

REDEFINING A GREAT
Arts EXPERIENCE

HONORING
Diana Hart

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
AWARD TO
John Lee

ENTERTAINMENT
Michael Feinstein

Nov
06
2021

SOPAC
gala



Michael Feinstein has built a dazzling career over the last three decades bringing the music of the Great American Songbook to the world. From recordings that have earned him five Grammy Award nominations to his Emmy nominated PBS-TV specials, his acclaimed NPR series and concerts spanning the globe – in addition to his appearances at iconic venues such as The White House, Buckingham Palace, Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall and Sydney Opera House – his work as an educator and archivist defines

Feinstein as one of the most important musical forces of our time.

In 2007, he founded the Great American Songbook Foundation, dedicated to celebrating the art form and preserving it through educational programs, Master Classes, and the annual High School Songbook Academy. This summer intensive open to students from across the country has produced graduates who have gone on to record acclaimed albums and appear on television programs such as NBC's "America's Got Talent." Michael serves on the Library of Congress' National Recording Preservation Board, an organization dedicated to ensuring the survival, conservation and increased public availability of America's sound recording heritage.

Michael was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, where he started playing piano by ear as a 5-year-old. After graduating from high school, he moved to Los Angeles when he was 20. The widow of legendary concert pianist-actor Oscar Levant introduced him to Ira Gershwin in July 1977. Feinstein became Gershwin's assistant for six years, which earned him access to numerous unpublished Gershwin songs, many of which he has since performed and recorded.

Gershwin's influence provided a solid base upon which Feinstein evolved into a captivating performer, composer and arranger of his own original music. He also has become an unparalleled interpreter of music legends such as Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer, Duke Ellington and Harry Warren. Feinstein has received three honorary doctorates.

Through his live performances, recordings, film and television appearances, and his songwriting (in collaboration with Alan and Marilyn Bergman, Lindy Robbins, Bob Merrill and Marshall Barer), Feinstein is an all-star force in American music.