

## THE BEST OF SECOND CITY

Saturday, October 19, 2024, at 7:30pm Tryon Festival Theatre

# **PROGRAM**

## THE BEST OF SECOND CITY

The Second City is celebrating 65 years of legendary laughs! Showcasing some of our audience's favorite songs, sketches, and characters written on our stages by some of our illustrious alumni, including Catherine O'Hara, Tina Fey, Keegan-Michael Key, Amber Ruffin, Stephen Colbert, Tim Meadows, Bill Murray, Tim Robinson, Joan Rivers, Eugene Levy, Adam McKay, and so many more... With material handpicked from our iconic comedy archive and brought to life by our all-star ensemble, see for yourself why The Second City continues to be the world's most influential name in comedy for sixty-five years and counting.



## **CAST**

Rich Alfonso Anna Bortnick\* Karl Bradley\* Kennedy Baldwin\* Claire Favret\* Ross Taylor

#### STAGE MANAGER

Bree Bartman\*

#### MUSIC DIRECTOR

Tony Belsito

#### DIRECTOR

Anne Libera

This performance will include a 20-minute intermission.



#### THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING THIS PERFORMANCE

With deep gratitude, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts thanks all 2024–25 Patron Sponsors and Corporate and Community Sponsors, and all those who have invested in Krannert Center.

In addition to performance sponsors, Krannert Center is deeply grateful for the generosity and steadfast support from our season-long patrons and corporate and community partners showcased in the Philanthropy & Advocacy section of our program book. These relationships form the cornerstone of our ability to bring unforgettable performances and enriching experiences to our audiences.

This event is supported by:



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# ABOUT THE SECOND CITY

## It all started with children's games.

Rooted in the groundbreaking improvisational games of Viola Spolin, The Second City opened its doors on a snowy Chicago night in December of 1959, and a comedy revolution began. The small cabaret theater has grown to become the most influential and prolific comedy empire in the world, developing an entirely unique way of creating art and fostering generation after generation of superstars.

Co-founded by Spolin's son, Paul Sills, along with Howard Alk and Bernie Sahlins, The Second City was experimental and unconventional in its approach to both theater and comedy. Almost immediately, alumni of The Second City, including Alan Arkin, Joan Rivers, Fred Willard, Gilda Radner, Dan Aykroyd, and John Belushi, launched the theater into the international spotlight.

In 1976, Second City launched *SCTV*, which has been hailed as one of the greatest sketch comedy series of all time. The two-time Emmy winner featured an all-star cast made up of Martin Short, Andrea Martin, Catherine O'Hara, John Candy, Eugene Levy, Dave Thomas, Joe Flaherty, and Rick Moranis.

Today, The Second City is home to a world-class entertainment company, continuing to produce premier talent in all three of its locations—Chicago, Toronto, and Hollywood—and entertaining more than one million audience members a year. From Steve Carell to Keegan-Michael Key, Stephen Colbert to Tina Fey, Chris Farley to Mike Myers, Second City's imprint is all over film, television, and beyond.

In addition to its stages, Second City Touring Companies perform electrifying revues and original productions across North America and abroad. Our creative collaborations have produced thrilling and critically acclaimed work in partnership with organizations like the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Norwegian Cruise Line, the New York Comedy Festival, and the Chicago Bulls.

Second City Training Centers in Chicago, Toronto, Hollywood, and online teach thousands of students a year, and the opening of the Harold Ramis Film School in 2016 gave the world the first film school dedicated to comedy. Finally, Second City Works is an industry leader in bringing improv-based methodologies to businesses and organizations of all types.

We hope you enjoy the show . . . after all, it's been almost 65 years in the making.

# **PROFILES**



Rich Alfonso (Ensemble, he/him) is excited to be a part of the Touring Company along with these amazing people! He was a recipient of the 2016 NBC/Universal Bob Curry Fellowship and has worked as a cast member for The Second

City's Black History Month Show, touring aboard Norwegian Cruise Line and as an understudy for the ETC Resident Stage. Other credits include being a featured performer in the 2019 NBC Break Out Comedy Festival, and his solo show at the Annoyance, *I.C.E. Box*, which was featured on WBEZ Radio and NPR. He is represented by BMG Talent. Follow Rich on Instagram and TikTok @rich\_alfonso



Kennedy Baldwin (Ensemble) is an improviser, writer, and actor born and raised in Chicago. They attended Western Illinois University where they studied music business. She started taking improv classes at The Second

City at the beginning of 2016 and has been in love with it ever since! In 2019, they completed the Severn Darden Graduate Program and in 2020 she was a recipient of the Bob Curry Fellowship at Second City. They now produce the smallprov show and perform on The Sunday Show at Logan Square Improv.



Anna Bortnick (Ensemble, she/her) is an actor and improviser originally from Boston, Massachusetts. She received her BFA from Boston University and has trained at the Eugene O'Neill National

Theater Institute. Anna also performs with the musical improv company Baby Wants Candy and Shamilton (Edinburgh Fringe, The Second City) and is a current resident company member at iO Theater. www.annabortnick.com



Karl Bradley (Ensemble, he/him) is a writer and performer living in Chicago. A Georgia native, he performs regularly at the Annoyance Theatre in the sketch group Cigarette Sandwich. Alright, enjoy the show that is about to start.

Wait, why are you still reading this? The show is on the stage. You won't miss anything if you stop reading now. The secrets of the universe are not hidden here, and if they were, would you believe them? Karl is from Georgia. See, I told you.



Claire Favret (Ensemble, she/her) writes and performs all around Chicago. She has contributed headlines for The Onion and Clickhole, co-wrote an episodic comedy podcast/radio play called A Winkle In Time, and has co-created many

sketches with the sketch comedy group Cigarette Sandwich. On social media she's @clairefavs.



Ross Taylor (Ensemble, he/him) is originally from St. James, Missouri and studied theater at Mizzou. Favorite Second City credits include: National Touring Company, performing at the Kennedy Center and Lyric Opera and understudying

the e.t.c. Ross teaches improv at the Second City and Annoyance Theater, and performs weekly at

the Annoyance with Missed Call and Tuesday Musical Improv. @rosstaylornyc

**Tony Belsito** (Musical Director) is the one behind the piano. Hello!

**Bree Bartman** (Stage Manager, she/her) is the stage manager for this production! For the past 10 years, she's been hiding in the shadows at several theaters around Chicago, including The Second City and the long-running show *Bye Bye Liver*. When she's not at Second City, you can find her slinging sass at Ed Debevic's! Please enjoy the show!!!

#### LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The University of Illinois System carries out its mission in its namesake state, which includes the traditional territory of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them.

This acknowledgment and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.



# **INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF THE ARTS**

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## MAKING IT POSSIBLE

## Support Krannert Center Today

## Where Creativity Ignites Passion

Krannert Center is committed to providing an inclusive space where students, community members, visiting artists, and friends can gather for enriching performances and cultural experiences. The support of our donors and friends enables the Center to produce creative programming that ignites a passion for the arts that is invaluable.

Together, we can ensure that students and the greater community continue to have access to transformative performing arts experiences.

Please consider making a gift to Krannert Center today. With your help, we can sustain the high level of excellence you have come to expect, while strengthening the lasting impact of the Center's work.

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## KRANNERT CENTER PHILANTHROPY AND ADVOCACY

Krannert Center's dedication to the celebration, exploration, and cross-pollination of the arts is advanced through these special programs. Donors who champion such work make it possible for more people in our community to participate in life-affirming experiences.

#### 2024-2025 ADVANCEMENT COUNCIL

This passionate group of arts advocates assists Krannert Center staff in expanding the Center's leadership and financial resources.

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#### 2024-2025 KRANNERT CENTER YOUTH SERIES

The Youth Series features daytime performances, online media created by performing artists, and educational activities designed especially for pre-K through high-school-aged students. Children who participate learn to appreciate the performing arts, gain knowledge, build social skills, and integrate live performance experiences into classroom work. Thank you to our Youth Series sponsors.

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#### Campaign for Young Audiences Lead Sponsors



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A. Mark Neuman

80 years ago, in 1945, members of the United States Armed Forces liberated my father, Rabbi Isaac Neuman, from Ebensee, Austria.

If US soldiers had not been there, I would not be here.

#### **KRANNERT SOCIETY**

The University of Illinois, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, and Krannert Center are profoundly grateful for the commitment of Krannert Society members. Through donations, pledges, and residual gifts of \$1 million or more, these open-hearted visionaries help build a thriving community and encourage cross-cultural understanding. Their support sustains the extraordinary vision of Herman and Ellnora Krannert to create a vibrant gathering place like no other.



VALENTINE JOBST III (1904-1993) March 1994



CLAIR MAE ARENDS (1912-2000)
G. WILLIAM ARENDS (1914-1997)
March 2000



MARILYN PFLEDERER ZIMMERMAN (1929-1995) VERNON K. ZIMMERMAN (1928-1996) November 2003



HELEN FARMER JAMES FARMER (1931-2020) April 2014

## **FOELLINGER SOCIETY**

Demonstrating their steadfast dedication to the arts, members of the Foellinger Society have donated or pledged \$500,000 to \$999,999. Because of their generosity, everyone in this community can unite in joyful and engaging experiences. These magnanimous arts lovers celebrate the spirit of Helene Foellinger, whose memorial gift honored her sister, Loretta Foellinger Teeple, and established the Marquee Performance Endowment.



**AVIS HILFINGER** (1915-2004) **DEAN HILFINGER** (1912-2006) April 2000



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University of Illinois President Emeritus and First Lady Stan and Judy Ikenberry have long demonstrated their love for the arts and their deep commitment to enhancing learning experiences for all University of Illinois students. Krannert Center gratefully acknowledges their steadfast support by introducing the Ikenberry Society to recognize donated gifts or pledges of \$250,000 to \$499,999.



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#### **COLWELL SOCIETY**

Dr. John B. Colwell, Pauline Groves Colwell, and R. Forrest Colwell provided critical funding for the Marquee Performance Endowment, and the Colwell Society gratefully acknowledges their invaluable assistance. Members have donated or pledged \$100,000 to \$249,999 for celebrating, preserving, and exploring the arts right here and around the globe.



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#### **DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**

Endowment support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation continues to enhance Krannert Center's presentation of diverse, world-class national and international visiting artistry; supporting the creation of new work; and increasing engagement and collaboration across campus.



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The Illinois Arts Council Agency provides general programing support to ensure that audiences of all ages have direct access to world-class theatre, dance, and music.



#### THE AUGUSTINE FOUNDATION

The Augustine Foundation provides continued major support for ELLNORA | The Guitar Festival.



#### THE STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

The Student Sustainability Committee provided funding for the Krannert Center Audiences Lighting Retrofit Project, which continues to increase energy efficiency, decrease labor requirements, and improve safety conditions.



#### GEORGE A. MILLER ENDOWMENT PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

The George A. Miller Endowment Programs Committee supports CultureTalk and other special collaborative projects.

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Julieanne Ehre, Assistant Director for Programming and Engagement

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