiences a unique opportunity to engage with some of the world's leading artists and to get an authentic "sneak peek" into extraordinary projects and artistic minds before their works go on to major galleries, concert halls, theaters, and museums around the world. These free and innovative programs include performances, conversations, readings, interactive experiences, open studios, school programs, teacher workshops, and more, serving thousands in our regional community each year.

For more information about the Hermitage and upcoming programs, visit: **HermitageArtistRetreat.org**.

FULL PROGRAM DETAILS

"Piano Classics Remade," Thursday, March 28 @ 7pm at Selby Gardens: With his uniquely energetic style, celebrated concert pianist and composer **Conrad Tao** gives a masterful demonstration of all the nuance a piano is capable of delivering. This internationally renowned Hermitage Fellow alternates between the most cutting-edge music venues and some of the world's most celebrated concert halls. From the New York Philharmonic to the Chicago Symphony and Germany's Klavierfestival Ruhr, Tao has been known to play everything from Gershwin and Rachmoninoff to his own contemporary compositions, always with his instantly recognizable improvisatory panache. In the third season of the Hermitage's annual Crosby Alumni Music Initiative, join Conrad Tao as he pays homage to the music of our past and offers a look into the future of music. *Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. Conrad Tao'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. Selby Gardens (Downtown), 1534 Mound Street, Sarasota, FL 34236.*

RUBY E. CROSBY ALUMNI ARTIST BIO

Conrad Tao

Hermitage Fellow **Conrad Tao** has appeared worldwide as a pianist and composer. He has been dubbed "the kind of musician who is shaping the future of classical music" (*New York Magazine*) and an artist of "probing intellect and open-hearted vision" (*The New York Times*). Tao has performed as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and Boston Symphony. As a composer, his work has been performed by orchestras throughout the world; his first large-scale orchestral work, *Everything Must Go*, received its world premiere with the New York Philharmonic, and its European premiere with the Antwerp Symphony, and he was the recipient of a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award, for Outstanding Sound Design / Music Composition, for his work on *More Forever*, in collaboration with dancer and choreographer Caleb Teicher. A returning Hermitage Artist Retreat Fellow, Tao is also the recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and was named a Gilmore Young Artist – an honor awarded every two years highlighting the most promising American pianists of the new generation.

The Hermitage Artist Retreat

Sarasota County, Florida

Andy Sandberg, Artistic Director and CEO

The Hermitage is a leading national arts incubator and nonprofit artist retreat located on Manasota Key, Florida. For more than two decades, the Hermitage has invited 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, and Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse and accomplished group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the 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 Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues; the State of Florida through the Division of 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.

ALL ANNOUNCED HERMITAGE PROGRAMS:

Friday, February 2 @ 5pm, "Hermitage Sunsets @ Nathan Benderson Park: Musical Moods," featuring Hermitage Fellows **Amir ElSaffar** and **Chris Ryan Williams**, at Nathan Benderson Park (Sarasota/Bradenton)

Presented in partnership with Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy

Amir ElSaffar's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by the Huisling Family Foundation

Friday, February 9 @ 5:30pm, "Script, Screen, and Stage: The Many Roles of Nambi E. Kelley," featuring Hermitage Fellow **Nambi E. Kelley**, at Booker High School (Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with Booker High School and Manasota ASALH

Nambi E. Kelley's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Judith & John Manocherian

Monday, February 19 @ 10:30am and 3pm, "Music Mondays: Hermitage Alum Doug Wright Writes Broadway," featuring Hermitage Fellow **Doug Wright**, at Church of the Palms (Sarasota) @ 10:30am and again at Venice Presbyterian Church (Venice) @ 3pm. *Presented in partnership with Sarasota Institute of Lifetime Learning*

Please Note: This program is part of the SILL "Music Monday" series, and tickets are available at the door on the day of the event for \$15/person.

Friday, February 23 @ 5pm, "Live Arts in Museum Spaces," with Hermitage Curatorial Council Member **Limor Tomer**, at the Ringling Museum (Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with The Ringling Museum

Friday, March 1 @ 5:30pm, "Stories in Light and Sound," with 2023 Hermitage Greenfield Prize finalist **Maura Brewer** and returning Hermitage Fellow **David 'Doc' Wallace**, at the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key)

Tuesday, March 12 @ 7pm, “Hermitage Writes @ Ringling College: Mesha Maren,” with Hermitage Fellow **Mesha Maren**, at Ringling College of Art and Design (Sarasota)
Presented in partnership with Ringling College of Art and Design

Thursday, March 14 @ 6:30pm, “Hermitage Sunsets @ Nathan Benderson Park: More than Music,” featuring Hermitage Fellows **Etienne Charles** and **Kamala Sankaram**, at Nathan Benderson Park (Sarasota / Bradenton)
Presented in partnership with Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy

Friday, March 22 @ 12pm, “Hermitage Writes @ Venice Writers Festival,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Elisa Bocanegra**, at William H. Jerve, Jr. Venice Public Library (Sarasota / Bradenton) *Presented in partnership with the Venice Writers Festival*

Tuesday, March 26 @ 7pm, “Hermitage Writes @ Ringling College: Brandel France de Bravo,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Brandel France de Bravo**, at Ringling College of Art and Design (Sarasota) *Presented in partnership with Ringling College of Art and Design*

Thursday, March 28 @ 7pm, “Crosby Alumni Music Initiative: Piano Classics Remade,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Conrad Tao**, at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Sarasota)
Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens
Conrad Tao’s concert and Hermitage residency are made possible through the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage

HermitageArtistRetreat.org

Facebook / Instagram: [@HermitageArtistRetreat](https://www.instagram.com/HermitageArtistRetreat)