

Entertainment Icon Rita Moreno to Perform at the Annenberg Theater Opening Night Benefit Concert on November 7, 2009



August 31, 2009 (Palm Springs, CA) -- Rita Moreno, one of only eight individuals to have earned each of the major entertainment awards, will be the opening act for the Annenberg Theater's 2009-2010 season on Saturday, November 7 at 6 p.m. The concert, entitled "An Evening with Rita Moreno" will feature a full orchestra on the stage of the Annenberg Theater at the Palm Springs Art Museum. The annual "Opening Night" fundraising event is presented by the Annenberg Theater Council (ATC) of the Palm Springs Art Museum and the presenting sponsor is

Wells Fargo. Tickets for this special fundraising event are \$295 and can be purchased through the Annenberg Theater Box office at 760.325.4490 or at annenbergtheater.org. A cocktail reception honoring Ms. Moreno will follow immediately after the concert in the museum.

About Rita Moreno

A petite dynamo whose career has encompassed stage and screen, Rita Moreno is one of the few entertainers to have earned an Oscar®, a Grammy®, an Emmy® and a Tony®. She began her career on Broadway in *Skydrift* (1945). Four years later, she was spotted by a casting agent at a dance recital and whisked to Hollywood with an MGM contract. A rare opportunity came when she was chosen to tango with Gene Kelly in the classic *Singin' in the Rain* (1952), but her first major break came when she landed the role of Tuptim, the rebellious concubine of the Siamese monarch in *The King and I* (1956). Encouraged by co-star Yul Brynner, she studied with an acting coach and her hard work finally paid off with 1961's *West Side Story*. As the fiery Anita, who sings and dances the show-stopping America, Moreno blazed across the screen netting that year's Best Supporting Actress Academy Award (pictured at right).



She returned to Broadway to appear in *She Loves Me* and *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* (both 1964) and starred opposite Marlon Brando in film *The Night After the Following Day* (1968) and as Alan Arkin's girlfriend in *Popi* (1969). This was followed by the role of Jack Nicholson's prostitute in *Carnal Knowledge* (1971).

Moreno spent the next five years as a company member of the children's educational program *The Electric Company* and in 1975, spoofed the stereotype

of a Latina spitfire as Googie Gomez, a second-rate Puerto Rican entertainer in a gay bathhouse, in Terrence McNally's play *The Ritz*.

Moreno received two Emmy® Awards (for a 1975 guest appearance on *The Muppet Show* and for a 1978 episode of NBC's *The Rockford Files*). She also starred in the ABC sitcom version of *Nine to Five* (1982-83) and had a regular role as Burt Reynolds' ex-wife in *B.L. Stryker* (ABC, 1989-90). She also appeared as Jon Seda's highly critical mother in Darnell Martin's *I Like It Like That* (1994) and was reunited with Alan Arkin as his snooty sister-in-law in *Slums of Beverly Hills* (1998).

Moreno made theater history in 1996 as the first Latina to play silent screen star Norma Desmond in the London production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard*. The actress also found a new round of fans playing Sister Peter Marie, a nun and the psychological counselor to the inmates of a maximum security facility, in *Oz* (HBO, 1997-2003).

Significant Awards:

Oscar®: Best Actress in a Supporting Role, *West Side Story* (1961)

Emmy® (2): Outstanding Lead Actress for a Single Appearance in a Drama or Comedy Series, *The Rockford Files* (1978) and Outstanding Continuing or Single Performance by a Supporting Actress in Variety or Music for *The Muppet Show* (1976)

Grammy®: *The Electric Company Album* (1972)

Tony®: Best Featured Actress, *The Ritz* (1975)

Golden Globe®: Best Supporting Actress for *West Side Story* (1961)

Previous Opening Night performers have included Elaine Paige (2008), Brian Wilson (2007), k.d. lang (2006), Renee Olstead (2005), Lilly Tomlin (2004) and Joan Rivers (2003). This marks the first time Ms. Moreno will have performed at the Annenberg Theater.

[Located downtown in an architecturally-significant building, the Palm Springs Art Museum features compelling exhibitions and a robust permanent collection of modern, contemporary, Native American, Western and Pre-Columbian and glass art in 28 spacious galleries and in its two outdoor sculpture gardens. The museum offers educational lectures, films and an assortment of programs and art workshops for all ages. The museum's Annenberg Theater features outstanding musical performances. The museum is open six days a week: Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Thursday from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. with free admission from 4 – 8 p.m. sponsored by the City of Palm Springs. Admission is free to members; \\$12.50 for adults; \\$10.50 for seniors 62 and over; \\$5 for adult students and active-duty military with I.D. and free for youths 12 and under. For more information, call 760.322.4800 or visit \[www.psmuseum.org\]\(http://www.psmuseum.org\).](#)

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