



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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BONUS FREE J.A.M. SESSION ADDED SEPTEMBER 10 **FEATURING SALSA DANCING** **Experience the Ford and release your inner artist**

LOS ANGELES—The 2009 season's J.A.M. (Jazzed and Motivated) Sessions have been so popular that the Ford in collaboration with Koffeehouse Music Productions LLC. has added a bonus one focusing on salsa dance. **Liz Lira**, who has won five salsa world championships, leads "**Salsa Under the Stars**" from 7 to 10 p.m. on Thursday, September 10. Two classes, one for beginners and the other for intermediate/advanced dancers, run simultaneously from 7 to 8 p.m. Participants salsa dance on stage from 8 to 10 p.m.

The bonus session, like all J.A.M.s, is free. Reservations can be made at www.FordTheatres.org - click on Events, then J.A.M. Sessions - or by calling the Ford Box Office at **323 461-3673**.

The interactive J.A.M.s were expanded from seven to nine in 2009 and attracted over 800 participants during the regular schedule which ended August 24.

"If you've never been to a J.A.M, here's one more chance to try one this summer," says Adam Davis, Managing Director of the Ford Theatres for the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. "Dancing on the stage allows you to experience the Ford in a new way – from the performer's perspective. A great spirit develops among J.A.M.mers so the stage becomes like a club in a spectacular outdoor setting."

The multi-level Ford complex is located in a Los Angeles County Regional Park and affords breathtaking views of the surrounding Hollywood Hills.

Liz Lira, the "Rose of Salsa," was born in La Paz, Bolivia, and immigrated to the United States at the age of eight. For more than a dozen years, she trained at the most respected dance studios with top ballet coaches and traveled with her dance company, Salsa Soleil, performing both on television and live in front of thousands. She emerged onto the LA salsa scene in 2001. Her dancing has been referred to as a fusion of graceful motion and explosive energy. Her outstanding teaching skills also made her a favorite among salsa students at establishments such as the Mayan and Conga Room. She captured her first major salsa dance championship at the Mayan World Championships in the summer of 2002. Performances have taken her to Bolivia, South Korea, Canada, Mexico, Germany, Italy, and Japan. She has also won more than a dozen competitions with former partner Salomon Rivera. Liz is currently a five-time World Salsa Champion and a seven-time US Salsa Champion. Liz also choreographed the semi-finals and finals routines for Mark and Shawn, the first-place winners of "Dancing With the Stars" Season 8, and the feature film "The Ugly Truth" starring Gerard Butler and Katherine Heigl.

This J.A.M. Session is presented by the Ford Theatre Foundation and Koffeehouse Music with major support provided by The James Irvine Foundation.

The Ford Amphitheatre is located at 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East in Hollywood, just off the 101 Hollywood Freeway across from the Hollywood Bowl and south of Universal Studios. The grounds open one hour before J.A.M. Sessions start with time for picnicking. On-site parking is free!

This event is part of the Ford Amphitheatre 2009 Season, a multi-disciplinary arts series produced by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission in cooperation with Los Angeles County- based arts organizations. For a complete season schedule, directions to the theater and parking information, log on to www.FordTheatres.org

The **Ford Theatre Foundation**, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1994, supports the performing arts and education activities that are presented at the Ford Theatres. The foundation's Community Bridges program builds audiences by encouraging and facilitating participation in the theatres' programs and brings Ford performers to youth and social service centers based in Asian Pacific Islander and Latino communities throughout Los Angeles County. The foundation also produces the Big!World!Fun! Family Series, which is free for children.

Koffeehouse Music Productions, LLC is Los Angeles' premier, grassroots live music production company, best known for creating unique outdoor performance spaces for the most talented emerging singer-songwriters and bands. Koffeehouse takes pride in giving these artists a platform to share their extraordinary ability with music industry executives and music lovers alike. Koffeehouse won the 2006 Community Service Award from the LA Music Awards, and in beginning of 2008 became an official partner of the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, in connection of the Ford Amphitheatre 2008 and 2009 Seasons. www.koffeehouse.com

The **Los Angeles County Arts Commission**, Laura Zucker, Executive Director, provides leadership in cultural services of all disciplines for the largest county in the United States, encompassing 88 municipalities. In addition to programming the John Anson Ford Theatres, the Arts Commission provides leadership and staffing to support the regional blueprint for arts education, *Arts for All*; administers a \$4.5 million grants program that funds more than 300 nonprofit arts organizations annually; oversees the County's Civic Art Program for capital projects; funds the largest arts internship program in the country in conjunction with the Getty Foundation; and supports the Los Angeles County Cultural Calendar on ExperienceLA.com. The Commission also produces free community programs, including the L.A. Holiday Celebration broadcast nationally. The 2009-10 President of the Arts Commission is Araceli Ruano.

For more information please consult the Arts Commission online press kit: http://lacountyarts.org/communications/docs/lacac_onlinepresskit_0905.pdf