

Live concerts are making a **big return** to Baltimore venues with a slate of high-profile performers

Music MANIA



By Baltimore Sun Staff

The Jonas Brothers popped into Baltimore last week for a “secret show” at Soundstage but the superstar trio are not the only musicians adding the city as a tour stop. Over the next six months and through the end of the year, local fans will have their pick of concerts to attend. Here’s a look at some of the performers who have upcoming shows in the Baltimore region.

MAY

Janet Jackson

The Grammy award-winning singer, who was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2019, performs May 13 at the city’s CFG Bank Arena as part of her 2023 “Together Again” tour. Rapper Ludacris, also known for his role in the “Fast and Furious” movie franchise, will take the stage as a special guest. The tour — Jackson’s first in four years — is set to celebrate her 50-year career in entertainment, which has yielded hits like “Rhythm Nation,” “Together Again” and “All For You.”

Anita Baker with Babyface

The R&B powerhouse Anita Baker comes to Baltimore in her first tour since 1995. The eight-time Grammy-winning vocalist takes the stage at CFG Bank Arena on Mother’s Day, May 14, as part of “The Songstress” tour, celebrating 40 years in the music industry. (It is also the first time The Songstress will be performing her classic hits live since winning back the rights to her masters, according to Live Nation.) She will be joined by Babyface, the legendary singer and producer.

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Clockwise from top: Janet Jackson will perform May 13 in Baltimore. COURTESY; Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli will perform alongside the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in December. JEFF MITCHELL/AP; Adam Lambert, left, and Brian May of Queen + Adam Lambert will kick off The Rhapsody Tour in Baltimore with two shows, Oct. 4 and Oct. 5. ROB GRABOWSKI/INVISION/AP; Maryland native Maggie Rogers will headline the All Things Go Music Festival in Columbia. AMY HARRIS/INVISION/AP; Rock band 3 Doors Down will perform at Pier Six in June. COURTESY



Ami Brabson, who portrayed Mary Pembleton on NBC’s “Homicide: Life on the Street,” will perform “Resilience & Joy, A Cabaret” at Baltimore Theatre Project this weekend. BALTIMORE THEATRE PROJECT

Performer Ami Brabson is telling her mother’s story through cabaret

By Abigail Gruskin

Memories are an integral part of a person, actress and singer Ami Brabson posited on a Tuesday in mid-April during an interview with The Sun.

“What happens, then, if something happens to your memory?” she asked. “If you lose your memory, do you then lose yourself?”

Brabson — best known in Baltimore for playing the wife of Andre Braugher’s Detective Frank Pembleton on NBC’s locally filmed “Homicide: Life on the Street” (the pair are married in real life, too) — will tackle those questions later this month, when she performs “Resilience & Joy, A Cabaret” at Theatre Project in Midtown on April 29 and 30.

Through original narration or “patter,” as it’s called in cabaret, and an arrangement of songs from other artists and eras, Brabson tells the life story of her

own mother, navigating love and marriage, raising five children, dealing with old age and illness.

The weekend will be a sort of homecoming for the New Jersey resident, who once lived in Baltimore and still has family in the area. Brabson last performed one of her cabarets at Theatre Project in 2019, and was expected to return in 2020 with “A Change Is Gonna Come,” when the coronavirus pandemic threw a wrench in her plans.

“We had beautiful posters printed up for it and everything,” said Chris Pflingsten, Theatre Project’s producing director.

Pflingsten, a Maryland native, has served in that role since 2012, curating each season of theater, musical performances, puppetry, dance and more. He first worked for the theater in the 1980s, when he flipped homes for artists to stay in while they were performing at the venue.

He worked for over two

decades at Walt Disney World, as an actor, and was the mascot for the Orioles for three years, including when they won the World Series in 1983. “It was a little sweaty,” Pflingsten said of wearing the bird get-up. “Mascot costuming has come a long way in 40 years.”

When planning this season at Theatre Project, Pflingsten knew he wanted Brabson to finally make her return. “I’ve been trying to get her back here” since her canceled show, he said.

Brabson first began working on “Resilience & Joy, A Cabaret” in 2021, during the coronavirus pandemic; it took months to complete.

“In every song, there’s a story,” she said. “Our lives are very layered and complex, and cannot be summed up necessarily as neatly as we’d like them to be.”

The cabaret is biographical,

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