CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF IMPACT

For 40 years the LBC has been serving the community as a home for arts, entertainment, and education programs. We are a community gathering place, an event center, a destination for public art, and a home to resident companies.

In the 1970s, 12 civic minded families founded the Luther Burbank Memorial Foundation and purchased the former Christian Life Center to house the Santa Rosa Symphony and present arts and entertainment programs. The doors opened in 1981 with debut performances by the Symphony and artists such as Anne Murray and Steve Allen. Through the years LBC has continued to present established artists such as Bonnie Raitt, John Lee Hooker, Johnny Cash, and Ringo Starr as well as catching stars on the rise such as Blake Shelton, John Legend, P!nk, and Keith Urban.

“The LBC has always understood the importance of presenting a wide-range of genres and highlighting various cultural experiences—from traditional dance, to world music, to today’s popular artists, and everything in between. The Center believes in the power of the arts and the significance of a shared experience through live performance. However, what people may not realize is how much the organization is also dedicated to education. We are so much more than a concert hall,” shares President & CEO Rick Nowlin.

With over 20 programs designed to serve schools, educators, and students, education is essential to the LBC’s mission. “We’ve seen how the arts transforms lives and builds confidence, collaboration, problem solving, and leadership skills. Programs like our free instrument lending library, reading initiative for 3rd graders, live performance for schools, and our nationally-recognized arts integration residencies serve over 50,000
students annually. Our workshops for teachers and teaching artists fill a gap by bringing the arts back into classrooms," says Director of Education & Community Engagement, Ashleigh Worley.

Providing access and opportunity remain the key pillars behind the Center’s education programming. While we work to keep costs as low as possible, we understand that sometimes this is not enough to break down the barrier of accessibility. For this reason, scholarships are available for all of the education programs that we offer that aren't already free of charge.

Extending beyond our campus, LBC has brought visual arts, dance, and mariachi camps into local neighborhoods, and launched a year-round afterschool Mariachi Ensemble. The importance of the LBC’s Mariachi program cannot be understated, and it is incredibly powerful to listen to students speak of the impact it has had in their lives. Violinist Laura Martinez says, "As you start playing you just start feeling really happy. I feel like it’s a balloon that’s expanding, and it’s filled with happiness. That happiness keeps you going. Sometimes I feel like I don’t want to stop.” Students participating in the Ensemble understand that it deepens their connection to their family and culture. "Mariachi helps me with Spanish, and it feels like I am starting to have a really strong connection to my culture," says Juliana Avalos, a violinist. Bryan Villalobos, also a violinist, agrees. "I've learned a lot about my parents; I've learned a lot about Mexico.”

In October 2017, wildfires wrought destruction throughout the North Bay. LBC was one of many that suffered significant damage and loss. With grit and determination, we were able to reopen the facility in one month. This allowed LBC to resume its role as a community gathering place and to offer the solace and healing power of the arts.

When the community was closed by COVID-19, LBC once again demonstrated it’s resilience and innovation as we quickly launched virtual programming that was uplifting, inspiring, and educational. Classrooms were able to participate in virtual performances, our Artists in the Schools residency work continued, and professional development was provided to both artists and teachers. We continued music education through a newly-created online guitar class and gathered our Mariachi Ensemble virtually. We offered music, art, and dance programs through a virtual summer camp and created a free virtual family series. LBC also converted our parking lot to offer drive-in movies, creating opportunities to gather safely.

The arts challenge us to look at other points of view, empathize, and foster a sense of community and belonging in a way no other discipline can. They also allow for self-discovery, growth, and prepare our next generation for success in school, work, and life.

Luther Burbank Center for the Arts has had 40 years of rich history in the community—presenting over 3,000 performances, serving over 3 million people, and reaching over 500,000 children. The collective impact of LBC’s programs ensure that we are not only creating future artists and art patrons, but capable individuals who are prepared to help shape our community tomorrow.
...AND FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER
STUDENTS ENTER THE LBC SUMMER CAMPS T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

Congratulations to 9th grader Anuja Davé, who is winner of LBC's first ever summer camp t-shirt design contest! Anuja comes from a family of creatives where she says everyone in her home plays an instrument. In addition to playing the cello, Anuja started to explore visual art last summer during the pandemic. Anuja is self-taught, finding inspiration from YouTube and Instagram. When asked how she felt upon learning hers was the winning design for the 2021 camp t-shirt, Anuja said she was "surprised and it was so cool! My hard work paid off." She is glad for the opportunity for students to get their ideas out and be represented through the contest.

Education & Community Engagement staff were thrilled to receive nine submissions the first year of the contest. "We hope to build on that next summer and get even more designs to celebrate the youth in our community," said Tracy Sawyer, LBC's Community Engagement Coordinator. All students who submitted an entry were able to pick a summer camp of their choosing and all camp participants were given a t-shirt.

As we start welcoming everyone back to the Center, we want you to know that your dedication and support is especially appreciated. We hope you enjoy these stories and learn about the impact you helped make possible.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND
FREE SUMMER CAMPS ARE OFFERED ONCE AGAIN TO EXCITED CHILDREN

By necessity, last year's Summer Camps were 100% virtual. This summer, kids were able to connect and learn again – in person! In fact, your support helped us offer FREE camps in every format this year—virtual, in-person, and hybrid—making it possible to serve 132 kids and their families.

We were thrilled to offer Visual Art and Beginning Mariachi Camps entirely in-person in small groups of 12 for two weeks. Camps were offered in two sessions, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, to maximize participation. All of the art supplies, instruction, and instruments were provided completely free of charge. Beginning Mariachi Campers who learned violin or guitar will have the opportunity to continue in the year-round Mariachi Ensemble. Click here to see the virtual art show and a short video from camp!

Our year-round Mariachi Ensemble's camp evolved into a dynamic hybrid this year. Students spent time at the Center and virtually, including three weeks of master classes with eight members of the world-renowned Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, considered the best of the best when it comes to mariachi. You can imagine what a treat it was for our students to participate in a masterclass with them via Zoom! After a masterclass focused on vocals, student Marta stated, "It was really helpful and an honor to be able to be taught by them!!" Marta applied what she learned to prepare for vocal pieces featured in our annual Fiesta de Independencia to take place virtually on September 12. The Ensemble was excited to hear that Mariachi Vargas will be returning to LBC on October 29, 2021, and we know there will be many awestruck students eagerly awaiting that performance. Information and tickets for the performance available online.

Daniela, pictured at left, has been part of the Mariachi Ensemble since her first summer camp in 2016. Daniela plays violin and was looking forward to learning a new piece during the hybrid Mariachi Camp this summer. She related that the piece, "Ojos Españoles," was very difficult for her and she was excited to finally get it during the three-week camp. Daniela loves being part of the program and understands that it is special. Daniela offered, "I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Ensemble. A lot of kids don't have this opportunity."

Last, but by no means least, in order to continue to serve youth and families who were unable to participate in in-person camps, we offered Sampler Camp for a second year. Like last summer, it was 100% virtual with a focus on three different arts genres. This year students explored ukulele, percussion, and theatre. Check out this link to see some of the amazing work students did during the one-week camp.

None of this would be possible without your continued interest and unwavering support. Thank you for helping us do this work.
Since 2009, Rodney Strong Vineyards has partnered with the LBC as the exclusive wine sponsor to bring breathtaking dance performances to the residents of Sonoma County.

Now in its 12th year, the Rodney Strong Vineyards Dance series stands out as a signature aspect of the Center’s programming. The partnership between Rodney Strong and LBC has a strong foundation in a sense of community that defines both. So, it is a natural connection for winery founder and former dancer/producer Rod Strong and current proprietor Tom Klein to bring their shared passion for the arts to support the Luther Burbank Center, the premiere arts center in Sonoma County.

A dancing prodigy from early on, Rod Strong studied at the American School of Ballet under the legendary George Balanchine and Martha Graham, and he was dancing on Broadway before the age of 20. After this, Rod headed to Europe and produced Confetti, at Paris’s hottest club, The Lido. In 1952, New Faces premiered on Broadway with Rod dancing the lead, and by this time he was a star. During his time in Europe, Rod developed a passion for wine and fine cuisine. After retiring in 1959, Rod moved to Sonoma County and established Rodney Strong Vineyards as the 13th bonded winery in the county. Tom Klein, a third-generation farmer and businessman, purchased Rodney Strong Vineyards in 1989.

His integrity, entrepreneurial spirit and love of wine guided Tom’s work to shepherd the winery onto the world stage. A long-time proponent of Sonoma County and passionate steward of the land, Tom is a leader for sustainable practices in the wine industry. Rodney Strong was the first carbon-neutral winery in Sonoma County; both the winery and 11 estate vineyards are certified sustainable.

Today, Rodney Strong Vineyards thrives as a family-owned winery, committed to community. Visit the Rodney Strong Vineyards Tasting Room & Terrace in Healdsburg.

LAMONJA JOHNSON WALRAVEN LEGACY SOCIETY

Lamona Johnson Walraven, a longtime Santa Rosa resident, was a high school teacher and counselor who came of age at a time when most women did not pursue higher education. She earned a master’s degree from UC Berkeley, then shared her love for learning with her family and students, believing that all would thrive through the benefits of education. Through her bequest, Lamona left a lasting impact on the LBC, with the largest legacy gift ever received, benefitting students and children through her donation.

CREATE YOUR LEGACY

A gift through your will or living trust helps ensure that LBC remains accessible to all members of our community, including students and teachers. This thoughtful act may result in the most lasting and impactful one-time gift you ever make to the Center.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS & INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS
2021

Carlton Senior Living Symphony Pops Remember When Rock Was Young—The Elton John Tribute  August 29
An Evening with Chicago  September 4
Squeeze  September 7
Marquez Brothers Entertainment Presents Camila  September 10  NEW DATE
Free Virtual Fiesta de Independencia  September 12
Vintage Trouble  September 17
45th Annual San Francisco Comedy Competition  September 18
Josh Turner  September 24
AEG Presents Bianca Del Rio: Unsanitized  October 2
Emmylou Harris  October 4
John Hiatt & The Jerry Douglas Band  October 8
Tape Face  October 12
Amy Grant  October 15
Symphony Pops Series Fiedler’s Favorites  October 17
Unique Lives & Experiences Presents John Cleese—Why There Is No Hope  October 19
Live Nation Presents Wanda Sykes  October 23
Billy Collins  October 24
CBC Events & Serpiente Star Presents Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán  October 29
Gipsy Kings featuring Nicolas Reyes  November 2
Live Nation Presents Lewis Black: It Gets Better Every Day  November 4
Faith Ako  November 5
Press Democrat Women in Conversation with Laura Dern  November 6
Whiskey Myers with special guest The Steel Woods  November 12
George Thorogood & The Destroyers  November 13
Postmodern Jukebox: The Grand Reopening Tour  November 14
Cirque Musica Holiday Spectacular  November 16
Live Nation Presents Randy Rainbow Live  November 19
LJ Productions Presents Dos Más Dos  December 3
Pink Martini featuring China Forbes  December 7
Rodney Strong Vineyards Dance Series Posada Navideña by Calidanza  December 10
Symphony Pops Series Holly Jolly Pops  December 12
Mat & Savanna Shaw  December 14
Comedy, Country, Christmas with Oliver Graves & Pete Stringfellow  December 18
Dave Koz Christmas Tour 2021  December 22

2022

Evolve with John Edward Presents Crossing Over  January 16
The Price Is Right Live™  January 21
Beth Hart—The Thankful Tour  February 1
Cake Master: An Evening with Duff Goldman  February 3
Whose Live Anyway? With Ryan Stiles, Greg Proops, Jeff B. Davis, and Joel Murray  February 4
Illusion Touring Entertainment Presents Por Qué Los Hombres Aman A Las Cabronas  February 5
Fran Lebowitz  February 17
Symphony Pops Series Return to a Galaxy Far, Far Away—The Music of John Williams  February 20
Rodney Strong Vineyards Dance Series Aldeal  February 25
Pandora Presents Disney Princess The Concert  March 1
Outback Presents Nate Bargatze: The Raincheck Tour  March 4
Buddy Guy  March 6
Black Violin  March 14
Bessie, Billie & Nina—Pioneering Women in Jazz  March 22
Symphony Pops Series Hotel California—A Tribute to the Eagles  April 24
Yotam Ottolenghi  May 6
Lila Downs  May 8
Rodney Strong Vineyards Dance Series Alonzo King LINES Ballet  June 10

All performances take place in the Ruth Finley Person Theater, unless otherwise indicated. • Performed on the Wilhelm & Edith Wurst Stage in the Carston Cabaret.