

For Immediate Release

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The Angelica and Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts Announces its Fall 2015 Season of Music, Theatre and Speakers

MAHWAH, NJ. – Rock, bluegrass, Broadway stars and Emmy and Grammy Award winning artists will highlight the 2015 fall season of the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts at Ramapo College of New Jersey.

"This is an exciting lineup for the Berrie Center," said Stephanie Chaiken, Interim Director of the Berrie Center. "There is something for everyone in the entire family in our fall calendar of shows ranging from concerts to distinguished speakers to theatre. Our patrons can experience incredible performances right here in northern New Jersey. Our venues are stunning and we have plenty of free parking."

The Berrie Center will begin the fall season on Sunday, September 27 with **THE HILLBENDERS PRESENT: TOMMY: A BLUEGRASS OPRY**. "Ever since I was a young boy, I played the silver ball." Maybe not your standard bluegrass lyric, but a line known by all the world from the biggest rock opera of all time, The Who's **Tommy**. Forty-five years after its original release, this rock classic has now been fully realized as a full-length bluegrass tribute, featuring Springfield, Missouri's acclaimed group - **The Hillbenders**.

With a perfect mix of virtuoso musicianship on banjo, dobro, mandolin, bass and guitar and rock star vocals, the Hillbenders have received high critical acclaim for bringing Pete Townsend's original vision to life in a new and exciting way.

Next up is a rare treat, as **News 12 New Jersey's** own **John Bathke** sits down at the Berrie Center on Friday, October 2 to discuss some of his most fascinating and insightful interview experiences. Emmy® Award winning television interviewer and journalist John Bathke has interviewed show biz greats and come away with life lessons from Hollywood icons, along with a wealth of stories. John created and hosts **ON THE SCENE**, an arts and entertainment series seen on News 12 New Jersey. He has interviewed Jay Leno, Mary J. Blige, Lewis Black, Joan Rivers and Tony Bennett, to name a few. This will be an empowering and thrilling evening of insight as well as entertaining and moving anecdotes about the rocky road leading to a life in television news.

On Saturday, October 3, **Dawn Day** creates an authentic and moving **Tribute to Karen Carpenter**, one of the most delightful and popular singers of our time. Her rich and melodic tone captures the true essence of the timeless classics of The Carpenters. Hailing from the Midwest, Dawn is an acclaimed vocalist who has performed in thousands of venues, and the Berrie Center is very pleased to be added to that list. Dawn's tribute to Karen has kept her music alive.

On Friday, October 16, the Berrie Center welcomes **FreePlay Duo**, the multifaceted Canadian vocal musicians Suba Sankaran and Dylan Bell. Described as “inspired eclecticism,” Dylan and Suba take you from concert halls of Europe, to jazz clubs of NYC, to temples of India... all without leaving your seat. In this special evening, they will join esteemed New Jersey artist and art administrator **Victor Davson** – Executive Director of Aljira in Newark, N.J. FreePlay Duo will perform songs by musicians represented in Davson's Dub Factor: Heroes series, which features popular and iconic figures, such as Aretha Franklin, George Benson, Dionne Warwick and Jim Reeves, who influenced the artist growing up in Guyana.

There are also pre-show opportunities from 6 to 8 p.m. to visit the Davson exhibit in the Kresge and Pascal Galleries premiering a mid-career survey of Davson's work - from early abstraction to colorful imagery inspired by Caribbean Carnival.

The Berrie Center welcomes back a Broadway star for the third time on Sunday, October 18-with Tony Award nominated **Jarrold Spector** performing his show: **A Little Help from My Friends**. Beginning with a childhood stint on TV's Star Search, Philadelphia native Jarrold Spector debuted on Broadway as Gavroche in Les Miserables. After opening the Chicago company of Jersey Boys as Frankie Valli, Spector was tapped to play the singer on Broadway in 2008. Jarrold is currently playing the role of Barry Mann in Beautiful: The Carole King Musical.

On Saturday, October 24, the Berrie Center goes pop with **AJR**. The three brothers from NYC have achieved a startlingly quick level of success with “I'm Ready,” a buoyant electro-pop single. They have sold more than 500,000 singles, were featured in Billboard and the *New York Post*, and on SiriusXM “Hits 1” while climbing the Top 40 chart. Their musically prodigious line-up consists of older brother Adam, 24, on bass and vocals, middle brother Ryan, 20, on guitar, piano and vocals, and youngest brother Jack, 17, on vocals and guitar.

On Sunday, October 25, the Berrie Center will present two shows with **BJ Thomas**. A true American institution whose iconic pop, country and gospel hits defined their respective generations and now transcend them, B.J. Thomas has found a unique way to celebrate an incredible half century in music and some 47 years since his first gold-selling hit on Scepter Records. Thomas has earned five Grammy awards, more than fifteen Top 40 Pop/Rock hits, and sold 70 million records. Several of his well-known songs include "Hey Won't You Play Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song," "Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head" and "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry." *The New York Times* raves "...Thomas' resurgence is proof that the phrase 'born to sing' can apply to a lifetime."

On Saturday, November 7, the Berrie Center presents **D.O.A. Mysteries in Win, Lose or Die!** Watch what happens when America's favorite game show rolls into town looking for local contestants. Everyone is in jeopardy – even the audience! Buzz in with your answer to the \$64,000 question: Who is the killer? It only takes a minute to win it, a minute to lose it and just seconds to die in this fast-paced and hysterically funny interactive murder mystery.

On Sunday, December 6, **Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul** captures the spirit and magic of the season with two performances of their heartwarming holiday show, **An Irish Christmas – An Nollaig**. Nine time All-Ireland Fiddle Champion and music star of *Riverdance*, Eileen Ivers will change the way you think about the violin. Hailed as one of the great innovators and pioneers in the Celtic and World Music genres, Ivers has established herself as the pre-eminent exponent of the Irish fiddle in the world today. *The New York Times* calls her "... the Jimi Hendrix of the violin."

On Saturday, December 12, The Berrie Center welcomes **Julie Budd**, presenting her Broadway World Award winning show, **“They Wrote The Songs: Remembering Mr. Sinatra.”** Called “The

Consummate Singer” by the *NY Times*, Julie Budd has enjoyed a multi-faceted career that ranges from television to film, the New York stage and symphonies nationwide. On this centennial birthday of Frank Sinatra, Julie performs an evening of the greatest songs from the most celebrated writers and entertainers, including selections from Burt Bacharach and Hal David, Elton John, Andrew Lloyd Webber and shows like *The Wiz*.

The busy season wraps up on Sunday, December 13, with a matinee performance with **One Desire** as they present “**A Gospel Christmas Celebration.**” Since 1999, One Desire has been performing as a miraculous collective after what was supposed to be just one evening as a group. Sixteen years later, the group is still going strong with acclaim and faith. Join us for a Gospel Christmas Celebration as One Desire shares their joyful song and performance in the spirit of the holiday season.

A world of stellar entertainment...very close to home, the Berrie Center has exceptional seating, affordable ticket prices and free parking. For tickets and more information on these fall 2015 events, plus a sneak peak of spring 2016 events, call the Berrie Center Box Office at 201-684-7844, or order online at <http://www.ramapo.edu/berriecenter/>