

**MEDIA CONTACT**

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**Hermitage Artist Retreat Presents**

**“Film and Musical Theater in the Making”**

**With filmmaker Mirella Martinelli, book writer/lyricist Stephen Cole**

**and musical director/conductor David Evans.**

**Friday, August 24, 5 p.m., at the Hermitage**

The Hermitage Artist Retreat presents “**Film and Musical Theater in the Making**,” with filmmaker Mirella Martinelli, book writer/lyricist Stephen Cole, and musical director/conductor David Evans. All three will be in residence at the Hermitage. Martinelli, winner of the John Ringling Towers Award, will show clips of her film, "Frenemies," which revisits the hot topic of the relationship between Cuba and the United States. Cole and Evans will discuss and perform songs from their "fiction musicals,” “Merman’s Apprentice” and “Lip Service.” Both musicals mix reality with fiction to make musical comedy magic. Cole and Evans will also discuss their collaborative process, and Cole will share how his friendship with Ethel Merman led to the writing of “Merman's Apprentice.” This free community program is Friday, August 24, 5 p.m., at the Hermitage Palm House, 6630 Manasota Key Road in Englewood. *Reservations are required and are through email only to reservations@hermitageartistretreat.org.*

**Mirella** **Martinelli** is a filmmaker born and raised in Brazil and currently a resident of Sarasota County. A screenwriter, director, editor and producer, she’s worked on more than 40 productions, including short films and feature films. Martinelli received an American Cinema Editors award, a grant from The Rockefeller Foundation, and her screenplay, “Goodbye Mom,” was selected for the Sundance Screenwriters' Lab. In 2017, Martinelli received the Arts & Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County’s John Ringling Towers Award to produce “Frenemies.” Her residency is supported by a grant from Designing Women Boutique and Estate Services.

Book writer/lyricist **Stephen Cole** is an award-winning musical theater writer whose shows have been recorded, published, and produced around the nation and world. His creations include “After the Fair,” “The Night of The Hunter” (Goodman), “Saturday Night at Grossinger's,” “Casper” (Chita Rivera), “Dodsworth” (Dee Hoty and Hal Linden) and “The Road to Qatar.” In 2014, Cole wrote and directed “Inventing Mary Martin,” which played Off-Broadway. Cole is also the author of four books, including “That Book About That Girl;” “I Could Have Sung All Night,” the autobiography of the late Marni Nixon; and Charles Strouse's memoir “Put on a Happy Face.” In addition, Cole has written special material for Marlo Thomas, Phil Donahue, Liz Smith, Liza Minnelli, Michelle Lee, and Bernadette Peters.

**David Evans** received a Drama Desk nomination for his score for “Birds of Paradise,” which ran Off-Broadway in 1987 and has since had many regional productions. His Drama Desk-nominated musical, “Children’s Letters to God” recently completed an Off-Broadway run at the Lamb’s Theater and has had subsequent productions around the world. Evans has written songs for many Off-Broadway revues, including “A … My Name is Alice,” and for television shows, including “Sesame Street” and “Square One TV.” Current projects include “Super Sunday” (with Sarah Schlesinger), “Bed” (with Faye Greenberg), and “Merman’s Apprentice” (with Stephen Cole). A prominent musical director and conductor, Evans is currently associate conductor of “Wicked” on Broadway. He is the artistic director of ASCAP’s Marvin Hamlisch Broadway Conductor’s Program and co-artistic director of Broadway Triple Threat, a musical theater summer program.

**About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:**

The Hermitage is a not-for-profit artist retreat located at 6660 Manasota Key Road in Englewood, Florida. It invites accomplished painters, sculptors, writers, playwrights, poets, composers and other artists from all over the world for residencies on its beachfront historic campus. Artists are asked to interact with the community during their stay and, as a result, Hermitage artists touch thousands of Gulf Coast community residents with unique and inspiring programs each year. Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by philanthropist Gerri Aaron; by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts; by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues; and by the Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council of Arts and Culture and the State of Florida (Section 286.25 Florida Statutes). In addition, the Hermitage awards and administers the prestigious Greenfield Prize, an annual $30,000 commission for a new work of art, rotating among visual art, music and drama. The Hermitage also partners with the Aspen Music Festival and School to award the annual Hermitage Prize to a composition student during the Festival. For more information about The Hermitage Artist Retreat, call 941-475-2098, Ext. 5, or visit the website at www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org.