



*The Great American
Songbook Foundation*
Michael Feinstein, Founder

AT THE CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

CONTACTS:

Chris Lewis, Director of Programs
317-844-9446
clewis@TheSongbook.org

Anne O'Brien, the Center for the Performing Arts
317-819-3518
aobrien@TheCenterPresents.org

Photos: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/f9wzdvqlq8kzhg/AABeS29u8tysiRhatlxGNRTea?dl=0>

Michael Feinstein Introduces 2015 Songbook Academy™ Winner, Lucas DeBard, at Feinstein's/54 Below

New York, NY: [Michael Feinstein](#) is slated to introduce teen vocalist Lucas DeBard as part of his inaugural engagement at the new [Feinstein's/54 Below](#) Supper Club, December 20-30. DeBard is the winner of the 2015 Great American Songbook Academy™, a project founded by Michael Feinstein.

"I created the [Songbook Academy](#)™ to foster young artists who have an interest in the American Songbook, which includes the music of classic Broadway, Jazz standards, and popular music. Through this program, we are reaching a new generation to teach the music of the American Songbook and the history that inspired and influenced its composers," said Michael Feinstein, founder of the program and the organization called the [Great American Songbook Foundation](#).

DeBard, an 18-year-old from Lebanon, Indiana, sang two American standards at the July Academy: "I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter," and "I'll See You in my Dreams." As the first place winner he receives the chance of a lifetime: the opportunity to make his New York City debut with Michael Feinstein during his engagement at Feinstein's/54 Below. As first place winner DeBard is serving as the Great American Songbook Youth Ambassador for one year and will have opportunities to perform throughout the year. In September he made his Kennedy Center debut, along with Songbook Academy™ Alums Nick Ziobro, Julia Goodwin, and Madelyn Baillio.

DeBard was one of forty high school vocalists at the week-long Songbook Academy™, held in the Indiana city of Carmel. The annual event is sponsored by the Great American Songbook Foundation and is the only U.S. competition dedicated solely to the music from Broadway, Hollywood musicals and the Tin Pan Alley era of the early to mid-twentieth century.

This holiday performance will mark the kick-off for the 2016 Songbook Academy™. The application is now available online at www.TheSongbook.org until March 25, 2016. High school students grades 9-12 have the opportunity to participate. Forty students will be invited to

the Songbook Foundation's headquarters in Carmel, IN, July 16-23, 2016, to participate in a seven-day academy on interpreting and performing the music of the Great American Songbook. Five-time Grammy nominee, Michael Feinstein, and other top music industry and theatre professionals will conduct workshops and master classes throughout the week. Tony nominee [Laura Osnes](#) joined Michael Feinstein as a guest Mentor for the 2015 Academy. The final competition performance will be held in the 1,600 seat Palladium Concert Hall at the Center for the Performing Arts.

Great American Songbook Foundation

Michael Feinstein founded the Great American Songbook Foundation in 2007 in order to preserve, promote, and perpetuate the music of the Great American Songbook. The mission of the Foundation is to inspire and educate by celebrating the Great American Songbook. The work of the Foundation includes:

- High School Songbook Academy™
- Educational programming
- Library, Archives, and Gallery Exhibits
- Great American Songbook Hall of Fame

To learn more, visit: www.TheSongbook.org

Songbook Academy™

The Songbook Academy™ is a summer music intensive for young singers who have an interest in the American Songbook. Students who love the music of classic Broadway shows, jazz, and popular music have the life-changing opportunity to work with music industry pros, award winning singers and performers, and educators from the top University music and theatre programs in the country.

The Songbook Academy™ is a celebration of the Golden Age of American Popular music. This program is the only high school intensive in the U.S. dedicated solely to the music from Broadway, Hollywood musicals and the Tin Pan Alley era of the early to mid-twentieth century (1920s – 1960s).

Applications are now being accepted at www.TheSongbook.org.

About Michael Feinstein

[Michael Feinstein](#), the multi-platinum-selling, two-time Emmy and five-time Grammy Award-nominated entertainer dubbed “The Ambassador of the Great American Songbook,” is considered one of the premier interpreters of American standards. His 200-plus shows a year have included performances at Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House and the Hollywood Bowl as well as the White House and Buckingham Palace.

More than simply a performer, Feinstein has received national recognition for his commitment to celebrate America's popular song and preserve its legacy for the next generation. In 2007, he founded the Great American Songbook Foundation, dedicated to celebrating the art form and preserving it through educational programs, Master Classes, and the annual Songbook Academy for high school students. Michael serves on the Library of Congress' National Recording

Preservation Board; an organization dedicated to ensuring the survival, conservation and increased public availability of America's sound recording heritage.

Feinstein serves as Artistic Director of the Center for the Performing Arts, a \$170 million, three-theater venue in Carmel, Indiana, which opened in January 2011. The Center is home to the Great American Songbook Foundation Archives and museum. Starting in 2010, he became the director of the Jazz and Popular Song Series at New York's Jazz at Lincoln Center. In 2013, he replaced the late Marvin Hamlisch as the lead conductor of the Pasadena Pops. In 2013, Feinstein opened the San Francisco nightclub, Feinstein's at the Nikko. In 2015, he joined forces with Manhattan nightclub 54 Below to open his newest venture, Feinstein's/54 Below.

Feinstein can be seen on PBS in his award winning series, Michael Feinstein's American Songbook. He can also be heard on NPR in his current show, Song Travels with Michael Feinstein. His latest book, *The Gershwins and Me*, which is combined with a new CD of Gershwin standards performed with Cyrus Chestnut at the piano, was released by Simon & Schuster in October 2012. His latest album, *A Michael Feinstein Christmas*, was released in 2014.

Feinstein's/54 Below

Feinstein's/54 Below, Broadway's Supper Club, offers an unforgettable New York nightlife experience, combining performances by Broadway's best with world class dining in an elegant setting. Steps from Times Square, the club is known as Broadway's living room, a home away from home for Broadway professionals and audiences alike. With pre-theatre dinner offered nightly from 5pm, Feinstein's/54 Below has set a new culinary standard for New York City entertainment venues. For tickets to Michael Feinstein's Swinging Christmas show, visit www.54Below.com.

Media links

Watch highlight reel of Songbook Academy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jkUZ8xwgBU&list=UU2-QryLNaFKRO-oiM0ab8dA>

Watch video of 2015 Winner, Lucas DeBard, Perform:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waeMmjW1U3g>

Michael Feinstein and Laura Osnes Teach New Generation of Songbook Singers:

<http://www.indystar.com/story/life/2015/07/24/michael-feinstein-broadways-laura-osnes-teach-new-generation-songbook-singers/30624525/>

Secret Stash of Music History – Songbook Foundation:

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/local/hamilton-county/2015/11/30/secret-stash-music-history-palladium/75513580/>

More information: www.TheSongbook.org

*The mission of the Great American Songbook Foundation is to inspire and educate
by celebrating the Great American Songbook.*

###