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**WHYY TO LAUNCH THIRD SEASON OF EMMY AWARD-WINNING ON CANVAS
PERFORMING ARTS SERIES WITH FOUR EPISODES OCT. 7 TO 28**

*Program to Spotlight Philadelphia Native Melody Gardot,
Buckwheat Zydeco, Shemekia Copeland and Rufus Wainwright*

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 28, 2009 — Fresh off an Emmy Award win for Arts Program, WHYY's *On Canvas* ushers in its third season on Wednesday, Oct. 7, on WHYY-TV. *On Canvas*, a weekly performing arts series that explores Greater Philadelphia's rich, diverse arts and culture scene, will feature **Melody Gardot** on Oct. 7 and **Buckwheat Zydeco** on Oct. 14. Subsequent episodes will showcase **Shemekia Copeland** on Oct. 21 and **Rufus Wainwright** on Oct. 28.

On Canvas episodes premiere on WHYY-TV at 8 p.m. Wednesdays and are rebroadcast at 2 p.m. Sundays. Episodes are also broadcast on WHYY-TV's Y Arts channel (Channel 12.2, Comcast 257 and Verizon FiOS 474) at 9 p.m. Wednesdays, 10 p.m. Thursdays, 11 p.m. Fridays, 2 p.m. Sundays, 7 p.m. Mondays and 8 p.m. Tuesdays following the premiere broadcast on WHYY-TV. *On Canvas* episodes may also be streamed at WHYY.org/oncanvas.

Melody Gardot at Sellersville Theater 1894, 8 p.m. Oct. 7

"I have to give it away," Melody Gardot explains, discussing her music for *On Canvas*. Once she's conceptualized and rendered a final product, "it doesn't belong to me anymore."

Gardot performs to a sold-out house at Sellersville Theater 1894 in upper Bucks County, Pa., following the release of her second album, *My One and Only Thrill*. The Philadelphia native singer-songwriter honed her craft through musical therapy following a severe hit-and-run accident that left her in the hospital for a year. Unable to comfortably sit and play the piano as she once did, Gardot picked up a guitar instead, and the rest is history.

On *My One and Only Thrill*, her voice is sometimes accompanied by an orchestra of string instruments or bare acoustic guitar. The "beauty of impermanence" in love, life and even music is the concept behind *Thrill*, from which she performs "Who Will Comfort Me" and "Lover Undercover" in this episode. Gardot's understanding and talent for the intricacies of blues and jazz is emphasized on her new album, which maintains



the strength and promise of her successful 2006 debut album, *Worrisome Heart*. Gardot performs "All That I Need is Love" and the title track from *Worrisome Heart*.

Buckwheat Zydeco at Sellersville Theater 1894, 8 p.m. Oct. 14

"Zydeco music is party music," Stanley "Buckwheat" Dural Jr. says of his signature style. And he assures *On Canvas* viewers that even if they've never danced before, they won't be able to stop themselves at one of his concerts.

Dural, along with his band, Buckwheat Zydeco, is the pre-eminent ambassador of Louisiana zydeco music. This year marks Buckwheat Zydeco's 30th anniversary and the release of a new album, *Lay Your Burden Down*. In what critics are calling its most accomplished album to date, the band debuts five original compositions in addition to fresh covers of Memphis Minnie's "When the Levee Breaks," Bruce Springsteen's little-known "Back in Your Arms," Gov't Mule's "Lay Your Burden Down," Captain Beefheart's "Too Much Time" and Jimmy Cliff's "Let Your Yeah Be Yeah."

Fans of the group's previous zydeco albums will not be disappointed, and the scope and depth of this latest endeavor will surely win new followers. Dural's boundless energy and incredible instrumental and vocal talents are on display when Buckwheat Zydeco performs "Out on the Town," "Hard to Stop," "Jackpot" and "Buckwheat Zydeco" at Sellersville Theater 1894.

Shemekia Copeland at WXPN's XPoNential Music Festival at Wiggins Waterfront Park, 8 p.m. Oct. 21

"I thought I was going to be a psychiatrist," Shemekia Copeland says of her early aspirations. "I wanted to help people," she explains in the program. Copeland soon discovered her music has the same effect on people.

When Shemekia Copeland sings, one can't help but be captivated. She was first encouraged to sing by her father, the late Texas blues guitar legend, Johnny Clyde Copeland. Since then, she's opened for the Rolling Stones, headlined at the Chicago Blues Festival and shared the stage with B.B. King, John Mayer, Buddy Guy and Taj Mahal. Her powerful soulful style has been compared with that of Ruth Brown, Etta James and Koko Taylor.

With the release of her new album, *Never Going Back*, Copeland embarks on a forward-looking adventure, aware of the new avenues open to her as she refines and expands on her blues roots. Her pride in the new album is clear, as she's gotten the courage to talk about politics, religion and, of course, relationships. Watch Copeland bring down the house with new hits "Never Going Back to Memphis" and "Big Brand New Religion"



and older tracks “Who Stole My Radio” and “Breaking Out” at Wiggins Waterfront Park in Camden, N.J., for WXPN’s XPoNential Music Festival.

Rufus Wainwright at Longwood Gardens, 8 p.m. Oct. 28

Rufus Wainwright has established himself as one of the great male vocalists and songwriters of his generation. The son of folk singers Loudon Wainwright III and Kate McGarrigle, he most recently completed his first opera, *Prima Donna*, which premiered in Manchester, England. Referred to as “the greatest songwriter on the planet” by Elton John and lauded by critics, musical artists and audiences alike, Wainwright’s concerts are known for their exuberant creativity and originality.

Wainwright performs at the open-air theater of Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pa., with special guest Lucy Wainwright Roche.

Trudi Brown serves as executive producer for *On Canvas*; Hugh Haynie, producer; and Heidi Saman, associate producer. Pete Scaffidi serves as editor and technical director. Part of WHYY’s wide variety of community programming, *On Canvas* serves as a window to artists’ stories, combining interviews with performances captured live at venues throughout Greater Philadelphia.

On Canvas is made possible through the extraordinary generosity of an anonymous family of donors and the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation. For more information visit WHYY.org/oncanvas.

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