



Associated Musicians of Greater New York

PRESS ADVISORY
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Musicians to Protest Lincoln Center Allowing Canned Music at Koch Theater Dance Performances

*Visiting Ballets Perform to Recordings Instead of Live Music,
Contrary to the Mission of the Venerated Live Performance Arts Complex*

NEW YORK, NY—In blatant disregard of its most sacred mission, the leadership of Lincoln Center is turning its back on live performance by allowing dance groups to perform to pre-recorded music in the complex's Dave H. Koch theater.

On Thursday, October 18, from 6:30-8pm, Members of the New York City Ballet Orchestra and Local 802 will pass out leaflets outside Lincoln Center's Koch Theater to inform the audience attending the traveling ballet revue "Stars of the 21st Century" that they are paying top dollar to see these international performers dance *to a recording, not a live orchestra*. Although the world-class New York City Ballet Orchestra could have accompanied the dancers, ticket-buyers, who have paid up to \$125 per ticket, will instead be deprived of the joy of listening to live music.

This engagement is yet another example of how Lincoln Center, established with an enormous infusion of taxpayer dollars as a hub for New York City's major performing arts organizations, is being undermined by a recent trend of allowing space to be rented to visiting performance companies that do not uphold the high standards Lincoln Center audiences expect and deserve. Venue rental arrangements like the one for "Stars of the 21st Century" are increasing in lieu of a larger initiative to expand the seasons of the superb resident arts companies—the very institutions that make Lincoln Center a priority destination for New Yorkers and tourists alike. Allowing the New York City Opera to leave its home at the Koch Theater this past year was a disastrous blunder, and there is no bold vision for filling the void it has created. New York City is the cultural capital of the United States and one of the top cultural magnets in the world, and the leadership of Lincoln Center needs to take action immediately to sustain this

jewel in New York's crown.

"Stars" is in town for one night but increasingly, Lincoln Center—home to the Juilliard School, educator of the world's top musicians and a bastion of live music excellence—is also allowing canned music as accompaniment for longer artist engagements and residencies. In March 2012, for the first time in its history, Lincoln Center allowed a dance company, The Paul Taylor Dance Company, to perform to canned music instead of being accompanied by professional musicians during a three-week residency.

Outraged by this dangerous precedent, which jeopardizes the aesthetic integrity of a treasured institution important to New York City's cultural and tourism economy, professional musicians and elected officials submitted a letter addressing the issue to Lincoln Center Board Chair Katherine Farley, President Reynold Levy, and the Board of Directors of Lincoln Center. The letter, signed by U.S. Congress Member Jerrold Nadler, New York State Senator Tom Duane, New York State Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal, NYC Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer and New York City Council Member Gale Brewer, called on members of the board "for a commitment to mandate the use of live music for major performances in residence at Lincoln Center."

"I firmly believe it is in the collective interest of everyone involved—the Board of Directors, producers, performers and musicians—to ensure that we consistently offer the highest quality performance possible to our loyal and discerning audiences at Lincoln Center," said **Tino Gagliardi, President of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802**. "Ultimately, I am confident that the Board of Directors at Lincoln Center will realize the importance of sustaining live music in performances at Lincoln Center and forbid the use of canned music in all future presentations in each of its constituent venues."

Sara Cutler, harpist for the New York City Ballet orchestra, said, "Lincoln Center is a premiere world cultural venue. Allowing recorded music at dance performances is a dangerous step toward a decline in the quality that is central to its purpose and its venerated brand."

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