



Harris Center

Three Stages at Folsom Lake College

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AN IMAGINED CONCERT WITH JANIS JOPLIN, A WEEK BEFORE HER UNTIMELY DEATH

The National Tour of A Night With Janis Joplin conjures up a concert with Janis, Aretha Franklin, Nina Simone and others.

Mary Bridget Davis - the Tony-nominated Janis from the Broadway run - is featured. A fifth show has been added.

(August 30, 2018, Folsom, CA) Anyone who has heard Janis Joplin knows her immediately — the give-all intensity, the great songs, and that rawly emotive voice. *A Night With Janis Joplin* presents an imagined concert, held a week before her untimely death, with the legendary performer joined by some of her most significant influences — from Aretha Franklin to Nina Simone to Bessie Smith to Odetta. “Exhilarating...Remarkable...A joyful ruckus” (*Washington Post*).

Joplin was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1995 and posthumously given a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. But such honors only made official what rock fans already knew: that she was among the greatest, most powerful singers the form had ever known — and that she’d opened the door for countless artists across the musical spectrum.

Fueled by such unforgettable songs as “Me and Bobby McGee,” “Piece of My Heart,” “Mercedes Benz,” “Cry Baby” and “Summertime,” a remarkable cast and breakout performances, this national tour of *A Night With Janis Joplin*, written and directed by Randy Johnson and starring Mary Bridget Davis, is a musical journey celebrating Janis and her biggest musical influences.

A Night With Janis Joplin comes to Folsom for five shows Friday, October 12, 2018, at 7:30 pm; Saturday, October 13 at 2 pm and 7:30 pm; Sunday, October

14 at 2 pm and **(just added)** 7 pm. Tickets are \$48-\$72; Premium \$78. They are available online at www.harriscenter.net or from Harris Center Ticket Office at 916-608-6888 from 12 noon to 6 pm, Monday through Saturday, and two hours before show time. Parking is included in the price of the ticket. Harris Center is located on the west side of Folsom Lake College campus in Folsom, CA, facing East Bidwell Street.

“A Night With Janis Joplin will rock your world!” (Los Angeles Times). With 25 songs, some performed in their entirety, *A Night with Janis Joplin* is both the story of Janis’s life and a reminiscence of a kind — about the musicians that informed her work and helped form the star she became. “One of the most amazing and emotional experiences offered on any Los Angeles stage so far this year” (*Backstage*). Janis Joplin passed on October 4, 1970 — the Folsom performances are presented 47 years, almost to the day, of her tragic demise.

The cast is a notable one. **MARY BRIDGET DAVIES** plays Janis Joplin; she received a Tony Award nomination for Best Lead Actress in a Musical for her Broadway performance as Janis in *A Night with Janis Joplin*. A noted interpreter of Joplin’s music, she has toured in Europe with Joplin’s original band, Big Brother and the Holding Company.

ASHLEY TÁMAR DAVIS plays Aretha Franklin, Nina Simone, Blues Woman, Chantel; she is known as the muse and protégé of Prince and gained notoriety for co-writing their Grammy Award–nominated duet, “Beautiful, Loved and Blessed.” She appeared on NBC’s *The Voice*, debuted in the first national tour of *Motown: The Musical*, and has performed in numerous Tyler Perry/Lionsgate productions.

TAWNY DOLLEY (Etta James, Chantel, Joplinaire) has shared the stage with musical artists Estelle, Solange, Rachel Platten, John Legend, and the legendary band Vintage Trouble. She’s performed on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *The Wendy Williams Show*, *The Late Late Show*, *The Talk*, *The Late Show*, and *The Tonight Show*.

JENNIFER LEIGH WARREN (Blues Singer, Lead Chantel, Joplinaire) played the original Alice’s Daughter *Big River* (“How Blest We Are” was written for her by Roger Miller); she was the original Crystal in the Alan Menken/Howard Ashman hit *Little Shop of Horrors*.

AURIANNA ANGELIQUE (Odetta, Bessie Smith, Chantel) is a native of southern California. Some of her most recent credits include: Deloris in *Sister Act*, *Smokey Joes Cafe*, and many more.

But for all the talent on the Harris Center stage, *A Night With Janis Joplin* belongs to Janis Joplin. That voice — high, husky, earthy, explosive — remains among the most distinctive and galvanizing in pop history. Janis Joplin didn’t

merely possess a great instrument; she threw herself into every syllable. She claimed the blues, soul, gospel, and rock with unquestionable authority and verve, fearlessly inhabiting psychedelic guitar jams, back-porch roots and everything in between. Her volcanic performances left audiences stunned and speechless, while her sexual magnetism, world-wise demeanor, and flamboyant style shattered every stereotype about female artists — and virtually invented the “rock mama” paradigm.

Born in Port Arthur, Texas on January 19, 1943, Joplin fell under the sway of Leadbelly, Bessie Smith and Big Mama Thornton in her teens, and the authenticity of these voices strongly influenced Janis’ decision to become a singer. A self-described “misfit” in high school, she suffered virtual ostracism, but dabbled in folk music with her friends and painted. She briefly attended college in Beaumont and Austin but was more drawn to blues legends and beat poetry than her studies; soon she dropped out and, in 1963, headed for San Francisco, eventually finding herself in the notoriously drug-fueled Haight Ashbury neighborhood. In 1966 Janis joined the Haight-based psychedelic-rock band Big Brother and the Holding Company. Her adoption of a wild sartorial style — with frizzed-out hair, bangles, and extravagant attire that winked, hippie-style, at the burlesque era — further spiked her burgeoning reputation.

The band’s increasingly high-profile shows earned them a devoted fan base and serious industry attention; they signed with Columbia Records and released their major-label debut in 1967. Of course, it was Joplin’s seismic presence that caused all the commotion, as evidenced by her shattering performance in June of that year at the Monterey Pop Festival. It was captured for posterity by filmmaker D.A. Pennebaker; in the film, fellow pop star Mama Cass Elliot can be seen mouthing the word, “Wow,” as Joplin tears her way through “Ball And Chain.”

Big Brother’s “Piece of My Heart,” on 1968’s Cheap Thrills LP, shot to the #1 spot, the album sold a million copies in a month, and Joplin became a sensation — earning rapturous praise from *Time* and *Vogue*, appearing on *The Dick Cavett Show* and capturing the imagination of audiences that had never experienced such fiery intensity in a female rock singer. Her departure from Big Brother and emergence as a solo star were inevitable; she put together her own outfit, the Kozmic Blues Band, and in 1969 released *I Got Dem Ol’ Kozmic Blues Again Mama!*, which immediately went gold. That year also saw her give a historic performance at Woodstock.

Joplin assembled a new backup group, the Full Tilt Boogie Band, in 1970; she also joined the Grateful Dead, the Band and other artists for the “Festival Express” railroad tour through Canada. Her musical evolution followed the earthier, rootsier direction of the new decade, as reflected in her final studio album, the landmark *Pearl*. Embracing material such as Kris Kristofferson’s gorgeous ballad “Me and Bobby McGee” and her own a cappella plaint,

“Mercedes Benz,” the disc showcased Joplin’s mastery of virtually all pop genres. The latter song was, along with a phone-message birthday greeting for John Lennon, the last thing she recorded; she died in October of 1970, and *Pearl* was released posthumously the following year. The quadruple-platinum set became the top-selling release of Joplin’s career and, in 2003, was ranked #122 on *Rolling Stone’s* “500 Greatest Albums of All Time.”

This Year Marks Seven Seasons of Great Shows. Up Close. In Folsom!

The Harris Center for the Arts at Folsom Lake College brings the community together to share in cultural experiences featuring the work of artists from throughout the region and around the world. Built and operated by the Los Rios Community College District, the \$50 million, state-of-the-art regional performing arts center boasts three intimate venues with outstanding acoustics, an art gallery, a recording studio, elegant teaching spaces, plenty of safe parking and all the other amenities of a world-class performing arts venue. Each year the Center hosts over 400 events attracting more than 150,000 annually.

Event Summary

What: ***A Night With Janis Joplin: The National Tour***
When: Friday, October 12, 2018, at 7:30 pm; Saturday, October 13 at 2 pm and 7:30 pm; Sunday, October 14 at 2 pm and 7 pm
Where: Harris Center for the Arts at Folsom Lake College
10 College Parkway
Folsom, CA 95630
Ticket Price: \$48-\$72; Premium \$78
Tickets: www.HarrisCenter.net

Tickets are available online at www.HarrisCenter.net or from Harris Center Ticket Office at 916-608-6888 from noon to 6 pm, Monday through Saturday, and two hours before show time.

For interview requests, contact Paul Dorn at paul.dorn@harriscenter.net.

High resolution images available at <http://bit.ly/2iacUNX> (This link to the Press Room at www.HarrisCenter.net has been updated).