



**WASHINGTON  
PERFORMING ARTS**

We make it happen

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**MEDIA ALERT**

**WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS 27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
NORWEGIAN CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING**

*Thursday, December 7, 2023, 6:00 p.m. at Union Station*

**WHAT:** The annual **Norwegian Christmas Tree Lighting**, presented by **Washington Performing Arts** in partnership with the **Royal Norwegian Embassy**, kicks off the holiday season with festive music from artists including: Norwegian singer **Lisa Stokke**, the voice of Elsa in the Norwegian language-version of *Frozen* and *Frozen II*; D.C.-based singer **James Murphy**; harpist **Kim Sator**; rock, country, reggae, and pop band **Brent & Co.**; an appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus; and the lighting of the magnificent Norwegian Christmas Tree. **WUSA-9's Allison Seymour** serves as host.

The country of Norway presents the Christmas tree to the people of Washington, D.C., in recognition of the strong friendship between Norway and the United States, and in gratitude for America's assistance during and after World War II.

Washington Performing Arts partners with the Royal Norwegian Embassy, NorCham USA, and Union Station in this beloved holiday event. More information is available at [www.unionstationdc.com/events/norwegian-tree-lighting-ceremony](http://www.unionstationdc.com/events/norwegian-tree-lighting-ceremony).

**WHEN:** Thursday, December 7, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Union Station Main Hall (50 Massachusetts Ave NE, Washington, DC 20002)

**WHO:** **Host:** Allison Seymour, *WUSA-9 anchor*  
**Headlining artist:** Lisa Stokke | *Norwegian singer, actress and voice-over artist*  
**James Murphy**, *DMV-based singer*  
**Kim Sator**, *harpist*  
**Brent and Co.**, *D.C.-based band*

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Lisa Stokke** is a Norwegian singer, actress and voice-over artist active in Norway, Great Britain, and the United States. She was the lead actress playing Sophie in the original West End-staging of the ABBA hit musical *Mamma Mia!* and went on to appear in several West End productions including *Guys and Dolls*, *Chess* and *Hard Times*. She has performed at Buckingham Palace and London's *Party in the Park*. In 2005, Stokke performed and co-hosted Nelson Mandela's 46664 Arctic Concert in her hometown of Tromsø, Norway, alongside Annie Lennox, Peter Gabriel, Brian May, and others. She has also appeared in the UK television hit series *Jonathan Creek* and *Doctor Who*. She voiced Elsa in the Norwegian language-version of Disney's blockbusters *Frozen* and *Frozen II*. During the televised 92nd Academy Awards ceremony in 2020, watched by 23.6 million viewers, she performed the song "Into the Unknown" together with other international voice-over artists. In 2023, Stokke was nominated for Best Supporting Actor at Norway's Gullruten (the Norwegian equivalent of an Emmy) for her role in the hit TV series *Vi Lover Et Helvete* wherein she played a mother with early onset dementia. This fall she is touring in Norway with her band Lisa Loves ABBA!, a celebration of ABBA's music and her time playing Sophie in *Mamma Mia!*

**James Murphy** is an artist whose approach to the music world today is noted as unique and refreshing. His voice has a rich mixture of the urban contemporary gospel and R&B sound, which will delight a multitude of music lovers. His goal is to inspire and uplift those in need of a sincere message.

James was provided the opportunity to minister to national and international audiences as he shared the stage with or accompanied A-list gospel artists including Donald Lawrence, J. Moss, Jeff Majors, Byron Cage, Coko, DeWayne Woods, Brent Jones, and BeBe & CeCe Winans. James has accompanied first-class R&B artists Eddie Levert, Patti LaBelle, Kelly Rowland, Kelly Price, Ledisi, the late Gerald Levert, and many more. James has toured France, Germany, and Italy, performing concerts and appearances with international orchestras. Most recently he traveled to Prague to perform with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra in Prague Proms - Music Festival.

James's debut album *So Crazy, No Boundaries* (available on all streaming platforms) features the lead single "Follow Thee" entered Top 20 Radio Singles on Billboard. James is currently gearing up to record and release his sophomore project.

### **Kim Sator**

A lifelong contributor to the D.C. metropolitan area's artist community, this native Washingtonian harpist got her musical foundation in the D.C. Public School System and the D.C.

Youth Orchestra Program. She started on violin and later transitioned to flute and piano. Once she discovered the harp, she never looked back. A graduate of Howard University, her artistry

transcends the confines of genre, weaving her musical ideas into jazz, gospel, and contemporary music. Solo or with other musicians, she finds joy in creating new ideas.

**Brent & Co.** combines rock, country, reggae, and pop with improvisation to create memorable and refreshing music with heart and soul. The group comprises of vocalist/guitarist Brent Peterson is joined on stage by drummer Dominic Fragman, saxophonist Derrick Michaels, and bassist Joe Martone. Performing more than 250 shows a year, this is a sound crafted on the road and in front of audiences in Washington, D.C., and nationwide. While the members of Brent & Co. come from varied musical backgrounds, their strong musicianship ties their sound together seamlessly. Brent & Co. have built a name the traditional way: with night-after-night of great performances. First it was small bars and house parties, now it is clubs and colleges. Regardless of venue, the band consistently reaches new audiences with unique performances of classic tunes and original songs that are thoughtful, catchy, and made for dancing.

### **ABOUT WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS**

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, jazz, international genres, and more. We also have an ever-expanding artistic and educational presence on the internet, envisioning ongoing opportunities for online connection and community.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events online and in myriad performance venues and neighborhoods, we engage international visiting artists in community programs and introduce local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

Our achievements have been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the DC Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

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