

47th McElheran Visiting Artist

PERLA BATALLA

A Letter to Leonard: Tribute to a Friend

November 7, 2026
7:30 pm
Hosmer Concert Hall
SUNY Potsdam

CPS Community Performance Series

47th McElheran Visiting Artist

PERLA BATALLA

A Letter to Leonard: Tribute to a Friend

Perla Batalla	Lead Vocals
Andy Stack	Bass/Vocals
Dimitris Mahlis	Guitar/Oud/Vocals
Devon Yesberger	Piano/Vocals
Claud Mann	Percussion/Vocals

No Intermission

"A lifetime ago, when Leo and I were just getting to know each other, he told me that he recognized in me a beautiful sadness.

Those words from him were an invitation to live in gentle acknowledgement of all the things that make up who I am, including the darkness.

Long before he passed, Leonard once asked me if I might continue to sing his songs after he was gone.

My response: try to stop me."

~Perla

View the full program
Scan the QR code to the right or visit:
https://cpspotsdam.org/perla-batalla

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Season Underwriters

Potsdam STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
CRANE School of Music at SUNY Potsdam


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Celebrating the 37th Season of Community Performance Series

Your presence here is an essential part of the magic of live performance, creating the energy that only an in-person experience can provide.

This final concert of our fall season is a heartfelt one as Perla Batalla honors her longtime friend, mentor, and musical collaborator Leonard Cohen in a deeply personal tribute on the 10th anniversary of his passing. Having performed and toured with Cohen for many years, Perla brings a rare intimacy and authenticity to his music. Cohen's poetry and songwriting are filled with emotion, tension, and beauty, continuing to resonate with millions through their enduring reflections on the human experience.

Ring the bells that still can ring,
Forget your perfect offering,
There is a crack, a crack in everything,
That's how the light gets in.
- "Anthem," Leonard Cohen

Thank you for being part of the Community Performance Series family. Your attendance sustains the vibrant connection between artists and audiences. We are also especially grateful to those whose generous donations help make these shared experiences possible.

With gratitude,

Vanessa V. Vaverchak

Director, Community Performance Series and Art
Office of Public Learning, Arts and Community Engagement (PLACE)

Please join us for an exciting Spring 2027 lineup:

Goitse | Sun, March 21 at 3 p.m. | Proscenium Theater
Multi-award-winning Irish band featured on the soundtrack of *Bad Sisters*

Jessica Vosk | Sat, April 10 at 7:30 p.m. | Hosmer Hall
Broadway star best known for her star turn as Elphaba in *Wicked*

The Magic School Bus: Lost in the Solar System | Sun, April 25 at 2 p.m.
Nationally touring family show by TheatreWorks (Proscenium Theater)



"Music that's brimming with energy and creative zeal"

- Irish Music Magazine

Goitse

"Sprightly instrumentals with exciting and unexpected twists topped off with winsome vocals."

- fRoots Magazine

Sunday, March 21, 2027 at 3 pm

SUNY Potsdam Performing Arts Center | Proscenium Theater

The multi-award-winning quintet Goitse continues to blaze trails as one of Ireland's most dynamic and celebrated traditional ensembles. Forged in the white-hot creative crucible of Limerick's Irish World Academy, the band is now celebrating 15 years of touring worldwide, captivating audiences with their signature blend of original compositions and timeless traditional tunes.

Known for electrifying live performances, Goitse has built a reputation for energy, warmth and an uncanny ability to connect with audiences everywhere. Their artistry has not gone unnoticed: the band members and their music were recently featured on the hit Apple TV series *Bad Sisters*, introducing their sound to an even broader global audience.

CPS Community Performance Series

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CUSTOMER SUPPORT: Mon-Fri 11 am - 4 pm
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SUNY Potsdam Performing Arts Center
44 Pierrepont Ave · Potsdam, NY 13676

Community Performance Series

37TH SEASON - FALL 2026

Community Performance Series is a not-for-profit college-community bridge, presenting distinctive and renowned public and school-based performances across a range of genres to the Northern New York region at SUNY Potsdam since 1989.

Vanessa Vaverchak M '27	Director, Arts & Community Performance Series
Meghan Stever	Assistant Director, Arts & Community Performance Series

Student Intern Team

Julia Ellison '28	Youth Programs Coordinator/Box Office Lead
Kyria Getman '29	House Manager
Brian Hershberger '29	Box Office Associate
Alivia Jackson '27	Hospitality & Youth Programs Associate
Christian Sanchez '30	Box Office Associate
Amanda Sawatis '30	Hospitality Associate
Mia Twyman '28	Communications Associate

Special thanks to:

Generous donors whose gifts make incredible performances like these possible.

The following people whose special efforts supported this event:

Dr. Andrew Mast, Dean, Crane School of Music
Dr. David Heuser, Associate Dean, Crane School of Music
Dr. Matthew Gatti '10, Director of Operations, Crane School of Music & Performing Arts Center
Joshua Barkley '21, Director of Production, Crane School of Music & Performing Arts Center
Dr. Peter McCoy, Professor: Music Education
Dr. Ivette Herryman Rodriguez, Associate Professor: Music Theory, Composition
Marcus Alvarez, Barker Productions
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Community Performance Series Advisory Board

Founding Director: Sal Cania, Jr. '79

Advisory Board Members

Jill Breit	Sarah Diederich '02, M'08	Jerry Manor '78
Salvatore Cania '79	Joshua Barkley '21	Mona Ouimet Vroman '85



TheatreWorks USA production of
The Magic School Bus: Lost in the Solar System

Sunday, April 25, 2027 at 2 pm
SUNY Potsdam Performing Arts Center | Proscenium Theater

Music and Lyrics by Matthew Lee Robinson
Book by Marshall Pailet

When the class gets lost on the way to the planetarium, Ms. Frizzle saves the day by blasting into outer space for an epic interplanetary field trip! But when rivalries, both old and new, threaten to tear the students apart, our young heroes must learn to pull together or risk getting forever lost in the solar system. Hop on the Magic School Bus for a ride in this new musical adaptation based on the original book series published by Scholastic.

Original Direction and Choreography by Connor Gallagher
Scenic Design by Jason Sherwood
Costume Design by Sarah Cubbage
The Magic School Bus and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered marks of Scholastic Inc.

Approximate Running Time: 60 Minutes

Recommended Ages: Grades K through 5 and their families

https://cpspotsdam.org/the-magic-school-bus

This event is made possible by the ***Maresca Family Endowment for Music & the Arts*** *and the* ***Performing Arts Center Programs Endowment****.*

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CPS WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE SPONSORS WHO MAKE THESE EVENTS POSSIBLE.

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Received July 1, 2026 - October 31, 2026

***Deeply Rooted, Future Focused*, SUNY Potsdam's most ambitious campaign yet, includes a focus on Creative Experiences.**

Gifts like yours in support of Community Performance Series help meet immediate and future creative experiences offered through our programming.

Scan to Donate

Thank you for your generosity

For more information and to make your gift in support of our programming, please visit **CPSpotsdam.org**

Looking to support the Community Performance Series through a business sponsorship, legacy or estate gift?

Set up a one-on-one meeting with Director, Vanessa Vaverchak, to explore how your generosity can sustain and expand our programs.

Find her in the lobby after the show or reach out at:
315-267-2612 or vavercvn@potsdam.edu

Sixth Maresca Visiting Artist

JESSICA VOSK



April 10, 2027
7:30 pm
Hosmer Concert Hall
Crane School of Music

Ms. Vosk's rapturous 90-minute-plus set proves in person why she has deservedly become one of the stage's favorite musical theater divas. **-BroadwayWorld**

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ABOUT PERLA BATALLA

While today Perla Batalla can be found sharing the stage with such musicians as Nick Cave, Rufus Wainwright and Jackson Browne, it was her early years touring and recording with the celebrated Canadian poet, Leonard Cohen that shaped her as an artist in her own right. With Cohen's encouragement, Perla began performing her own songs in Los Angeles clubs in the late 1990s. During this period, she was noticed by Elektra Records founder, Jac Holzman (The Doors, Queen, Judy Collins), and signed to the Discovery-Warner label.

Perla Batalla continues to forge her reputation as an essential interpreter of Leonard Cohen's music. Perla's first homage to Cohen, *Bird on the Wire* was recorded with Cohen's blessing: he attended the studio sessions, weighed in on material, and uncharacteristically participated in a photo session at his Los Angeles home to help promote the project.

Perla's powerful follow-up Cohen undertaking, *A Letter to Leonard Cohen: Tribute to a Friend*, picks up where she left off, and this time features Batalla's original compositions inspired by two decades of musical exchanges with Canada's poet laureate.

Perla Batalla was born in Los Angeles, California to an immigrant family immersed in music. Her Afro-Mexican dad was an itinerant mariachi singer, while her Argentine mom ran a family record store called Discoteca Batalla. There, by her mother's side, Perla was exposed to an education of non-stop music cutting across language and genre. Alone in the shop while her mom ran errands, Perla began dreaming of one day being a singer. Against her parents' wishes, she left home at sixteen, studying opera and theater during the day and performing in clubs at night.

Since then, Perla Batalla has appeared in a myriad of concert venues throughout the world as varied as The Sydney Opera House, Kennedy Center, Royce Hall, and The Brighton Dome. She has released seven albums and co-written and appeared in two one-woman shows: her celebrated *Mestiza* song cycle, exploring the intricacies of straddling different cultures as a person of mixed race, and *Blue House*, an exultant Frida Kahlo musical commissioned by Los Angeles County Museum of Art and tapped for production by The Ojai Playwrights Conference.

In 2024, Perla was inducted into Focus on the Masters, dedicated to recognizing the works and lives of accomplished contemporary artists in California. She has also been honored with two affiliated U.N. awards: The Earth Charter Award, for extraordinary devotion to social and economic justice, and The Environmental Peacebuilding Award, for advancing social justice through art and music.

Perla currently divides her time between Ojai, California and Barcelona, Spain.



December 8th, 2026, 6–8 p.m.
Proscenium Theater, SUNY Potsdam Performing Arts Center

The evening will feature live music from local performers, including The Raquetteers and Riffindor, celebrating Dolly Parton and her incredible musical legacy. The evening will be hosted by MC Jahad, who will help keep the celebration lively and entertaining.

Whether you're a longtime Dolly Parton fan or simply enjoy live music, come celebrate an iconic artist with us. Bring your friends, sing along, and enjoy an evening filled with music, sparkle, and good vibes!

https://getinvolved.potsdam.edu/event/12958206

This LoKo Arts project is made possible by the generosity and artistic vision of Kathryn (Kofoed) '54 and Donald Lougheed (Hon.'54).



SUNY Potsdam Alumni Association Reunion July 9-11, 2027

All are welcome back to campus for our annual Reunion celebration. Whether you graduated 50 years ago or 5 years ago, we hope to see you there! ***More information:*** potsdam.edu/alumni-friends/reunion

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The **SUNY Potsdam Alumni Association** is proud to welcome new members into the alumni family each year as our students graduate. Shared experiences at SUNY Potsdam and during the years following graduation keep our community strong, throughout generations and no matter the distance.

We love connecting with our alumni and friends!

Visit potsdam.edu/alumni to complete the Connection Form today!

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