


# EnsembleArts Philly

Serving the region through world-class performances at the Kimmel Center, Academy of Music, Miller Theater, and Forrest Theatre

## Share it!

 Folk-rock legend @NatalieMerchant (Facebook/Instagram) is bringing her “Autumn Acoustic Tour” to the Kimmel Center on 11/17 and 11/18, joined by longtime collaborator @Erik.DellaPenna.9 (Facebook)/@ErikDellaPenna (Instagram), presented by @EnsembleArtsPhilly (Facebook/Instagram)! For more info, visit [www.ensembleartsphilly.org](http://www.ensembleartsphilly.org)

## Press Contacts:

Lauren A. Woodard Hall  
484-832-1963  
[lhall@ensembleartsphilly.org](mailto:lhall@ensembleartsphilly.org)

Taylor Hord  
267-765-3723  
[thord@alliedglobalmarketing.com](mailto:thord@alliedglobalmarketing.com)

## **ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY PRESENTS GRAMMY® NOMINATED SINGER-SONGWRITER NATALIE MERCHANT IN HER *AUTUMN ACOUSTIC TOUR***

**Joined by longtime collaborator Erik Della Penna,  
Merchant performs for two soulful nights,  
November 17 – 18, 2025**

**“... soulful songwriting. Her ability to create atmospheric songs invites us to find ways we can negotiate the permeable boundaries between the spiritual and the physical.”**

**– *Folk Alley* about Merchant’s album, *Keep Your Courage***

**“...dramatic, intimate and impressive to witness.”**

**– *The Guardian***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (October 2, 2025)** – Ensemble Arts Philly is proud to present **Natalie Merchant** with **Erik Della Penna** in the ***Autumn Acoustic Tour*** at the Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts for two shows on **November 17 and 18, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.** The dynamic pair, who have played together for 25 years, will perform a rare, intimate evening of songs and stories.

Over her 40-year career, Natalie Merchant has attained a place among America's most respected recording artists, earning a reputation for being an acclaimed songwriter and a captivating stage performer.

Merchant began her musical career as the lead vocalist and lyricist of the pop music band 10,000 Maniacs and released two platinum and four gold records with the group. Merchant left the group in 1994 and subsequently released nine albums as a solo artist with combined sales of seven million copies: *Tigerlily* (1995), *Ophelia* (1998), *Natalie Merchant Live* (1999), *Motherland* (2001), *The House Carpenter's Daughter* (2004), *Leave Your Sleep* (2010), *Natalie Merchant* (2014), *Paradise is There* (2015), and *Butterfly* (2017). In April 2023, Nonesuch Records released her first album of original material in nine years, *Keep Your Courage*.

Merchant has collaborated, both on stage and in the studio, with an impressive array of artists including Philip Glass, Wynton Marsalis, David Byrne, The Chieftains, Medeski, Martin & Wood, Mavis Staples, REM, Daniel Lanois, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Tracy Chapman, Kronos Quartet, Lokua Kanza, The Klezmatics, Lúnasa, Yungchen Lhamo, Chris Botti, Dan Zanes, Billy Bragg, and Wilco.

"Both accomplished artists individually, we welcome Natalie Merchant and Erik Della Penna to our intimate 650-seat Perelman Theater, a recital hall and proscenium space within the Kimmel Center where we host concerts, speakers, dance recitals, educational performances, and more," said Frances Egler, Vice President of Theatrical Programming and Presentations. "With decades of collaboration and exceptional artistry between them, Philadelphia concertgoers are set for an unforgettable experience."

In 2007, Merchant was appointed by the Governor Elliot Spitzer to serve a five-year term on the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). In 2013, she spearheaded an effort to stop the advance of hydraulic fracturing in New York State with a concert film, *Dear Governor Cuomo*. Also in 2013, she used the same format of concert film to address domestic violence in *Shelter*. Most recently, she spent two years as Artist-in-Residence with the Head Start Program in Troy, NY, creating a multi-disciplinary arts curriculum for preschoolers called *The Mother Goose Project* (2017–2019). In November 2022, NY Senator and majority leader Chuck Schumer appointed Merchant to a six-year term on the board of trustees of The American Folklife Center at The Library of Congress.

Merchant's awards for artistic excellence and philanthropic work include the Library Lion Award from the New York Public Library (2011), The American Society of Authors, Composers & Publishers (ASCAP) Champion Award, and The John Lennon Real Love Award.

Merchant will be accompanied by her principal guitarist, Erik Della Penna, a Tony® nominated composer and lyricist (*Dead Outlaw*) with credits on over 60 rock, pop, and Americana albums. He has toured and recorded extensively with Joan Osborne, Natalie Merchant, and Joan Baez, and has worked with legendary music producer T-Bone Burnett. He is conservatory-trained, holding a BFA in Classical Guitar from the Mannes School of Music (now The New School). He also plays the banjo, lap steel guitar, and mandolin. In 2024, he won the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics for his off-Broadway musical, *Dead Outlaw*.

Other featured upcoming performances include **Whitney Cummings: *Big Baby*** (November 22, 2025, Miller Theater); ***The Jinx & DeLa Holiday Show*** (November 29, 2025, Miller Theater); **PHILADANCO! *Then & Now*** (December 5–7, 2025, Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center); ***A Soulful Christmas*** (December 9, 2025, Marian Anderson Hall inside the Kimmel

Center); **Blippi: Join the Band Tour** (December 10, 2025, Miller Theater); **Béla Fleck & the Flecktones: Jingle all the Way** (December 12, 2025, Miller Theater); **Paula Poundstone** (January 17, 2026, Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center); **Alfredo Rodriguez & Pedrito Martinez** (January 22, 2026, Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center); **Step Afrika!: The Evolution Tour** (February 7, 2026, Miller Theater); and **Kurt Elling: Wildflowers** (February 27–28, 2026, Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center).

### **Tickets**

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.ensembleartsphilly.org](http://www.ensembleartsphilly.org), by calling 215-893-1999, or in person at the Academy of Music Box Office (240 S. Broad Street) daily from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. For more information, visit [www.ensembleartsphilly.org](http://www.ensembleartsphilly.org).

### **Natalie Merchant with Erik Della Penna: Autumn Acoustic Tour**

Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center

Monday, November 17, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 18, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

*The Monday and Tuesday 7:00 PM performances are currently sold out. We encourage guests to check [www.ensembleartsphilly.org](http://www.ensembleartsphilly.org) for any changes.*

###

### **ABOUT ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY**

For more information about ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY, visit [www.ensembleartsphilly.org](http://www.ensembleartsphilly.org).

###

For photography, please visit [www.ensembleartsphilly.smugmug.com/2025-2026-Season](http://www.ensembleartsphilly.smugmug.com/2025-2026-Season).