



A Special Gift to New York City: Andrea Bocelli Live in Central Park

N. L. (September 13, 2011)



The internationally acclaimed tenor will perform a free concert on Central Park's Great Lawn, Thursday, September 15th with the New York Philharmonic, conducted by its music director Alan Gilbert. This spectacular evening will be recorded in high definition by Thirteen for a national PBS broadcast on GREAT PERFORMANCES in late fall 2011.

Internationally acclaimed tenor Andrea Bocelli will perform in a free concert on Central Park's Great Lawn, on Thursday, September 15, 2011, accompanied by the New York Philharmonic, under the direction of music director Alan Gilbert, the Westminster Symphonic Choir, conducted by Joe Miller, with special guest artists such as Céline Dion, Tony Bennett, Nicola Benedetti, Chris Botti, David Foster, Andrea Griminelli, Ana Maria Martinez, Bryn Terfel and Pretty Yende, the gala event is a special gift to New York City.

Andrea Bocelli Live in Central Park will be recorded in high definition by [THIRTEEN's](#) [2][GREAT PERFORMANCES](#) [2] and it will air on December 2 at 9 p.m. (check local listings) as part of the **PBS**



Arts Fall Festival. Bocelli will present a varied repertoire that includes his best-known and best-loved songs, which have become fan favorites. He is widely regarded as the most popular Italian tenor in the world, with more than 70 million albums sold.

Since **GREAT PERFORMANCES** introduced American television audiences to Bocelli with 1997's Romanza concert, the tenor has been featured in an outstanding series of **GREAT PERFORMANCES** specials, including Sacred Arias, Amore, Vivere, My Christmas and American Dream, his spectacular "Statue of Liberty" concert from New Jersey's Liberty State Park.

[Sugar Music](#) [3], the Milan-based label headed by chairman and CEO Filippo Sugar, that discovered Bocelli in 1994, was instrumental in bringing about the concert and has enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with **GREAT PERFORMANCES** and THIRTEEN, producing nearly all of Bocelli's specials.

The PBS Arts Fall Festival is a multi-platform event anchored by nine broadcasts that highlight artists and performances from around the country, and online interactive exhibits that invite every American into the worlds of music, theater, dance, opera and cultural history. In announcing the program's selection as the final episode of the PBS Arts Fall Festival, PBS president and CEO Paula Kerger said, "We're thrilled to have Andrea Bocelli as the finale of the first PBS Arts Fall Festival. The special is one of four distinguished presentations of **GREAT PERFORMANCES** for the Fall Festival, which will highlight nine extraordinary cities and regions of our country where the arts have taken center stage."

"Bringing artists of this magnitude to audiences is core to our mission at THIRTEEN," said Neal Shapiro, WNET CEO and president, of the Bocelli event. "This free concert in New York City's ultimate performance space is another way we can make such historic events accessible to audiences who might otherwise find them out of reach."

Andrea Bocelli has commented, "I cannot help but smile when thinking about the upcoming concert in Central Park. It was my father's dream, and my father was right, because my artistic path would have been entirely different without the strong and sincere embrace of this extraordinary city where everything is possible, even when it seems impossible. My father will not be there, but I can count on his blessing and his kind and gentle smile to give me courage. My mother, sitting in the front row, will feel my father, too, and they will be together again just like when I was a little boy performing on the fireplace steps. Perhaps they had secretly dreamed that I might have the opportunity to perform in New York City, and maybe right here in Central Park."

Zarin Mehta, president and executive director of the [New York Philharmonic](#) [4], notes, "The New York Philharmonic and Andrea Bocelli have teamed up on more than one occasion in the past to joyful musical effect. This September will be our grandest collaboration to date. I can't think of a better way for summer in the city to culminate."

New York City Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe declared: "I join the Mayor and all New Yorkers in thanking Andrea Bocelli and all involved in making a beautiful autumn evening full of splendor and world-class music possible, in one of the most cherished outdoor places in New York City. From the Great Lawn in the heart of Manhattan to the **GREAT PERFORMANCES** series on WNET, where millions more will be able to share this gift, it will be a very special occasion. A million thank yous. Grazie mille!"

All information for this special evening, including distribution of tickets that will be **required for entry, will be available at www.bocellicentralpark.com** [5]. Andrea Bocelli Live in Central Park will also be released on CD and DVD by Sugar/Decca this November.

[Barilla](#) [6], one of the world's most esteemed Italian food companies, is the main sponsor of the concert event and the television broadcast and has just announced that they are sharing especially reserved tickets to the free performance on Central Park's Great Lawn with high school students from all five boroughs.

"Barilla helps people around the world experience the joys of sharing the table, an integral part of Italian culture," said Guido Barilla, Chairman, Barilla Group. "In this spirit, it is important to us to



share this once-in-a-lifetime experience with New York City high school students who could appreciate the authentic Italian experience created by the combination of the food and music." For the first time in Central Park concert history, Barilla will be the exclusive food provider for concert-goers, creating a cultural and culinary experience inspired by the cuisine of Italy and a unique opportunity for New Yorkers to share the table under the stars during the performance. The Barilla menu will include grilled Panini sandwiches, summer vegetable lasagne, cold vegetable and legume soup, and more. Food will be available for purchase and 25 percent of proceeds will go [The Food Bank of New York City](#) [7] to help New Yorkers in need share the table.

Also taking place in Central Park during the week is Casa Barilla, a four-day celebration of authentic Italian food and culture, Sept. 13-16 at Rumsey Playfield. The event allows New Yorkers to taste, learn, cook, play and share during authentic Italian cooking classes, sampling stations, chef workshops and a dedicated play area for children called the Piccolini playground. It is good fun and fun for all...

For more information about Barilla's Summer of Italy, including Casa Barilla and other events, please visit: www.SharetheTable.com/SummerofItaly [8]

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