Friday, October 9, 7:30 PM EDT

A PIANO, A SONG, AND A PINK MARTINI
THOMAS LAUDERDALE AND CHINA FORBES

Moss Arts Center
HomeStage Series
A PIANO, A SONG, AND A PINK MARTINI
THOMAS LAUDERDALE AND CHINA FORBES

Moderated by Margaret Lawrence, director of programming, Moss Arts Center

Songs to be announced during the performance
Biographies

THOMAS LAUDERDALE

Raised on a plant nursery in rural Indiana, Pink Martini bandleader Thomas M. Lauderdale began piano lessons at age six with Patricia Garrison. When his family moved to Portland in 1982, Lauderdale began studying with Sylvia Killman, who to this day continues to serve as his coach and mentor. He has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras and ensembles, including the Oregon Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, Portland Youth Philharmonic, Chamber Music Northwest, and several collaborations with Oregon Ballet Theatre.

In 2008 he played Gershwin’s Piano Concerto in F with the Oregon Symphony under the direction of Christoph Campestrini. Lauderdale returned as soloist with the Oregon Symphony in multiple concerts in 2011, and again in 2015, under the direction of Carlos Kalmar. In 2017 he and his partner, Hunter Noack, created and performed a dazzling, rhapsodic two-piano arrangement of George Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue with choreographer Nicolo Fonte for Oregon Ballet Theatre.

Active in Oregon politics since a student at U.S. Grant High School (where he was student body president), Lauderdale served under Portland Mayor Bud Clark and Oregon Governor Neil Goldschmidt. In 1991 he worked under Portland City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury on the drafting and passage of the city’s civil rights ordinance. He graduated with honors from Harvard with a degree in history and literature in 1992. He spent most of his collegiate years, however, in cocktail dresses, taking on the role of “cruise director...” throwing waltzes with live orchestras and ice sculptures, disco masquerades with gigantic pineapples on wheels, midnight swimming parties, and operating a Tuesday night coffeehouse called Café Mardi.

Instead of running for political office, Lauderdale founded Pink Martini in 1994 to play political fundraisers for progressive causes such as civil rights, the environment, affordable housing, and public broadcasting. In addition to his work with Pink Martini, Lauderdale has most recently completed two long-awaited collaborations with dear friends. In 2018 he completed Love for Sale, an album of jazz standards with singer and civil rights leader Kathleen Saadat. In 2019 Lauderdale and members of Pink Martini collaborated on a new release with the international singing sensation Meow Meow. The album, Hotel Amour—the culmination
THOMAS LAUDERDALE (continued)
of almost a decade of work—features guest appearances by Rufus Wainwright, The von Trapps, Barry Humphries (of Dame Edna fame), and the inimitable late French pianist and composer Michel Legrand.

Lauderdale currently serves on the boards of the Oregon Symphony, Pioneer Courthouse Square, the Oregon Historical Society, Confluence Project with Maya Lin, and the Derek Rieth Foundation. He lives with his partner in downtown Portland, Oregon.

CHINA FORBES

China Forbes was born and raised in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she graduated cum laude from Harvard and was awarded the Jonathan Levy Prize for “most promising actor” in 1992. Forbes appeared in New York regional theatre and off-off Broadway productions, earning her Equity card alongside future stars of stage and screen such as Norm Lewis, Peter Jacobson, and Rainn Wilson.

Forbes and her first band played regularly at CBGB’s Gallery, the Mercury Lounge, and Brownies in New York City. Her first solo album, Love Handle, was released in 1995, and she was chosen to sing Ordinary Girl, the theme song to the TV show Clueless.

In 1995 she was plucked from New York City by Harvard classmate Thomas Lauderdale to sing with Pink Martini and has since co-written many of the band’s most beloved songs with Lauderdale, including Je ne veux pas travailler, Lilly, Clementine, Let’s Never Stop Falling in Love, Over the Valley, and A Snowglobe Christmas, which can be heard on Pink Martini’s holiday album, Joy to the World. Her original song, Hey Eugene, is the title song of Pink Martini’s third album. She sang Qué Será Será over the opening and closing credits of Jane Campion’s film, In the Cut, and her original song The Northern Line appears at the end of sister Maya Forbes’ directorial debut, Infinitely Polar Bear (Sony Pictures Classics). Both films star Mark Ruffalo.

Forbes has performed songs in over 20 languages and has sung duets
Go Deeper

Founder, bandleader, and pianist Thomas M. Lauderdale describes Pink Martini’s eclectic repertoire as an embodiment of its commitment to inclusion and diplomacy: “We’re very much an American band, but we spend a lot of time abroad and therefore have the incredible diplomatic opportunity to represent a broader, more inclusive America... the America which remains the most heterogeneously populated country in the world... composed of people of every country, every language, every religion. Except for Native Americans, all of us are immigrants from every country, of every language, of every religion.”

How were these dual missions evident in Pink Martini’s HomeStage program? What’s the unique value of experiencing this ensemble’s work, remotely, right now?
In the Galleries

We’re so pleased to welcome you back for another season of exciting and evocative exhibitions in the Moss Arts Center galleries!

JASON MIDDLEBROOK: ANOTHER WORLD
Through Sat., Nov. 21
Ruth C. Horton Gallery

American visual artist Jason Middlebrook envisions, creates, and then digitally renders a new 15-by-28-foot site-specific commissioned work of art inspired by the soaring architecture of the Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre. This panoramic work invites viewers into another place—a place of inspiration, visual complexity, and delight.

ART AND SOCIAL CONSCIENCE
Calling attention to sociopolitical issues and the need for change

CAUSE COLLECTIVE:
IN SEARCH OF THE TRUTH
Through Sat., Oct. 10
Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor

A video installation presenting concise thoughts and observations by individuals from across the globe, this exhibition grapples with one of the deepest social, political, and philosophical issues of our times: what the truth is and what it means.

22 STEPS
Through Sat., Nov. 21
Grand Lobby Staircase

Rendered in text on the Moss Arts Center’s stairs is a pertinent statement by Congressman and civil rights leader John Lewis (1940-2020) paying attention to and reflecting our country’s ongoing struggle for social justice.

For the most up to date gallery hours, please visit our website.
Online Resources

Join us for a special series of events featuring notable artists live from their homes and studios. Not another livestream or pre-recorded performance that’s widely available to everyone, our HomeStage series is exclusive to the Moss Arts Center and designed specifically to be presented online. For a full list of our online events and resources, please click here.

Reopening Updates

The health and wellness of our community is our top priority, and you can be assured that we are doing everything we can to keep you and our staff safe and healthy. Find more information about our re-opening plans here.

Box Office Hours
Wednesday-Friday, 10 AM-5 PM
Saturday, 10 AM-4 PM

For more information, please call the box office at 540-231-5300 during these hours, or email us anytime at mossartscenter@vt.edu.

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The Moss Center acknowledges the Tutelo and Monacan people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognizes their continuing connection to the land, water, and air that Virginia Tech consumes. We pay respect to the Tutelo and Monacan Nations, and to their elders past, present, and emerging.

We also acknowledge the university’s historical ties to the indentured and enslaved whose labors built this institution. We pay respect to these people for their contributions to Virginia Tech.

As you engage with one another and the arts we present, we invite you to reflect on the history of this space and its possibilities for reconciliation, truth, and humanity. In the spirit of Ut Prosim, let this acknowledgment be but a single step in the Moss Arts Center’s commitment to these values.
The Moss Arts Center presents

HOME STAGE

An exclusive series of online performances and conversations—live in the comfort of your own home.

Mon., Oct. 12, 7:30 PM EDT

And So We Walked
DeLanna Studi and the Trail of Tears

Fri., Oct. 23, 7:30 PM EDT

The Treasures of Fiddlers
Mark and Maggie O’Connor

Thurs., Oct. 29, 7:30 PM EDT

Behind the Scenes with
Choreographer Ephrat Asherie

Fri., Nov. 6, 7 PM EST

Javaad Alipoor
The Believers Are But Brothers
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Our community needs the arts to lift us up and bring us together, and artists need the support of arts organizations and audiences to keep their work alive and relevant. Your continued support of the Moss Arts Center is critical.

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