

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER
FALL GALA 2007:
BEST OF THE BIG BANDS

Guest Artist Biographies

PAUL ANKA (*Vocals*), is one of this century's most successful entertainers and songwriters, with awards and accomplishments that are unsurpassed. This year marks the icon's 50th anniversary in music; to commemorate the occasion he has recorded one of his most heartfelt and personal albums to date, *Classic Songs, My Way*. The album was Anka's first recording for the Decca label and was released this past August. Arranged for big band in the vein of his last disc, the critically acclaimed, Gold Certified, *Rock Swings*; the new CD showcases Anka's unmistakable vocals and his uncanny ability to make any song his own with style and panache. To date, Anka has recorded 125 albums including over 10 albums in Japanese, German, Spanish, French, and Italian, composing songs culturally tailored to each country. He has sold over 40 million albums, CDs and singles worldwide. Among his Billboard chart stats in the U.S. are three #1 songs, "Diana," "Lonely Boy," and "You're Having My Baby," as well as 22 Top 20 hits. At 65, Anka shows no sign of slowing down. He works not for fun, not to eat, but because one must. However, these days he works when he wants to work, where he wants to work. "I perform because I still need to," he says. "It's one of those things that's in your blood. Because, in the beginning, people didn't come to see me because I was a performer. They came to see me because I had a hit song. Now they come because they know I'll give them a performance like no one else."

EARTHA KITT (*Vocals*), is an international star who gives new meaning to the word "versatile." She has distinguished herself in film, theater, cabaret, music, and on television. Miss Kitt is one of only a handful of performers to be nominated for a Tony (three times), the GRAMMY® (twice), and an Emmy Award. She enthralled New York nightclub audiences during her extended stays at The Café Carlyle and made a triumphant return to this epitome of chic with a recent sold out run. That performance has been captured in her newest recording, *Eartha Kitt, Live At The Carlyle*. Miss Kitt's distinctive voice has enthralled an entirely new generation of fans. Young fans loved her in the role of YZMA the villain in Disney's animated feature *The Emperor's New Groove*, (2001 ANNIE Award for Best Vocal Performance/Animated Feature). Miss Kitt was also featured in the sequel, *The Emperor's New Groove II*, and upcoming episodes of the Saturday morning series based on the film. In 1967, Miss Kitt left her indelible mark as the infamous Catwoman in the television series, *Batman*. She immediately became synonymous with the roll and her trademark growl became a part of pop culture. Live theater is Miss Kitt's passion. In 2001, Broadway critics singled her out with a Tony and Drama Desk nomination for her role as Dolores in George Wolfe's *The Wild Party*. Over the last few years, she has starred in National Tours of *The Wizard Of Oz* and Rogers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella*. In December 2003, Miss Kitt dazzled Broadway audiences as Liliane Le Fleu in the revival of *Nine, The Musical*. In December 2004, she appeared as The Fairy Godmother in The New York City Opera production of *Cinderella*.

at Lincoln Center. Most recently she starred in the off-Broadway production of *Mimi Le Duck* (2006).

FANTASIA (*Vocals*) gained international stardom at the age of 22 when she won *American Idol* in May 2004. She has since released two critically acclaimed albums on J Records, *Free Yourself* (November 2004) and *FANTASIA* (December 2006), selling over 2.4 million copies. Fantasia is currently starring to much acclaim in the Broadway production of *The Color Purple*. She has earned more than 20 award nominations and wins including nods from the GRAMMY® Awards, American Music Awards, and more. She became the first artist in *Billboard* Hot 100 chart history to debut at #1 with her debut single "I Believe." Fantasia broke records with her *New York Times* best-selling autobiography *Life Is Not A Fairy Tale* (Simon & Schuster, September 2005) and starring in *The Fantasia Barrino Story: Life is Not a Fairytale*, the Debbie Allen-directed Lifetime original movie adaptation of her memoir in August 2006, which is the second highest rated Lifetime movie ever. Fantasia was nominated for a 2007 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Television Movie, Mini-Series or Dramatic Special.