

PROGRAM BOOK

CODA INTERNATIONAL & THE BELLA LUNAS PRESENT

CODAS



THE BELLA LUNAS
ASL - MUSIC - MAGIC

GOT



TALENT



CODALEAGUE 2024 CONCERT FUNDRAISER

SATURDAY, 9 MARCH 2024
3PM - 5:30PM (PST)

PROGRAM for CODAS GOT TALENT

March 9, 2024, 3:00PM

TRACI ISON, MC

CODA TEAM	Video: Introduction and Welcome to CODA
SHEENA RICE	Live: Welcome and Vision for CODAS GOT TALENT
TRACI ISON	Live: MC Introduction
DAVID BURNS	Live: Piano Performance: <i>The Walls Came Tumbling Down</i>
OREL BARAJAS	Video: Dip Hop ASL Music Video: <i>Deaf Mona Lisa</i> Original recording produced and sung by artists Orel Barajas: ORL B THA CODA (Coda) Warren Snipe; Wawas World (Deaf) Sammy Cruz; Defstar (Deaf) Nicar Bocalan; DJ Nicar (Hearing)
DANE LENTZ	Video: ASL Song Interpretation: <i>You Will Be Found</i>
GUNILLA KARLSSON	Video: A Message from the President of CODA International
MELISSA CAYTON	Live: Hula Dancing, Singing, ASL Music Interpretation
<i>HALF-n-HALF</i> SHERRY HICKS MICHAEL VELEZ	Live: Musically Inspired ASL Storytelling Sherry Hicks (Coda) Michael Velez (Coda)
SHERRY HICKS	Live: Musically Inspired ASL Storytelling
MYA RENA HUNTER	Video: Singer: <i>I (Who Have Nothing)</i>
ROBERT RHOADS, Jr.	Video: Singer, Songwriter and ASL Interpretation: <i>The Path</i>
ARLENE MALINOWSKI	Live: Solo Dramatist: <i>What Does The Sun Sound Like</i>
JILL SHEFFIELD	Video: Singer, Songwriter and ASL StoryTeller: <i>True Story</i>
<i>THE BELLA LUNAS</i> SHEENA RICE RHEA MAKIARIS LILY MOLINA	Live: Singers/Songwriters, ASL Music Interpretation Sheena Rice (Coda) Rhea Makaris (Hearing) Lily Molina (Deaf)
CODA TEAM	Live: Acknowledgments

CODAS GOT TALENT - INTRODUCING THE ARTISTS



Traci Ison is a CODA and has been a sign language interpreter for most of her career. Traci considers herself an activist and is committed that the world sees the true contribution that Deaf leadership is. Traci is also a personal performance coach, a leader in the interpreting community, and an entrepreneur at heart. Her passion is the journey of life-long learning.

www.traciison.com



The Bella Lunas :

Rhea Makiaris, Sheena Rice, and Lily Molina

Kismet brought The Bella Lunas together in San Diego, California in 2022 and the vibrant trio immediately bonded over their love of music, creativity and American Sign Language. **Rhea**, a versatile singer-songwriter and ASL Interpreter, showcases her powerful, raw musical talent and exceptional vocals. **Sheena**, a CODA

(Child of a Deaf Adult), brings her velvety vocals and passion for perfectly blended harmonies. **Lily**, a Deaf artist, wowed the other ladies with her unique ASL rhythmic renditions of visual music. Rhea and Sheena's voices and instruments blend together in angelic harmonies, weaving intricate patterns of sound that captivate audiences. Yet it is Lily, a Deaf artist and performer, who introduces a completely new dimension with American Sign Language. They are graceful together with the music as it creates a mesmerizing experience you can see, hear, and feel.

Instagram: [@asl.bella.lunas](https://www.instagram.com/asl.bella.lunas) www.aslbellalunas.com



Arlene Malinowski is a Chicago-based solo artist, writer, actor and CODA who is snowbirding in San Diego. Her award-winning solo shows have been produced across the country and abroad. She is a resident playwright at Chicago Dramatist where she teaches solo and story. She is to her knowledge the only actor to have appeared in Shakespeare's Measure for Measure AND Dougie Howser in the same 24 hours.

www.arlenemalinowski.com



Melissa Cayton-Lawrentz is an influential figure in the deaf community. As an actor, singer, and professional Polynesian dancer, she utilizes sign language to form powerful connections and evoke profound emotions in her audiences. With a deep commitment to sign language preservation, Melissa serves as a director and coordinator of the Preservation of the Chamoru Sign Language Project, showcasing her dedication to this cause. Her passions intertwine her active leadership by dedicating over 30 years by sitting on boards with Deaf clubs and organizations. Additionally, she is a recognized ASL YouTube influencer and the visionary behind the ASL competition "Signing Idol." Through her contributions to ASL comedy productions and her direction of ASL plays, Melissa champions inclusivity, representation, and the

immense talent of ASL performers. Raised on the island of Guam and residing in the Pacific Northwest, Melissa's multifaceted talents and unwavering commitment to sign language leave a lasting impact. Visit: www.empowerguamdeaf.com



Half-n-Half : Sherry Hicks and Michael Velez CODA performers bring love and "musically inspired ASL storytelling" for all to see and hear! Celebrating their 29th anniversary of collaboration in creative works in blending ASL, music, and storytelling with their signature craft "musically inspired ASL storytelling."

This dynamic duo delights audiences everywhere. Their work is truly a "feast for the eyes."

Contact us: sherryhicksthe@gmail.com



David Burns was born to deaf parents who encouraged him to embrace music because at an early age, his parents observed David playing his late grandfather's piano and were told that he plays quite well. David goes to Cedars Sinai and County General Hospital and volunteers to play the piano for those who are present and in need of Music for Healing. He has performed at notable events and was the lobby pianist at the famous Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood for many years. He has played for many celebrities such as: Bill Clinton, Jane Seymour, Loni Anderson, Alex Trebek, Shirley MacLaine and Barbra Streissand, just to mention a few. David was in charge of the Green Room for the Actor's Fund, the green room

for the TONY Awards, Los Angeles and Master of Ceremonies for the American Diabetes Association's Health Expo held at the Los Angeles Convention Center with over 20,000 in attendance.



Mya Rena Hunter is an actress and singer and CODA from Houston, TX. She is currently traveling on the road with the Broadway National Tour of **Les Miserables** performing in the role of Éponine! Mya discovered her musical talent growing up singing in her church's choir. After becoming involved in her high school's production of *The Wiz*, Mya decided to pursue further education at Howard University in Washington, D.C., where she recently graduated with her BFA in Musical Theatre.

Instagram: @mya.rena



ORL B THA CODA (Orel Barajas) is a Father, a partner, a CODA, a musician, and a sneaker-head. He's a Mexican-American California native. He has a passion for making and signing music with the goal of changing the industry to be more visual and accessible.

Instagram: @orl_b_that_coda



Jill Sheffield is a CODA from Louisiana, but has been living in Atlanta Metro for over 20 years. While Jill has played guitar for many years, she only started songwriting and playing at open mics 3 years ago. She has completed 14 songs that are not yet recorded, one of which will be performed at the upcoming San Diego CODALeague 2024 Conference.

Email: jillsheff@gmail.com



Dane Lentz is a multi-hyphenate CODA from Fremont, California. He started performing when he picked up a saxophone in 7th grade and hasn't stopped since. He has over 30 theatre credits on his resume - including **SHREK**, **SWEENEY TODD**, **RENT**, and coming this Spring, **THE MUSIC MAN**. Dane loves performing - not for the attention, but because there are many stories that deserve to be heard. Tonight, you get to experience part of his story. Follow his antics on *Instagram* @danetrain512



Robert Rhoads Jr is a CODA by birth, an interpreter by choice, and a musician by design. His music career began with the violin and piano, before he pursued higher education in music composition. He has always had a dream to write music for film. In 2023, Robert acted onstage in two separate theatre productions of **A Raisin in the Sun**; the first which took place at the Atlas Theater in Washington, DC - in which Robert held the only fully spoken and non-signing role in a mixed Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing/CODA cast. For eight years now, Robert works as an ASL Interpreter and has since found new applications in combining his many passions to share a more personal message and creative dream with a wider audience.

Instagram: @rrhoadss

YouTube: @musicallyinclinedify

SAN DIEGO CODALEAGUE 2024 CONCERT FUNDRAISER -- ASL COMMUNITY EVENT



THE BELLA LUNAS
ASL + MUSIC = MAGIC

**CODAS
GOT
TALENT**



Traci Ison - EMCEE



Sherry Hicks and Michael Velez



Arlene Malinowski



David Burns



Melissa Cayton

FEATURED ONLINE PERFORMERS



Mya Rena Hunter



Orel Barajas



Jill Sheffield



Dane Lentz



Robert Rhoads Jr.

Calling all Codas!

If one or both of your parents is deaf and you are over 18 years old, consider joining CODA International.

Even better, join us at the CODALeague Conference, June 20-23 in San Diego, CA. It promises to be an unforgettable event for all!

You can find membership and conference information at the CODA International website

WWW.CODA-INTERNATIONAL.ORG



Thank you to all of our generous donors



MAKE A
DONATION

 **SEVEN INTERPRETING**
accessibility reimaged

\$1,000.00 Plus

Ella Lentz and Judy
Gough
Louise Arklin and
David Burns

\$500.00 – 999.00

Cody Firks
Lisa Field
Thomas Bull

100.00 – 499.00

Abigail Coyer
Daniel Candido
Daniel Nakaji
Daniel Taryane
David Lee
Denise Denn
Derek Wallace
Harlan Menkin
Jacanita Harris
Jacob Harris
John and Beth Ann Crouch
JoJo Sullivan
June Bilgore
Larry Stouder-Studenmund
Madison Bold
Maria Johnson
Marina Lavelle
Marla Hatrak
Matthew Fager
Michelle Froman
Nancy Williams
Robert Salcido
Sarah Baer
Sarah Hafer
Stephanie Swaggerty
Tami Meeks
Wendy Kim

\$50.00 – 99.00

Allie Rice
Amrita Booter
Amy Amundsen
Azucena Ceja
Bonita Ewan
Callie Shenson
Cathy Covy
Darlene Ensenat
Eileen Blair
Faith TenEyck
Frets Halligan
Heidi Hughes
Isabella Calbert

Jody Johnston
Karen Emmorey
Katherine Bartie
Kathy Davies
Kristine Brodie
Lindsay Cohen
Lucy Annett
Lynnette Miller
Mark Markel
Margie Brooks
Marty Blair
Matthew Mulley
Michael Sullivan
Millie Brother
Millie Stansfield
Natural Languages
Patricia E. Lessard
Robert Pels
Robin Dragoo
Rose Morba
Samuel Harris
Teresa Finnigan
Traci Ison
Trudy Schafer
Turquoise Townsend

\$5.00 – 49.00

Abigail Long
Allison Kam
Alvina Malcolm
Amanda Hays
Andrea Medlock
Andrea Wilhelm
Annette Miner
Ariana Saccente
Babbi Rozgay
Babetta Popoff
Bianca Hoffmeister
Brendan Kelly
Brett Rydzon
Briana Trujillo
Carla Dupras
Caroline Greene
Cecilia Finnigan
Chelsea Hull
Cheryl Molina
Christina Healy Collister
Dana S. Huitt
Daniel Roche
Darcy Benson
David Leitson
Dawn Wells
Diane Carrone
Diane Jones
Dorene Turner
Emily Pacheco

Glenda Trotter
Gunilla Karlsson
Helen Denham
Holly Sharer
Jac Terrio
Janet Calcaterra
Janet Carter
Jennifer Finnigan
Jennifer Sheffield
Jewel Jauregui
Joanne Sharer
Joe Demaras
John Arce
John Izaguirre
Jonathan Dutton
Kataya Urquhart
Ku Mei Kern
Laureen Newman Feldhorn
Leah Monson
Libby McKnight
Linda Christine Plunk
Linda Myers
Lisa Gonzales
Lisa Herbert
Lise St-Louis
Maria Izaguirre
Marian Mahoney
Marie Coppola
Marvin Miller
Melvia Valiente
Mona Mehrpour
Nicar Bocalan
Patrick Daugherty
Paula Olejarz
Peggy Finnigan
Rebecca Parvin
Rhonda Eermisse
Ron Rice
Rose Clifford
Sarah Heymann
Sarah Vilhauer-Kajkowski
Sarah Wheeler
Sasha Lewis
Sean Havas
Sean Jones
Sheena Rice
Sheila Jacobs
Shirley Galvin
Spring Schafer
Stacey Alcott
Taylor Booth
Tazi Hartmann
Tom Rice
Victoria Kirkpatrick
Wanda Kriegera