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An evening of legacy, leadership, and legendary sound! 🎵 ✨ Arts advocate and philanthropist Elaine Woo Camarda and global music icons and pioneers of soul Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff will be honored at the 2026 Great Stages Gala. This special evening supports the mission of @EnsembleArtsPhilly and @PhilOrch—presenting world-class performances, expanding arts education for thousands of students, and preserving Philadelphia’s iconic cultural venues. Proceeds will also support the restoration of the historic Academy of Music, ensuring it continues to inspire artists and audiences for generations to come. For more info, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org/gala.

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**ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY AND
THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
CELEBRATE PHILADELPHIA’S CULTURAL LEGACY
AND SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF THE ARTS
AT THE 2026 GREAT STAGES GALA
HONORING ARTS ADVOCATE AND PHILANTHROPIST
ELAINE WOO CAMARDA
AND GLOBAL MUSIC ICONS AND PIONEERS OF
SOUL KENNETH GAMBLE AND LEON HUFF**

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026

Proceeds support the Academy of Music Restoration Fund and advance the artistic, education, and community programs of Ensemble Arts and The Philadelphia Orchestra

Featuring performances by musicians of The Philadelphia Orchestra, PHILADANCO!, Justin Guarini, The Rodney Marsalis Philadelphia Big Brass, and Urban Guerilla Orchestra

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (March 30, 2026) – Ensemble Arts and The Philadelphia Orchestra will host the 2026 Great Stages Gala on Friday, April 10, 2026. The spring-inspired black tie celebration is the organization’s signature annual fundraiser, supporting its mission to present world-class performances, expand arts education and community programs that serve more than 300,000 people each year, and steward Philadelphia’s historic cultural venues. A portion of proceeds will benefit the Academy of Music Restoration Fund, ensuring the historic landmark continues to serve artists and audiences for generations to come.

At this year’s gala, Ensemble Arts and The Philadelphia Orchestra will honor Elaine Woo Camarda—a longtime member of its Board of Trustees, staunch arts advocate, and philanthropist—for her visionary leadership and enduring commitment to advancing the arts in Philadelphia. The gala also honors global music icons Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff, whose creation of “The Sound of Philadelphia” defined an era of American music and continues to influence artists worldwide.

“The extraordinary people and artistic legacy that define Philadelphia’s cultural identity are at the heart of this celebration,” said Ryan Fleur, president and CEO of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts. “It is also a moment to reaffirm our purpose as a nonprofit organization. Philanthropic support makes it possible to present world-class performances, invest in the next generation of artists and audiences, and steward the iconic venues that anchor our city’s arts community. We are proud to honor Elaine Woo Camarda, whose leadership has strengthened the arts across our region, and to celebrate Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff, whose ‘Sound of Philadelphia’ has shaped American music and inspired artists around the world since their first meeting in our Miller Theater.”

Elaine Woo Camarda is a passionate advocate whose philanthropy and leadership have strengthened Philadelphia’s cultural community for decades. Through her generosity, mentorship, and unwavering belief in the transformative power of the arts, she has expanded access to creative opportunities and inspired others to invest in the cultural vitality of the city.

Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff are international music legends and architects of “The Sound of Philadelphia.” The duo first met in the elevator of Ensemble Arts’ Miller Theater, and later established Philadelphia International Records on Broad Street across from the present-day Kimmel Center. As producers, songwriters, and founders, they created a signature sound that defined a generation. Their work includes collaborations with iconic artists such as The O’Jays, Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes, Teddy Pendergrass, Billy Paul, Patti LaBelle, and Lou Rawls, and led to more than 40 gold and platinum records between 1971 and the early 1980s.

Together, this year’s honorees reflect the vision, creativity, and cultural impact that define Philadelphia. The Great Stages Gala celebrates the breadth of artistry presented across

Ensemble Arts' venues while raising vital funds to support artistic programming, education initiatives, and historic spaces.

The evening begins with a cocktail reception at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, followed by a presentation paying tribute to Elaine Woo Camarda and Gamble & Huff, including performances by Qin Qian and Sons of Mysterio, musicians of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and Bucks County native Justin Guarini.

Guests will then promenade along the Avenue of the Arts, passing the Miller Theater, to celebrate at the Academy of Music. Additional artists performing include The Rodney Marsalis Philadelphia Big Brass, The Hood Lockers, Great on Skates, PHILADANCO!, the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale directed by Dr. J. Donald Dumpson—creator and director of *A Soulful Christmas*—and the Arch Street Presbyterian Church Choir, DJ Omar Saleem, Black Buttafly, and the Urban Guerilla Orchestra.

For more information about the Great Stages Gala and to purchase benefactor packages, visit www.ensembleartsp Philly.org/gala.

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About Elaine Woo Camarda

Elaine Woo Camarda represents the very best of arts leadership and philanthropy. She has been a long-time supporter and ambassador for The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts, helping to expand the impact of our work across the community. As a member of our Board of Trustees, Camarda has played an important role in advancing our mission and strengthening the organization for the future. She is also a powerful advocate for arts education, ensuring that young people have access to music and creative opportunities that can shape their lives. Her leadership reflects the belief that the arts are essential to education, community vitality, and cultural connection.

About Kenny Gamble & Leon Huff

Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff are global music legends and architects of “The Sound of Philadelphia.” The two musical legends met in the lobby at the Miller Theater while waiting on the elevator. Philadelphia International Records was founded in 1971, and their headquarters were located at 309 South Broad Street (known affectionately as just “309”). Through their groundbreaking work as producers, writers, and founders of Philadelphia International Records, they created a sound that defined an era of American music. Some of their most popular and best-selling acts included the O’Jays, Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes, Teddy Pendergrass, Billy Paul, Patti LaBelle, and Lou Rawls. Between 1971 and the early 1980s, the label released more than 40 gold and platinum records.

Their music brought Philadelphia to the world, influencing soul, R&B, pop, and contemporary music for decades. Beyond their artistic achievements, Gamble and Huff have also demonstrated a deep commitment to community investment and neighborhood revitalization in Philadelphia. Their work embodies the spirit of creativity, cultural pride, and civic impact that defines this city.

**Ensemble Arts and The Philadelphia Orchestra
extends gratitude to the 2026 Great Stages Gala Sponsors:**

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