

PRESENTS



# CHRIS WALDEN BIG BAND SONGS OF THE RAT PACK ERA

with guest vocalists **Jane Monheit, Patrick Tuzzolino,  
Nita Whitaker & Billy Valentine**

**OCTOBER 27, 2018**

Bram Goldsmith Theater

*The concert runs 1 hour and 45 minutes, including a 15 minute intermission.*



**CHRIS WALDEN** Seven-time Grammy® nominated German-born composer/arranger/conductor Chris Walden has scored more than 40 feature and TV films, and has written more than 1,500 orchestral and big band arrangements for artists including Diana Krall, Josh Groban, Michael Bublé, Aretha Franklin, Paul McCartney, Paul Anka, Stevie Wonder, Rihanna, Barbra Streisand, and orchestras like the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Pops. He has worked closely with producers David Foster, Tommy LiPuma, and Phil Ramone. As a guest conductor, he led the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Boston Pops, Pittsburgh Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Sydney Symphony, Munich Symphony, and many more. Since 1999, he has led his own big band recruited from top studio musicians based in Los Angeles. He most recently wrote arrangements for the Academy Awards (Oscars®), arranged for and conducted the Kennedy Center Honors and arranged the National Anthem for Jennifer Hudson's performance at the SUPER BOWL XLIII. His film credits as a composer include *The Terror of Halloween's Eve* and *King Of Herrings*. For many years Walden worked as arranger for *American Idol* and the *Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. He has been musical director on many TV shows and series, and has worked on more than 150 CDs. As an arranger and bandleader he has worked with jazz artists including Michael Brecker, Peter Erskine, Tierney Sutton, Arturo Sandoval, and the Count Basie Orchestra. Walden began writing compositions and arrangements at the age of 16 for local high school bands. After graduating at 19, he joined the German National Youth Jazz Orchestra as a trumpet player. At the age of 21, while he was studying composition and arranging at the University of Cologne, he started writing arrangements for German radio big bands and radio symphony orchestras. As assistant to his mentor Peter Herbolzheimer, Walden arranged music for the OSCAR® nominated film *Schtonk*. After receiving two master's degrees in music, Walden conducted both the RIAS Big Band in Berlin and the Frankfurt Radio Big Band, served as musical director for the televised German Movie Award Show for four years, and composed music for German films and TV before emigrating to Los Angeles at the age of 29. Although Walden learned composing, arranging, and orchestrating the traditional way, with pencil and paper, he explored the possibilities of computers for sequencing and notation early on. As a result he prefers to

orchestrate, program, and conduct his music himself. He has served as trustee on the national board of the Recording Academy and past president of ASMAC (American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers.)



**JANE MONHEIT**, born in 1977 in New York to a family of musicians, has been singing professionally for most of her forty years. In addition to releasing ten studio albums, two DVDS, and appearing as a guest on countless albums, television shows and film soundtracks, she has also toured internationally since the age of twenty. Deeply influenced by all forms of American music, she has focused on the *Great American Songbook*, collaborating with musical luminaries such as Nicholas Payton, Ivan Lins, Tom Harrell, Terence Blanchard, Christian McBride, and arrangers such as Jorge Calandrelli and Vince Mendoza. Her most recent release, *The Songbook Sessions: Ella Fitzgerald*, celebrates her greatest influence, joining traditional and modern interpretive styles in a deeply personal way. Jane resides in Los Angeles with her family, teaches, and continues to tour both as a headliner and as a guest artist.



**PATRICK TUZZOLINO** is a critically acclaimed jazz vocalist, pianist, guitarist, composer, and jazz producer. Patrick began performing with seasoned jazz musicians in his native New York during the 1970s, and continued to hone his craft in live venues throughout the West Coast since moving to California in the early 1980s. Fans and fellow musicians love Patrick for his extraordinary generosity both on stage and in the studio; Patrick gets inside the music and takes everybody with him. Patrick can easily step out of the jazz genre as both a composer and performer. This versatility can be heard on the diverse film and television soundtracks he has contributed to over the past 20 years. Many of his songs continue to be used in film and other media on an ongoing basis. In 2002 he won a 2nd place Maddy Award for his vocal work on the "Do it eBay" campaign. Patrick's recording of the song *It's Just a Question of Time* is a permanent part of the Animoto music library, and has been used by countless businesses and organizations for marketing and other endeavors.

About the Artists



**NITA WHITAKER** is a favorite singer of legendary producer David Foster, and has sung with some of the most famous voices of our time. Having toured with Andrea Bocelli as a guest duet artist, as well as a featured vocalist on tour with jazz trumpeter Chris Botti, Nita has performed for tens of thousands as well as hundreds in her own intimate one woman shows, charity galas and corporate events. A former Miss Louisiana and Grand Champion Hall of Fame *Star Search* Winner, Nita's superb vocals blends jazz, pop, and classical into her own unique sound. She has performed on stage including four world premiere musicals: *Ragtime*, *Ten Commandments the Musical*, *Breaking Through* at Pasadena Playhouse, and most recently *Born For This*. She has recorded 4 independent records, appeared in movies, television shows and multiple studio recordings. Nita penned an award-winning memoir entitled: *Finding My Voice*, started a 501c3 non-profit in [worldwithbooks.org](http://worldwithbooks.org), that has given nearly 6000 underserved children new books. She is the mother of two beautiful emerging stars, Skye and Liisi LaFontaine. [nitawhitaker.com](http://nitawhitaker.com)



**BILLY VALENTINE** is a singer/songwriter who has appeared at Herb Alpert's Vibrato Grill Jazz, Casa Del Mar Hotel, Baked Potato, Café Cordiale, Jazz at the Vic, Shutters at the Beach and Spazio. On stage and screen, he's been featured in *The Wiz's* first national tour, *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues* at the Geffen Playhouse and San Diego Rep, *The Five Heartbeats* feature film as lead vocalist, and as television vocalist in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Boston Legal*. He was the opening act for Donny Hathaway and Roberta Flack and lead singer for Young Holt Unltd. His songwriter works are featured on albums including *Family Groove* (Neville Bros) and *My World* (Ray Charles), to name a few. With his brother John (the Valentine Bros), he wrote *Money's Too Tight To Mention*, made famous by Simply Red. In the 70's & 80s, he produced artists like Sly Stone. His CD *Travelin' Light* can be heard on jazz stations across America, and his latest, *Brit Eyed Soul*, is now on iTunes.