

# Boca Happenings

By Hillary Reynolds

## 11th Annual Festival of the Arts Boca, March 2 – 12, 2017, Unveils Extraordinary Program of Artists and Authors

*Festival Celebrates Music in Film, Youth Prodigies and Talent From Around the World*

**Festival of the Arts BOCA** returns to the Mizner Park Amphitheater and the Mizner Park Cultural Arts Center, presented by Schmidt Family Centre for the Arts, **March 2 – 12, 2017**, with a diverse and exciting line-up to celebrate its 11th installation.

“We are so excited to present the 2017 Festival of the Arts BOCA season and we think the audience will be too,” said Charlie Siemon, co-founder and co-producer. “We have stars from all over the world, from Brazil to Indonesia to Mexico and the United States, and famous music from the most beloved films and opera, by the world’s greatest composers. And three of the headliners have a combined age of 45!”

“Our Authors & Ideas Program is extremely varied, exploring areas of politics, the arts, science and fiction,” added Siemon.

On Friday, March 3 at 7 p.m., the Festival will welcome Grammy Award-winning saxophonist **Branford Marsalis** joining **The Symphonia, Boca Raton** conducted by **Constantine Kitsopoulos**, in a program that will include music by John Williams from *Catch Me if You Can*, *Star Wars* and *Harry Potter*.

On Saturday, March 4 at 7:30 p.m., the Festival will feature the most popular opera of all time, *La Bohème*, in a semi-staged version (in Italian with English super titles), with The Symphonia and Kitsopoulos and a stellar cast of young singers. Billed as “Opera for the 99 Percent,” *La Bohème* will be an experience everyone can afford, with tickets starting at \$9.99.

On Sunday, March 5 at 7 p.m., 13-year-old Indonesian jazz piano prodigy, **Joey Alexander**, who wowed Festival-goers last season, returns to Mizner Park Amphitheater in a double bill with 13-year-old Mexican classical pianist **Daniela Liebman**. Accompanied by The Symphonia and Constantine Kitsopoulos, the two teen prodigies will perform a program including Mendelssohn’s Piano Concerto No. 2 and new

symphonic arrangements of Joey Alexander’s music.

A big surprise is in store for the concert Friday, March 10 at 7:30 p.m.: the romantic Violin Concerto in G Minor by Bruch will be performed by a world-renowned **Mystery Violinist**, whose name will be revealed in January. Completing the program with The Symphonia and Maestro Kitsopoulos will be Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1 with wunderkind **Daniel Hsu**, who performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra this past summer.

On Saturday, March 11 at 7:30 p.m., the Festival is proud to present the world premiere of the classic 1963 comedy film *The Pink Panther* with Henry Mancini’s iconic score performed live by the Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra, conducted by Constantine Kitsopoulos.

The Festival’s last performance will take place on Sunday, March 12 at 7 p.m. with three-time Grammy Award-winning **Sergio Mendes & Brasil 2017** in an exclusive South Florida appearance. Widely recognized as one of the most successful Brazilian artists of all time, Sergio Mendes will bring his favorite hits including “Mas Que Nada” to Boca Raton, closing the Festival on a dynamic note.

The Author & Ideas Program welcomes **Jennifer Egan**, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Visit from the Good Squad*; **Bob Mankoff**, cartoon editor for *The New Yorker*; **Jon Meacham**, presidential historian, Pulitzer Prize winner and contributing editor at *Time* magazine; and **Brian Greene**, author of *The Elegant Universe*, theoretical physicist and entertaining communicator of cutting-edge scientific concepts.

Tickets for the 11th Annual Festival of the Arts BOCA range from \$9.99 to \$125 per person and will be available starting November 1, 2016 at [www.festivalboca.org](http://www.festivalboca.org) or by calling (866) 571-ARTS: (866) 571-2787. Multi-event and full Festival packages are also available.

The 11th Annual Festival of the Arts BOCA, South Florida’s premiere literary and performing arts Festival, returns to the Mizner Park Amphitheater and the Mizner Park Cultural Arts Center presented by the Schmidt Family Centre for the Arts March 2 – 12, 2017. A world-class, multi-day cultural arts event, the Festival of the Arts BOCA brings the most sought after jazz artists, classical performers, and authors to South Florida while simultaneously cultivating the stars of tomorrow. For program details and ticket information visit: [www.festivalboca.org](http://www.festivalboca.org).

## Festival of the Arts BOCA to Host Two “Swanky” Events in Celebration of its 11th Annual Line-Up

Festival of the Arts BOCA will host a special screening of the documentary, *Swank Farm*, on November 17 from 7 p.m. – 8 p.m. at the Mizner Park Cultural Arts Center, 201 Plaza Real in Boca Raton, followed by a reception with light refreshments, in celebration of the 11th Annual Festival set for March 2 – 12, 2017.

Admission is free with suggested \$10 donation per person at the door to benefit Festival of the Arts BOCA.

Directed by Judith Olney, *Swank Farm* tells the story about Jodi and Darrin Swank, owners of Palm Beach County’s Swank Farm. After losing their jobs in the post 9/11 recession, the Swanks started new lives as passionate, pioneering, hydroponic farmers. Through hurricanes, near-bankruptcy, the challenges of Florida farming, and life in a trailer home with three growing children, they have emerged as major suppliers of fresh produce to area restaurants and hosts of legendary fundraising affairs – the legendary “Swank Table” events. A lesson in the rewards of giving back to the community.

On Sunday, January 29, Festival of the Arts BOCA’s patrons and supporters are invited to a Chinese New Year “Year of the Rooster” celebration at Swank Farm, 14311 North Road in Loxahatchee, where eight local and nationally known chefs will create multi-course meals with locally sourced ingredients. Tickets are \$200 or \$250 per person. For tickets, visit [www.festivalboca.org](http://www.festivalboca.org) or call (954) 646-8804.

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