FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 3, 2015

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THE AUDITORIUM THEATRE CELEBRATES THE CULMINATION OF THE BILLY STRAYHORN FESTIVAL WITH A GALA CELEBRATION

Guests Attended the Gala Celebration at The Hilton Chicago and Attended the Finale Performance, Lush Life: The Music of Billy Strayhorn, at the Auditorium Theatre

CHICAGO — On Saturday, November 21 the Auditorium Theatre hosted The Billy Strayhorn Festival Gala Celebration at The Hilton Chicago (720 S. Michigan). The event celebrated the culmination of The Billy Strayhorn Festival, a three month long celebration honoring the jazz legend with concerts and educational panels at jazz halls and other organizations throughout Chicago. The Gala evening began with cocktails and hors d’oeuvres in the Hilton’s beautiful Normandie Lounge followed by dinner in the illustrious Grand Ballroom with entertainment by Orbert Davis & The Rich Daniels Quintet playing a Billy Strayhorn program. The Gala Celebration was co-chaired by Bruce Bachman, Sidney and Sondra Berman Epstein, and Dave Samber and Darrell Windle. Honorary chairs were Alyce and Rochelle Claerbaut.

The event was attended by nearly 300 guests, and $215,000 was raised to support the initiatives of the Auditorium Theatre.

Following the Gala, guests boarded trolleys en route to the Auditorium Theatre for VIP seating at the finale performance of The Billy Strayhorn Festival, Lush Life: The Music of Billy Strayhorn. The fully staged salute to Strayhorn was directed by Bruce Mayhall Rastrelli and starred Broadway’s Darius de Haas, local cabaret icon Joan Curto, pianist Alan Broadbent, the Auditorium’s Too Hot to Handel Orchestra, Joel Hall Dancers and a 30-voice-all-male choir under the direction of Bill Chin.

The Auditorium Theatre would like to thank the Lead Foundation Supporter for The Billy Strayhorn Festival, THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST, with additional support provided by THE JOYCE FOUNDATION, and media sponsor, CHICAGO JAZZ MAGAZINE.

The Billy Strayhorn Festival Gala Celebration was sponsored by the PASQUINELLI FAMILY FOUNDATION.

About Auditorium Theatre

The Auditorium Theatre, located at 50 E. Congress Pkwy, is an Illinois, not-for-profit organization committed to presenting the finest in international, cultural, community and educational programming to Chicago, and to the continued restoration and preservation of the National Historic Landmark. In September of 2014, the Auditorium Theatre was awarded the inaugural Fifth Star Award by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. On December 9, 2014, the Auditorium Theatre celebrated its 125th Birthday with a proclamation from the City of Chicago declaring it “Auditorium Theatre Day.”

The 2015 – 2016 Auditorium Theatre Season includes Thodos Dance Chicago, January 9; Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah, January 16 – 17; Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater,
March 8 – 13: Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal – *Leonce and Lena*, April 1 – 3; Chicago Rhythm Fest, June 4; and Giordano Dance Chicago, June 11. For a complete listing of events at the Auditorium Theatre, please click here.

The Auditorium Theatre is generously supported by the MacArthur Foundation, the Illinois Arts Council, the Sage Foundation, and the Palmer House Hilton. For more information about programming, volunteer and donor opportunities or theatre tours, call 312.341.2310 or visit AuditoriumTheatre.org.

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