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**KIMMEL CENTER ANNOUNCES NEW PROGRAMMING INCLUDING A  
BREATHTAKING EXPLORATION OF SPACE INFUSED WITH JAZZ MUSIC FOR THE  
FIRST TIME EVER WITH THE JAZZ ORCHESTRA OF PHILADELPHIA DURING  
2018 PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**

***THE PLANETS: AN HD ODYSSEY* FEATURING THE JAZZ ORCHESTRA OF  
PHILADELPHIA, RARE ESSENCE, AND TILT LAMPSHADE BOUQUETS  
ADDED TO MORE THAN 50 AWE-INSPIRING PERFORMANCES  
MAY 31 – JUNE 10, 2018**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** (Philadelphia, PA, April 2, 2018) — The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts announces new programming added to the **2018 Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA)** lineup. **The Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia** will perform a world premiere, reimagined jazz arrangement of Gustav Holst's *The Planets* conducted by Terell Stafford. It will be accompanied by spectacular images from NASA in *The Planets: An HD Odyssey* that will be projected on one large screen in Verizon Hall. **Rare Essence**, Washington, DC's premier Go-Go band for more than four decades, will

perform an explosive high energy, dance throw down PIFA edition of the free monthly program *Sittin' In*; and **TILT Lampshade Bouquets** – the beautiful and colorful Commonwealth Plaza installation from the French artistic studio. The 11-day festival is packed with more than 50 performances ranging from music and dance to 360-degree immersive spectacle experiences, and will attract regional visitors to Philadelphia from **Thursday, May 31 through Sunday, June 10**.

“Since its inception, the keys to The Kimmel Center’s Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA) have been creativity, innovation, and community,” said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. “We are so proud to see and hear our beloved Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia perform a world premiere arrangement of this iconic symphony.”

Here is more detailed information about the new performances being announced today:

### ***The Planets: An HD Odyssey featuring the Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia***

After the Houston Symphony’s wildly popular UK tour that *The Guardian* called “an experience that is genuinely out of this world,” the Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia, conducted by Terell Stafford, will perform a world premiere jazz arrangement of Gustav Holst’s *The Planets* alongside the Duncan Copp film *The Planets: An HD Odyssey*. Thanks to NASA and Jet Propulsion Laboratories, *The Planets: An HD Odyssey* features incredible images from space showing audiences up close and extraordinary views of our Solar System. Performed by a live Jazz Orchestra for the first time, experience the stunning sights of Mars, Mercury, Saturn, and more, with a live jazz soundtrack arranged by Joseph Block, a former student of the Kimmel Center’s own Creative Music Program (Venus), Todd Bashore (Mars & Mercury), Jack Saint Clair (Jupiter), Mark Allen (Saturn & Uranus), and Nick Lombardelli (Neptune).

### **Rare Essence**

**Rare Essence**, Washington, DC’s premier Go-Go band for more than four decades, is an institution that has built a devoted fan base that spans multiple generations. They were dubbed “The Wickedest Band Alive” by rap pioneer Doug E. Fresh. During PIFA 2018, Rare Essence comes together in the Kimmel Center’s Commonwealth Plaza to perform an explosive high energy, dance throw down PIFA edition of the free monthly program *Sittin' In* where guests are invited to rock out and relive the sounds that have been fueling dance parties for over 40 years!

### **TILT Lampshade Bouquets**

French Studio **TILT** has been creating gorgeous large scale spectacles since its formation in 2001. Producing creative installations for various events worldwide, TILT will dazzle audiences with its **Bouquet d'abat-jours** (Lampshade bouquets) for the 2018 Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts. During the three previous PIFAs, the Kimmel Center’s Commonwealth Plaza welcomed visitors to experience the magnificent light show from the Eiffel Tower, the 100-foot-long, 16-foot-wide time machine, and the beautifully choreographed live performance around *The Kinetic Tree*. Throughout PIFA 2018, Commonwealth Plaza will feature six beautiful, bright, and gigantic **Lampshade Bouquets**. There will be seating for guests to enjoy while they marvel in the beauty of these illuminated works of art.

## Tickets

Tickets to individual performances are on sale now and start at \$19. Please check [www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa](http://www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa) for the most up-to-date pricing for each show. Tickets can be purchased by visiting [www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa](http://www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa) or calling 215-893-1999.

For a full lineup of PIFA 2018 performances and events so far, see below:

## PIFA 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS - blue highlighted items are new performances announced today, April 2, 2018.

### ***A Special Concert featuring Toshi Reagon and the cast of Octavia Butler's Parable of the Sower with special guests Lisa Fisher and the strings of the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra***

#### **PIFA GALA**

May 31, 2018

Verizon Hall (Gala performance)

Exact Time TBD

Artists: Toshi Reagon, Lisa Fischer, Philadelphia Youth Orchestra string players, and Luke Jerram's *Museum of the Moon*

Tickets are by purchase to the PIFA Gala only

Singer, songwriter, and guitarist Toshi Reagon and friends perform highlights from her genre-defying work-in-progress based on Octavia Butler's acclaimed novel, '*Parable of the Sower.*'

### **TILT Lampshade Bouquets**

*Commonwealth Plaza at the Kimmel Center*

May 31 – June 10, 2018, Available for the public during normal building hours

French Studio **TILT** has been creating gorgeous large scale spectacles since its formation in 2001. Producing creative installations for various events worldwide, TILT will dazzle crowds with its **Bouquet d'abat-jours** (Lampshades bouquet) for the 2018 Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts. During the three previous PIFAs, the Kimmel Center's Commonwealth Plaza welcomed visitors to experience the magnificent light show from the Eiffel Tower, the 100-foot-long, 16-foot-wide time machine, and the beautifully choreographed live performance around *The Kinetic Tree*. Throughout PIFA 2018, Commonwealth Plaza will feature six beautiful, bright and gigantic **Lampshade Bouquets**. There will be seating for guests to enjoy while they marvel in the beauty of these illuminated works of art.

### **Nobuntu**

*TBD outdoor location on the banks of the Schuylkill River*

June 1 – 10, 2018, live performances at 8:00 p.m. nightly (excluding June 4)

The internationally-acclaimed, all-female, a cappella quintet from Zimbabwe will perform as an opening act for **Cristal Palace** for 20-30 minutes each night. Your ticket to *Cristal Palace* gets you in to hear **Nobuntu**. There will not be separate tickets for the performance.

## ***Cristal Palace (World Premiere)***

Transe Express

*TBD outdoor location on the banks of the Schuylkill River*

June 1 – 10, 2018, live performances at 8:00 p.m. nightly (excluding June 4)

More than 200,000 witnessed the “jaw-dropping sensation” during the 2011 PIFA, when aerial performers dangled hundreds of feet in the air above Broad Street and transfixed the crowd with an otherworldly spectacle. Transe Express, the celebrated French performance troupe, returns with the world premiere of *Cristal Palace*, a 360-degree immersive event featuring a musician-topped chandelier as the centerpiece for the best dance party Philly has ever seen.

This will be the World premiere of *Cristal Palace*, commissioned by the Kimmel Center.

## ***Inventive Mothers: A Tribute to Frank Zappa (American Premiere)***

**Artist: Studio Dan**

June 2 @8:00p

June 3 @2:00p

SEI Innovation Studio at the Kimmel Center

Studio Dan is an Austrian band that combines composition and improvisation, exploring beyond the bounds of simplistic categories. Its music embraces "a great orchestral layer with a very special sound."

## ***Taylor Mac: A 24-Decade History of Popular Music (Philadelphia Premiere)***

Taylor Mac

In association with Pomegranate Arts

*Merriam Theater*

June 2, 2018 – PART I (1776 – 1896), 12:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.

June 9, 2018 – PART II (1896 – Present), 12:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.

Unlike anything you’ve ever experienced, this epic 24-hour performance art concert exorcizes the social history of the United States—240 years in the making and 24 hours in the telling. It is a spectacular pop odyssey with over 24 musicians and more than 100 local performers, including burlesque performers, a choir, a marching band, and knitters. The audience itself is essential to the performance with deeply touching, oftentimes hilarious, and immersive moments that build to a delicious illustration of our nation’s diverse and sometimes dysfunctional story, reinventing a distinctively American sense of possibility.

The only presentation of the complete *24-Decades* on the East Coast, this epic event (hailed as a Ring Cycle for the 21st Century), will be presented as two 12-hour parts, the longest presentation segments since Taylor’s historic 24-hour marathon performance in Brooklyn last fall. Tickets can be purchased individually for the two 12-hour parts, or audience members can

purchase the full 24 hours to see the pièce de résistance in its entirety— an experience that *The New York Times* called “one of the great experiences of my life.”

This will be the Philadelphia premiere of *Taylor Mac: A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*.

Major support for *Taylor Mac: A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* has been provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

### ***Water on Mars (Philadelphia Premiere)***

Plastic Boom

*Perelman Theater at the Kimmel Center*

June 1, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

June 2, 2018, 11:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.

June 3, 2018, 11:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.

A high-flying, not-your-average-feast for the eyes, *Water on Mars* combines jaw-dropping athleticism, eye-catching acrobatics and has been praised by *The Circus Diaries* as “a pure display of extraordinary skill.” This Philadelphia premiere kids show comes direct from Stockholm and turns the Kimmel Center stage into a circus of dizzying tricks and gravity-defying stunts bursting with comedy, chocolate, 400 roles of tape, and out-of-this-world airborne geometry!

This will be the Philadelphia premiere of *Water on Mars*.

### ***My Organ My Seoul (World Premiere)***

Ambiguous Dance Company & Ahreum Han

*Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center*

June 3, 2018, 3:00 p.m.

Direct from South Korea, former K-pop artists Boram Kim and Kung-min Jang dazzle audiences with their witty exploration of individual rhythm and freedom of expression in this world premiere featuring the Kimmel Center’s Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ. The afternoon includes a performance of “Rhythm of Human”; Curtis Institute-trained, critically-acclaimed organist Ahreum Han on the Kimmel Center’s Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ; and a collaborative piece commissioned by the Kimmel Center.

This will be the World premiere of *My Organ My Seoul*.

### ***Doggie Hamlet (Philadelphia Premiere)***

Ann Carlson

*Belmont Plateau in Fairmount Park*

June 3, 2018, 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

June 4, 2018, 6:00 p.m.

What has five performers, three herding dogs, a flock of sheep, and hay bale seating? *Doggie Hamlet!* This outdoor performance weaves dance, music, visual, and theatrical elements with aspects of competitive sheep herding trials. A work that “defies categorization” (Center for the Art of

Performance), this Philadelphia Premiere is based on *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle*, an Oprah book-club pick about a mute boy born into a family of dog breeders. The dreamlike display blends together equal parts mystery and movement.

This will be the Philadelphia premiere of *Doggie Hamlet*.

### ***SEA (Singular Extreme Actions) (Philadelphia Premiere)***

Streb Extreme Action

*Perelman Theater at the Kimmel Center*

June 5, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

June 6, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

June 7, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Watch as the laws of physics are put to the test at *SEA (Singular Extreme Actions)*, a Philadelphia premiere event from the mind of MacArthur Genius Award winner Elizabeth Streb. Human bodies careen through, around, and above a physical and kinetic set, thrilling audiences with athleticism and a healthy dose of bravery. Equal parts daredevil stunt work and acrobatics, *SEA* is a kaleidoscope of movement where every performer is dubbed an “action hero”.

This will be the Philadelphia premiere of *SEA (Singular Extreme Actions)*.

### ***Tape Riot (American Premiere)***

Asphalt Piloten

*Secret locations revealed to ticket holders*

June 5, 2018, 5:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

June 6, 2018, 5:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

June 7, 2018, 5:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

June 8, 2018, 5:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

See Philadelphia in a whole new way! Without the constraints of a theatrical performance structure, this hybrid dance art tour permits audience members freedom of movement throughout the city. Starting at a Center City, Philadelphia, mystery location – revealed only to ticketholders through a communication before the performance – audiences will be guided through a journey leaving artistic traces of gaffer tape as hints along the way and experiencing morsels of artistry from a quartet of artists which combine electronic soundscapes, and award-winning choreography, to create a dynamic performance that undulates through the City of Brotherly Love. A U.S. premiere, Asphalt Piloten’s *Tape Riot* is a performance that pushes against traditional boundaries by infiltrating urban public spaces to create a totally unexpected and unique experience.

This will be the American premiere of *Tape Riot* and Asphalt Piloten’s American debut. These performances are made possible through the Kimmel Center’s exclusive membership in In Situ – a network of European presenters specializing in art in public spaces. The Kimmel Center is the only U.S. member, and the affiliation allows the Kimmel Center to bring unique European performances to Philadelphia. *Tape Riot* is generously supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

### ***The Fever (Philadelphia Premiere)***

## 600 HIGHWAYMEN

*SEI Innovation Studio at the Kimmel Center*

June 6, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

June 7, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

June 8, 2018, 7:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

June 9, 2018, 7:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

June 10, 2018, 2:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.

At a time when we feel most divided as a nation, the Obie Award-winning creative team *The New Yorker* calls “New York’s best nontraditional company” gifts audiences with a common purpose through acting together. The newest experiential show from 600 HIGHWAYMEN taps into the limits of human existence.

This will be the Philadelphia premiere of *The Fever*.

## ***Bassem Youssef: The Joke is Mightier Than The Sword (Philadelphia Debut)***

*Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center*

June 6, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

Dubbed the “Jon Stewart of the Arab World,” Bassem Youssef is the creator and former host of the wildly popular TV show *Al-Bernameg*—the first political satire show in the Middle East and the most watched program in the region with 30 million viewers every week. In his stage show, *The Joke Is Mightier than the Sword*, Bassem shares his personal story and thoughts on the political climate that led to the Arab Spring; its parallels to the current state of American politics; and how propaganda lays the foundation for dictatorial regimes.

This will be the Philadelphia debut of *Bassem Youssef: The Joke is Mightier than the Sword*.

## **Rare Essence**

*Commonwealth Plaza at the Kimmel Center*

June 6, 2018, 9:00 p.m.

**Rare Essence**, Washington, DC’s premier Go-Go band for more than four decades, is an institution that has built a devoted fan base that spans multiple generations. They were dubbed “The Wickedest Band Alive” by rap pioneer Doug E. Fresh. During PIFA 2018, Rare Essence comes together in the Kimmel Center’s Commonwealth Plaza to perform an explosive high energy, dance throw down PIFA edition of the free monthly program *Sittin’ In* where guests are invited to rock out and relive the sounds that have been fueling dance parties for over 40 years!

## ***The Planets: An HD Odyssey featuring the Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia (World Premiere)***

**Conducted by Terell Stafford**

**with opening act: The Ambassadors Jazztet of The United States Army Field Band**

*Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center*

June 8, 2018, 8:00 p.m.

After the Houston Symphony's wildly popular UK tour that *The Guardian* called "an experience that is genuinely out of this world," the Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia, conducted by Terell Stafford, will perform a world premiere jazz arrangement of Gustav Holst's *The Planets* alongside the Duncan Copp film *The Planets: An HD Odyssey*. Duncan Copp is best known as the producer of *In the Shadow of the Moon*, a 2006 documentary film on the U.S. manned missions to the Moon, which was presented by Ron Howard and introduced at the Sundance Film Festival.

Thanks to NASA and Jet Propulsion Laboratories, *The Planets: An HD Odyssey* features incredible images from space showing audiences up close and extraordinary views of our Solar System. Performed by a live Jazz Orchestra for the first time, experience the stunning sights of Mars, Mercury, Saturn, and more, with a live jazz soundtrack arranged by Joseph Block, a former student of the Kimmel Center's own Creative Music Program (Venus), Todd Bashore (Mars & Mercury), Jack Saint Clair (Jupiter), Mark Allen (Saturn & Uranus), and Nick Lombardelli (Neptune).

As an added bonus, our opening act will be The Ambassadors Jazztet of The United States Army Field Band. It was developed in the legendary style of Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. Though, the Jazztet performs traditional jazz standards, its primary focus is on new compositions by members of the group, always creating a vehicle for improvised solos.

## **PIFA STREET FAIR**

*Broad Street, Philadelphia*

June 9, 2018, 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

PIFA concludes with the celebrated PIFA Street Fair on Broad Street: seven blocks of art, food, entertainment, and vendors that will take place all day Saturday, June 9, between Chestnut and South Streets.

The Street Fair is generously supported by Bimbo Bakeries, USA.

## **KIMMEL CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, the Kimmel Center's mission is to operate a world-class performing arts center that engages and serves a broad audience through diverse programming, arts education, and community outreach. The Kimmel Center Campus is comprised of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, SEI Innovation Studio, and the Merck Arts Education Center), the Academy of Music (owned by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association), and the Merriam Theater. The Kimmel Center is also home to eight Resident Companies: The Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly POPS, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts is the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is the season sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2017-2018 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit [www.kimmelcenter.org](http://www.kimmelcenter.org).

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