

The Journal News

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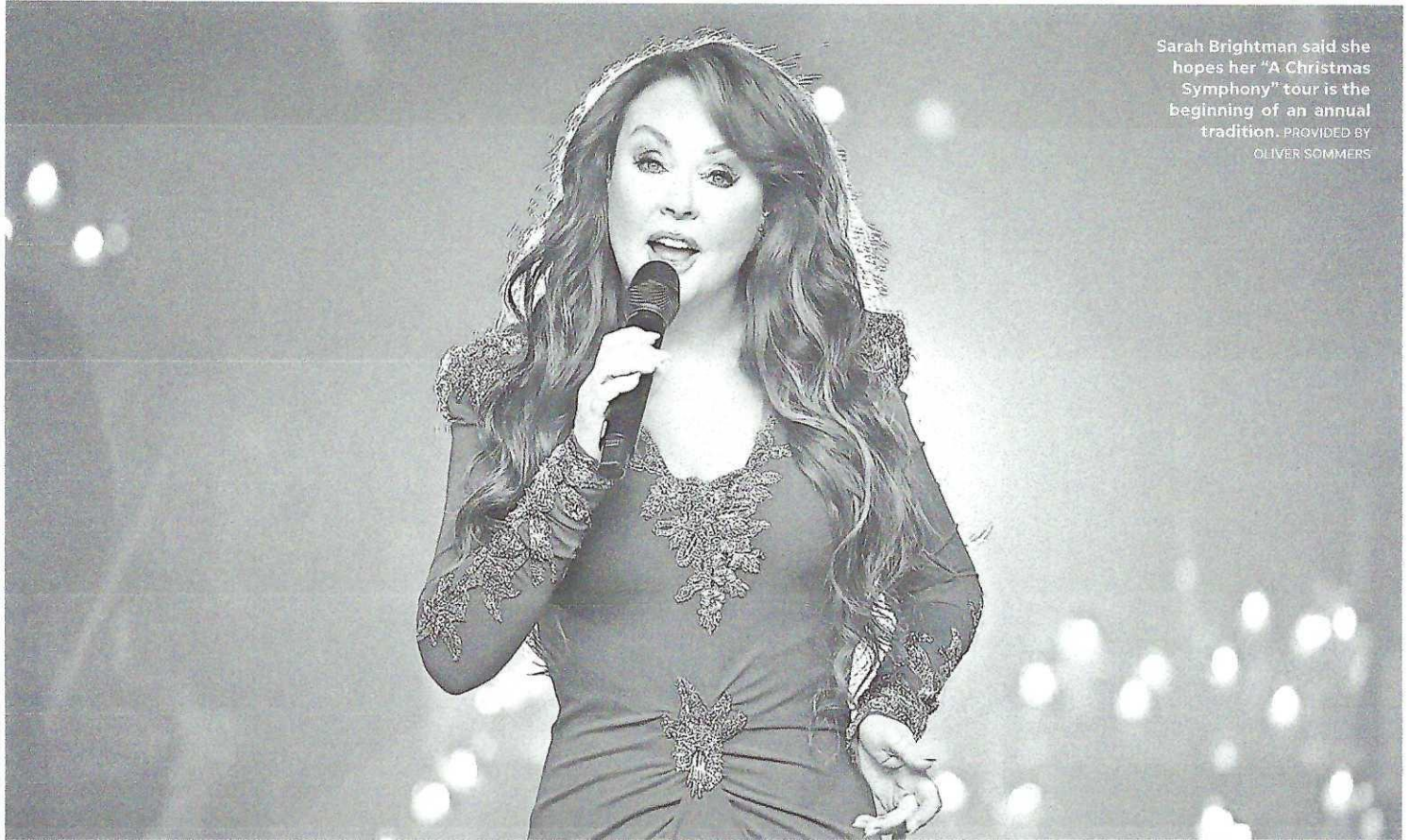
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*It's the most
wonderful
time ...*

CELEBRATE THE
SOUNDS OF THE
SEASON WITH
SARAH BRIGHTMAN



Sarah Brightman said she hopes her "A Christmas Symphony" tour is the beginning of an annual tradition. PROVIDED BY OLIVER SOMMERS

It's the most wonderful time ...

Celebrate the sounds of the holiday season with Sarah Brightman, Darlene Love and many more

Alex Biese Asbury Park Press | USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

It's time to say hello, again, to Sarah Brightman. ● The acclaimed soprano and theater icon is returning to the road for "A Christmas Symphony," her 17-date tour celebrating the sound and spirit of the holiday season. ● A Grammy nominee who originated the role of Christine Daaé in the Broadway blockbuster "The Phantom of the Opera" more than 30 years ago, Brightman is embracing the opportunity to be back to stage after the COVID-19 pandemic shuttered the live music industry last year. ● "Being the singer and sort of touring artist that I am, it's an extreme relief (to be performing again)," Brightman said. "And I think it is for all artists who are going out there again. It's wonderful." See **SEASON, Page 4K**

Season

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Launching Friday, Nov. 26, at the Wind Creek Event Center in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the tour has dates including Saturday, Nov. 27, at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark; Sunday, Nov. 28, at the St. George Theatre in Staten Island; and Saturday, Dec. 4, at the Ocean Casino Resort in Atlantic City.

"It's an important time of year for lots of people, because it is a gathering, it is a celebration, it's a very positive thing," Brightman said. "And I think last year many people weren't able to come together and watch something in the arts or they weren't able to be with their families, all of these things — so I'm very happy to be doing it."

Brightman, who previously spotlighted a seasonal selection of songs on her 2008 album "A Winter Symphony," got into the holiday spirit in 2020 for her live-streamed concert event "Sarah Brightman: A Christmas Symphony."

"I did it really because I wanted to cheer myself up while we were in lockdown, and also (to) employ some musicians because everyone was suffering a bit, and also give my fans or whoever cared to listen and to watch a wonderful time at Christmas for an hour," Brightman said of the streaming endeavor. "So we put it on and we had an overwhelming response and I thought, 'It would be wonderful to carry this through into a proper show for the live theater.'"

Brightman, who will be joined by an orchestra and a choir for the tour, said she hopes to make "A Christmas Symphony" an annual tradition.

As she draws on the vast and well-covered Christmas canon and her own decades' worth of material, Brightman explained the thought that went into planning the show's setlist.

"Christmas is an extremely emotional time for people, and so I wanted to be very careful about how I selected songs because some people, they're not Christians but they enjoy the fun of Christmas and everything," Brightman said. "Then you've got people that want the really beautiful songs like 'Silent Night' and the hymns and all of that sort of thing. Other people want to hear some hits of mine that sort of conjure up the idea of the Christmas spirit."

"And so I wanted to tick all boxes, really, and pick things also that obviously suit me very well. So it was actually quite difficult to choose something that would be fun for everybody, but we got there in the end and I think I got a really nice repertoire for people."

Sarah Brightman's "A Christmas Symphony" Tour begins at 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 26, at the Wind Creek Event Center, 77 Wind Creek Blvd., Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, \$69.50 to \$110, windcreekeventcenter.com. The tour continues at 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 27, at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center's Prudential Hall Betty Wold Johnson Stage, 1 Center St., Newark, \$49 to \$149, njpac.org.

Other dates include 8 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 28 at the St. George Theatre, 35 Hyatt Street, Staten Island, New



Darlene Love, with Steven Van Zandt at left, in a 2015 performance at Paramount Theatre in Asbury Park. She'll be at the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center in December. FILE

York, \$79 to \$179, stgeorgetheatre.com; and 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 4, at Ovation Hall at the Ocean Casino Resort, 500 Boardwalk, Atlantic City, \$60 to \$250, theoceanac.com.

Jingle all the way

Here are some other holiday concerts and events happening in Westchester, Rockland and Dutchess:

- **"A Swingin' Little Christmas! Live in Concert"** with Jane Lynch, Kate Flannery and Tim Davis, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4, Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St., Tarrytown, tarrytownmusicall.org.

- **The Magic of Christmas:** 4. Jimmy Sturr will be at the Paramount Theatre on Dec. 4 starting at 3 p.m. Special guests will be Jay Siegel's Tokens, also The Jimmy Sturr Singers, Matt and Elaine Dancers and more. Tickets range from \$39-\$45. Visit middlesonparamount.com for more information. 17 South St., Middletown. 346-4195.

- **Michael Feinstein "Home for the Holidays,"** Dec. 5, Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. Tarrytown, tarrytownmusicall.org

- **"Holiday Evening with Cher, Neil Diamond, & many more starring Vegas Edwards Twins,** 3 p.m. Dec. 5, Paramount Hudson Valley, Peekskill, paramounthudsonvalley.com.

- **A Celtic Christmas with Chrish The Ladies,** Dec. 5, at The Towne Crier. Tickets are \$45 in advance, \$50

at the door. 379 Main St., Beacon, townecrier.com.

- **Darlene Love,** Dec. 9, 8 .m. Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center, Chester. Find tickets at ticketmaster.com.

- **Jessica Lynn's "A Very Merry Country Christmas,"** Dec. 18. Enjoy a Broadway-style holiday spectacular in Peekskill with Jessica Lynn performing over a dozen holiday classics such as "Jingle Bell Rock", "It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year", "Let It Snow" and more. Tickets are \$25 to \$35 and can be purchased at jessicalynnmusic.org/shows. The Paramount Hudson Valley Theater, 1008 Brown Street, Peekskill. 914-739-0039.

- **Melissa Errico: A Broadway Celebration:** Bronxville resident and Tony Award-nominated Broadway star and singer Errico will be doing this holiday concert Dec 17 at 8 p.m. at The Emelin Theater in Mamaroneck with one of the industry's favorite personalities Billy Stritch at the piano. Tickets are \$50-\$75. Go to emelin.org to purchase.

- **Handel's Messiah,** Dec. 18. Bardavon Opera House, Poughkeepsie with guest conductor Christine Howlett. Tickets start at \$25. Go to bardavon.org.

- **Trans-Siberian Orchestra** celebrating 25 years of "Christmas Eve and Other Stories," 3 and 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 22, Prudential Center, 25 Lafayette St., Newark, \$44.50 to \$84.50, prucenter.com.

Alex Biese has been writing about art, entertainment, culture and news on a local and national level for more than 15 years.