



The Great American
Songbook Foundation

Michael Feinstein, Founder

AT THE CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Kristin Chenoweth, Michael Feinstein headline Songbook Celebration Gala

Hall of Fame inductee Mitzi Gaynor donates extensive collection
of musical charts and memorabilia to Great American Songbook Foundation

Carmel, IN – An unforgettable performance by Kristin Chenoweth topped a star-studded evening Saturday as the Center for the Performing Arts hosted its sixth annual Songbook Celebration presented by Krieg DeVault. The gala in the elegant Palladium concert hall drew 550 attendees and raised over \$600,000 to support the Center’s artistic and educational programming.

Michael Feinstein, artistic director for the Center and founder of the Great American Songbook Foundation, led tributes to this year’s Songbook Hall of Fame inductees: singer Ella Fitzgerald and lyricist Ray Gilbert, both honored posthumously, and singer-dancer-actress Mitzi Gaynor, who announced the donation of her own extensive collection of musical charts and other memorabilia to the Foundation’s archives.

Joining Feinstein in the tribute performances were three current and former Songbook Youth Ambassadors, winners of the Foundation’s annual Songbook Academy® summer intensive: Annie Yokom (2010), Julia Goodwin (2013) and Finn Sagal (2017). The Academy is the nation’s only such program for high school students, focusing on the jazz standards, classic Tin Pan Alley compositions and Broadway and Hollywood tunes that comprise the Great American Songbook.

“This being my first gala as the full-time president and CEO of the Center and the Foundation, I am extremely grateful to Kristin, Mitzi, Michael and all of our other performers, staff and volunteers for making it such a hugely successful evening,” President/CEO Jeffrey McDermott said.

The Foundation’s Songbook Archives & Library holds more than 100,000 items representing creators, performers and publishers of timeless popular music, including sheet music, recordings and other artifacts from artists such as songwriters Meredith Willson (*The Music Man*), Johnny Burke (“Swinging on a Star”), Gus Kahn (“It Had to Be You”) and Hy Zaret (“Unchained Melody”).

The Gaynor collection features original charts, orchestrations and other memorabilia covering six decades of her performing career on stage, television and recordings, including:

- selections from many composers of the Great American Songbook, including George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter and Harold Arlen, as well as more contemporary composers such as Stevie Wonder, Peter Allen and Paul McCartney
- orchestrations by such acclaimed arrangers as Billy May, J. Hill, Billy Byers, Jerry Fielding, Pete King and Russell Garcia
- charts from her 1959 Verve albums *Mitzi* and *Mitzi Sings the Lyrics of Ira Gershwin*
- charts created for her live stage shows, beginning with her 1961 debut at Las Vegas’ Flamingo hotel
- charts used in her eight Emmy-winning network television specials from 1968 to 1978, including fan favorites “Let Go,” “You Are the Sunshine of My Life” and “Everybody Loves My Baby.”

“This is an important collection that spans a vital era in American entertainment history,” said Chris Lewis, the Foundation’s executive director. “Now, these materials will be available to performers and researchers long into the future.”

The 2017 Songbook Celebration was sponsored by Krieg DeVault LLP with additional support from Katz, Sapper & Miller and First Merchants Bank.

About the Center for the Performing Arts

The mission of the nonprofit Center for the Performing Arts is to welcome, engage, inspire and transform through compelling performing arts experiences in a world-class environment. The Center presents and hosts hundreds of events each year on its campus in Carmel, IN, which includes a 1,600-seat concert hall, the Palladium; a 500-seat proscenium theater, the Tarkington; and the black-box Studio Theater. The campus houses the affiliated Great American Songbook Foundation and provides space and support services for six resident companies: Actors Theatre of Indiana, Booth Tarkington Civic Theatre, Carmel Symphony Orchestra, Central Indiana Dance Ensemble, Gregory Hancock Dance Theatre and Indiana Wind Symphony. The Center also provides educational programming for people of all ages. More information is available at TheCenterPresents.org.

About the Great American Songbook Foundation

The mission of the Great American Songbook Foundation, founded in 2007 by five-time Grammy® Award nominee Michael Feinstein, is to inspire and educate by celebrating the Great American Songbook – the timeless standards of pop, jazz, Broadway and Hollywood. Headquartered at the affiliated Center for the Performing Arts in Carmel, IN, the Foundation preserves and elevates this rich legacy by curating physical artifacts of its creators, performers and publishers; offering programs for the public and research opportunities for scholars, historians and performers; providing educational opportunities and multidisciplinary curricula for student musicians, including the annual Songbook Academy® summer intensive; overseeing the Songbook Hall of Fame; and operating a multimedia gallery for public exhibition of its collections. The Foundation is a Cultural Affiliate of the Los Angeles-based Grammy Museum®. More information is available at www.TheSongbook.org.