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RENEE OLSTEAD RETURNS TO PASADENA FOR CONCERT BENEFITTING PASADENA JAZZ INSTITUTE'S KIDS PROGRAMS

Concert features Duke Ellington's sophisticated rewrite of Tchaikovsky's holiday classic, Vince Guaraldi's Charlie Brown Christmas and more, with stars including James Tormé, Renee Olstead, Maestro Victor Vener, the Pasadena Jazz Orchestra, Sylvia St. James and the Sacred Nation Gospel Choir. Noted personality Bryan Gallyot hosts the event and future jazz legends the PJI Junior Superstars perform the pre-concert entertainment, setting the stage for some of today's living jazz legends, all the while sharing the Christmas spirit with the community. One night only—Saturday, December 19, 2009 at 7:00pm.

PASADENA, Calif. Paul Lines knows talent when he hears it. He has not only curated many of the most interesting jazz concerts in Los Angeles for the past eight years, but under the auspices of the Pasadena Jazz Institute—Lines being the organization's Artistic Director—he's worked tirelessly to bring new talent to the world's attention. In 2003, he presented a thirteen year old sensation named Renee Olstead in her singing debut. This year, Ms. Olstead returns to Pasadena to perform Christmas classics including *Santa Baby*, with the Pasadena Jazz Orchestra during *The Nutcracker Swings* benefit for the Pasadena Jazz Institute.

Discovered by Artistic Director Paul Lines, Ms. Olstead made her singing debut with the Pasadena Jazz Orchestra under Lines' direction. Since then, Ms. Olstead has gone on to act in feature films including *The Insider* with Russell Crowe, *End Of Days* with Arnold Schwarzenegger and *13 Going On 30* with Jennifer Garner, she's made a name for herself in television as a co-star of *Still Standing* and her current role in *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*. As a singer, her self-titled debut album received critical acclaim, with no less an expert than Neil Sedaka noting her voice is akin to "Patsy Cline, Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday all wrapped in one" and it went to #1 on the jazz charts. *Skylark*, her follow up, is doing just as well.

"Coming back to Pasadena for this Christmas celebration really makes me feel like I'm coming home musically. It's great to work with Paul and the Pasadena Jazz Orchestra again—they are some of the best musicians in the business. Plus, I get to lend my talents towards helping the organization that took a chance on me and my dreams."

"We're putting on this concert to benefit the Jazz Institute, especially the Kids Camp, which is the program closest to my heart," notes Lines. The Jazz Institute's annual Jazz Camp For Kids has spawned its own roster of tomorrow's talent, the PJI Junior Superstars, who caused a sensation this past summer at the Monterrey Park Jazz Festival. "I've been lucky to have a great career in jazz—but I

wouldn't have gotten to where I have without the help of more experienced musicians who have mentored me and shown me the ropes. When I founded the Jazz Institute, I wanted to continue that tradition and help the next generations of jazz musicians find their way to success.”

What's more, the Jazz Camp has become a “must do” for aspiring jazz musicians throughout the region. This summer, Lines expects well over 500 kids to pass through the program. “We're gearing up for the biggest Jazz Camp ever. One of the new developments for 2009 is that we are expanding our program to help even younger kids. Over the years, I've had so many parents ask for activities geared towards the younger siblings of kids already in the camp. So, we've put together Percussion Discussion—an ensemble for kids aged 6 to 10 to enjoy a hands-on introduction to music. What's more, I'm assembling an amazing array of guest artists to show the kids how to make music like pros.”

Concertgoers will be seated at tables and have the option of purchasing a full service three course meal with their seats for \$35 per person. A self-serve buffet will also be available, with entrées from \$10-\$18. Beverages including wine and a cash bar will also be available. Tickets for the event range from \$30.00 to \$70.00 per seat and can be purchased through Ticketmaster by calling 800 745 3000 or at ticketmaster.com or by visiting nutcrackerswings.com.

Sponsors of the event include Pasadena Entertainment, redwhite+bluezz, *Pasadena Independent*, *Pasadena Weekly* and Waltrip's Music. For more information about *The Nutcracker Swings*, please visit nutcrackerswings.com.

Dedicated to jazz education, preservation and participation, the Pasadena Jazz Institute is a non-profit, community benefit organization that celebrates this uniquely American art form. Known throughout the region for its innovative programming, with series like Jazz On The Terrace and Jazz At Paseo, the Institute has brought some of the area's most exciting jazz artists to thousands of eager music lovers and have set hundreds of young people on their way to incorporating jazz into their lives as performers and listeners since its inception in 2001. Following on the Institute's successful first season of concerts Lines added Jazz Camp For Kids in the summer of 2002 and the Pasadena Jazz Orchestra the following December. In addition to its public concerts, the Institute presents school concerts in the Pasadena Unified School District in order to share the legacy of jazz throughout the Pasadena community. For more information on its concerts and programs, visit the Institute online at pasjazz.org or call 626 398 3344.

Pasadena Entertainment brings the area's best music, venues, wine and event producers together to create incredible events and continue Pasadena's tradition of excellence in community involvement. The company, spearheaded by André Vener, has produced many noted events in the past year including the Freedom Concert, Cal Phil Festival on the Green, Pasadena Wine Festival, an exhibition match between the Los Angeles Galaxy and FC Barcelona and a free concert by the Spazmatics on the steps of the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. For more information, visit pasadenaentertainment.com or call 626 304 0333.

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