



**Contact**

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**The New South Orange Performing Arts Center (SOPAC)  
Announces Inaugural Season Featuring Kickoff Gala Event  
November 16 with Paquito D’Rivera, Yo-Yo Ma, & Imani Winds**

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**The Jewel in The Crown of South Orange’s Revitalization Will Showcase  
Music, Dance, Family Events, Comedy, Theater and Speaker Series**

(September 25, South Orange, NJ) : The new South Orange Performing Arts Center (SOPAC) is creating quite a stir in its hometown with the excitement of the building nearing completion and the recent announcement that a global world music program featuring Paquito D’Rivera and Yo-Yo Ma will kick off the Center’s inaugural 2006-2007 season. Now that the signage is up, the fun is about to begin for those in Essex, Union and Morris counties and beyond!

Located adjacent to the downtown South Orange NJ Transit train station and behind the central business district, SOPAC is made up of one live performance theater with 415 seats and five cinemas with 600 seats that will be operated by Clearview Cinemas. The cinemas are scheduled to preview from October 27-31 with special \$1 movies with all proceeds going to the new arts center. On November 1, both entities will officially celebrate their openings with a joint ribbon-cutting ceremony. Each facility will officially open with programming on November 3.

**Barbara Stoller (of South Orange), Chair of SOPAC’s Board of Governors**, comments:

SOPAC connects to a trend happening nationwide. Communities are creating their own arts centers to anchor cultural corridors, to spur development and to serve as community gathering places. Like BAM in Brooklyn, SOPAC is a unique facility that will offer exciting live performances and quality cinematic experiences and also like BAM did for Brooklyn, SOPAC can serve as a catalyst, further establishing South Orange as a dynamic cultural destination for residents and visitors from near and far alike.

**SOPAC Executive Director, Jessica Finkelberg (of Jersey City)**, not only considered the unique sensibilities of the South Orange/Maplewood (SOMA) area in programming the season but also thought beyond the local community to what would appeal to those from Summit, Orange, Montclair and even from Manhattan and Brooklyn.

Here in SOMA, there is a great awareness of and participation level in the full spectrum of arts – music, dance, theater. That made programming the season invigorating as did thinking of the audiences we hope to attract from beyond our home area. We fully expect that our special events, like the two-person Anton Chekhov play with Olympia Dukakis, will motivate those from Manhattan and Montclair to get on the train or drive the 15-20 minutes it takes to get to our door. It’s going to be quite an amazing first season. The thought of hearing Paquito D’Rivera and Yo-Yo Ma in our intimate theater still gives me the chills and is a great kick-off.

After the Center’s official joint grand opening, SOPAC will launch its dynamic first season with its fundraiser gala November 16 featuring a global list of great musicians: Latin jazz saxophonist, Paquito D’Rivera, Chinese cellist Yo-Yo Ma, wind ensemble, Imani Winds, Israeli pianist Alon Yavnai and soprano Brenda Feliciano. Tickets: \$250/\$500/\$750. Season tickets can be ordered through the website as of September 15. Phone (973.313.ARTS) and online sales at [www.sopacnow.org](http://www.sopacnow.org) begin October 3. Box office opens at 1 SOPAC Way November 1.

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Through December, the SOPAC calendar is as follows (*see addendum through May 2007*):

<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>COST</b>
11/03/06 8pm	<b>(C)</b> Stand Up Comedy with opener	Paula Poundstone Early female star comic	\$40
11/5/06 7pm	<b>(M)</b> Richie Havens Singer/Songwriter	Richie Havens <i>*will autograph post-show</i>	\$35
11/08/06 8pm	<b>(M/E) Cast Party</b> Broadway open mic Jams	Jim Caruso's Famous Birdland Monday night party	\$35
11/10/06 8pm	<b>(M)</b> Jeff Daniels Singer/Songwriter	Jeff Daniels, Actor & Musician	\$45
11/11/06 8pm <b>*Q&amp;A</b>	<b>(M)</b> "Monk on Coltrane"	T.S. Monk Jazz Composer/Drummer	\$35
11/12/06 3 & 7pm	<b>(M)</b> Rachele Ferrell Vocalist / Composer	Rachele Ferrell Jazz /Pop /Gospel	\$40
11/14/06 8pm	<b>(M)</b> Seton Hall University presents	Musicians from Marlboro Chamber / Voice	\$20/15/8
<b>11/16 – 8PM</b> <b>\$250/\$500/\$750</b>	<b>(M/E) PAQUITO D'RIVERA, YO-YO MA, Imani Winds, Brenda Feliciano, Alon Yavnai</b> <b>* SOPAC OPENING GALA EVENT : <i>Music of Two Worlds</i></b>		
11/18/06 8pm	<b>(M/E) CD Release: One Meatball:</b> A Concert & Dessert Event	Christine Lavin & Friends Folk Singer / Songwriter	\$40
11/19/06 11am & 2pm	<b>(M/F)</b> Children's Music One of Best Kids' Bands 2006	Dirty Sock Funtime Band From Noggin & Nick Jr	\$18
11/20/06 8pm	<b>(T)</b> SOPAC & <i>What Exit</i> Theater Company present (in Loft)	"Plan B" by Michael Healy Reading of new works	\$10
12/1-3/06 12/6-9/06 8pm Fri/Sat 2pm Sun	<b>(T)</b> Seton Hall University's Theater-in-the-Round presents	The O'Connor Sisters	\$15/12/8
12/10/06 3pm	<b>(M)</b> A Jazzy Holiday	Stacey Kent Jazz / Cabaret vocalist	\$45
12/12/06 8pm	<b>(S)</b> OffStage/OnStage: <i>The Creative Mind</i>	David Stone, Producer "Wicked," "Diary of Anne Frank"	\$10
12/14/06 8pm	<b>(M)</b> Uniquely American Music	Leon Redbone Blues/Ragtime/Jazz	\$35
12/15/06 8pm	<b>(M)</b> Uniquely American Acoustic Music	David Bromberg & Angel Band Country/Swing/Dixieland/Blues	\$35
12/16/06 8pm	<b>(M/R)</b> Handel's Messiah Chamber symphonic ensemble	<b>SOPAC Virtuosi &amp;</b> Bergen County's Pro Art Chorale	\$55
12/17/06 8pm	<b>(T)</b> The Western Wind: <i>A Chanukkah Story</i>	The Western Wind A cappella vocal sextet <i>*Celebrity narrator TBA</i>	\$45

**(M)=music (D)=dance (T)=theater (S)=speaker (C) =comedy (F)=family (E)=event (R)=artist-in-residence**  
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### **SOPAC : THE ESSENTIAL PLACE TO ENJOY THE ARTS**

SOPAC is an intimate live performance space that seats 415, a five-screen cineplex operated by Clearview Cinemas and an open loft space facing South Mountain reservation available for rental to the public. An independent 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization, SOPAC has a 21-member Board of Governors and a full-time executive director. The SOPAC Governors provide the oversight, advocacy and leadership, and the executive director provides the professional management, operational experience, programming and implementation. The mission of SOPAC is to offer innovative artistic and cultural experiences for diverse audiences within an intimate, inviting environment and to become the preferred performing arts center in its region. Currently SOPAC is engaged in its Capital Campaign to support its scheduled November 2006 opening. **WWW.SOPACNOW.ORG**