

## ARTIST BIOS for November 2

**AMY LEHELTA-BASTA**, aka Amy Fabulous, returns to the stage after a long hiatus during which she went from playing ingenue (Morales/*A Chorus Line*, Nancy/*Oliver* and Anne/*La Cage Aux Folles*) to Grandma! Playing with Second City (including the role of Cinderella with the Children's Theater) helped prepare her for this new reality-character! Today, AF continues to put her dancin' foot forward wearing Gucci shoes—producing fashion shows, styling clients, acting and various other musings! Soon she jet-sets to her home in southern France...

**LYNDA GORDON**, Northwestern University theater major, alumna of the University of Michigan School and graduate of the Loyola University MBA program, Lynda has returned to her first love—performing and singing. For many years her featured performances were as parent, independent travel consultant, and fund raiser for the Children's Research Foundation. She has appeared in SongShop's *Flying, Something to Talk About* and *Life At Home*; in *Broadway on the Cusp* at the Polo Cafe for the Rotary Club and at Davenport's for *Strut Your Stuff*. She is on the Board of the Chicago Cabaret Professionals and stars in her role as Gramma Lynda singing with her grandchildren Louisa and James! I would like to thank Nick Sula, David Edelfelt, Jonathan Cornell and Walter Kirchner. Special thanks to Claudia and Philip for being there for me for these past 2 years!

**ARLENE ARMSTRONG**, Actor-Director-Musician, a multi-hyphenate before she was out of grade school, Arlene recruited friends to do variety shows in her basement. "Ever since I played the goose that laid the golden egg in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, the stage was mine." She lists Karen Carpenter, Mahalia Jackson and Motown as musical influences. In addition to SongShop performances at the Jazz Showcase, Cyrano's, and for the South Chicago Rotary Club, Arlene took *Just a Girl & a Piano* to the Harold

Washington Library with Bobby Schiff; *Life is...Snapshots in Song* with Ruth Fuerst and Carol Weston sold out at Davenport's Cabaret.

**CAROL WESTON** sang and learned to play the piano and violin at a very young age. For many years, she's been a troubadour with guitar in hand, playing in schools and libraries. She's also been heard around town at Davenport's, Cyrano's, The Jazz Showcase, or playing the piano bar at the Drake Hotel or the Carlton Club at the Ritz. As a founding member of the Chicago Cabaret Professionals, she has been able to live her dream of becoming a cabaret singer. She presented *Life Is....* at Davenport's with Arlene Armstrong and Ruth Fuerst.

**RUTH FUERST**, Our very own Dr Ruth, a real live psychotherapist by day, is the keeper of a trove of very witty and sometimes wicked lyrics by her late father Jim Fuerst. By night, she's taken to dispensing her wisdom on the stage with Carol Weston and Arlene Armstrong. Their first show "*Life is....*" played to large and enthusiastic audiences, so they're working on a new one. Also benefiting from her new stage persona have been the Rotary International Fundraiser Annual Cabarets and several Songshop shows at Cyrano's and the Jazz Showcase.

**NICK SULA** is a pianist, music director, composer, and arranger born and raised in Chicago, with his degree in music from DePaul University. Theatre credits include Bohemian Theatre Ensemble, Porchlight Music Theatre, Chicago Opera Vanguard, and Light Opera Works, and Nick has received the Joseph Jefferson Citation for music direction. His compositions and arrangements have been performed on stage and on national television. He is an active member of the Chicago Cabaret Professionals, and performs as arranger/pianist for his vocal group, With A Twist. He performs regularly with cabaret artist Scott Gryder, and is the music director and pianist on Scott Gryder's CD, *Pure Imagination*.

## ARTIST BIOS for November 16

**CARRIE HEDGES**, In September 2010, Carrie retired from her position as a staff attorney with the U.S. District Court and joined Claudia Hommel's SongShop. She has appeared at Cyrano's Bistrot, the Jazz Showcase, and the Venue at the Daystar Center. Carrie made her debut at Davenport's in the CCP 2011 Holiday Cabaret, and appeared in *Broadway on the Cusp!* to benefit the Rotary Near South in 2013. She sings in the University of Chicago Chorus and serves on the Board of the Chicago Children's Choir. She is President of the International Wizard of Oz Club. Items from Carrie's extensive Oz collection have appeared in *Chicago Magazine* and at the Field Museum.

**LEONA ZIONS**, LeeZee's first gig at 3½ years of age was singing on Horn & Hardart's radio show! Six years of Glee Club led by Yip Harburg's pal Charlotte Hochman; seat-mate was mezzo soprano Martina Arroya (I got the solos, she got the career). Marriage, children and leads in regional *Pajama Game* and *Girl Crazy*. Directed/choreographed *Bye, Bye Birdie* in the Catskills, shades of *Dirty Dancing*. Many years with Marjorie Eliot's Parlor Entertainment in Harlem. Transplanted to Chicago and found CCP and SongShop. Venues: Davenport's for *Opportunity Knocks*, CCP's Holiday and *Strut Your Stuff* showcases; Cyrano's Bistrot, DePaul, the Jazz Showcase, and the Venue at Daystar.

**RON ANDERSON**, After spending 25 years as a folk singer in the haunts of Princeton, Greenwich Village and Liverpool, Ron slung his guitar on his back and headed back to his native Minnesota. Somewhere along the way he took a wrong turn and ended up in the Cabaret world of Chicago. Ron also sang barbershop for several years and earned a gold medal in international chorus competition in Nashville in 2001 with the Northbrook New Tradition chorus. The folk scene and barbershop world prepared Ron for *Cabaret*.

**BOB MOREEN**, pianist and singer, has appeared in virtually every type of entertainment venue as soloist, accompanist and ensemble member. He has worked with name entertainers such as Dorothy Collins, Peter Palmer, Greta Keller, the Incomparable Hildegard, and with many of Chicago's favorite cabaret singers. The *Chicago Sun-Times* calls him, "A special, eclectic piano player." The *Chicago Tribune's* Howard Reich describes him as "the complete entertainer...the quintessential cabaret singer-pianist." He is the 2009 recipient of Chicago Cabaret Professionals' Lifetime Achievement Award.

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**CLAUDIA HOMMEL**, Born in Paris, raised in Detroit, and seasoned in New York, Claudia moved to Chicago to "do the work". She is proud to have founded the Chicago Cabaret Professionals and SongShop with so many like-minded performers. She is a member of the actors' unions (SAG-AFTRA and Actors' Equity) and is on faculty at the DePaul School of Music Community Music Division. She tours nationally and to France with her concerts and masterclasses. Claudia invites you to join two tours to France, Spring 2014. Visit [cabaret-paree.com](http://cabaret-paree.com).

**PHILIP SEWARD**, the official accompanist of SongShop, has been playing the piano since a small child, joining the cabaret, music theatre, and opera stages as he got older. He has been known to sing a mix of standards and original works in the most intimate of settings. His short opera, *How To Date A Coloratura* was named a finalist in the National Opera Association chamber opera competition and Light Opera Works Second Stage recently premiered his one-act opera *Eve*. To listen to his music or purchase a CD, visit iTunes or [philipseward.com](http://philipseward.com).

**Previous 2013 SongShop Solo Set performers include Claudia Hommel, Dennis Luxion, Elizabeth Doyle, Emily Barrett, Keri Chryst, Jim Anderson, Jo Rainey, John Sims, and Philip Seward.**



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"Louise has brought me to places vocally I never knew I had within me." – Ruth Fuerst

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Event Ticket		Yard Sign
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Letterhead		
Menu		

**THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC**

**ACT I**

**AMY LEHELST-BASTA**

*Autumn Leaves* (Joseph Kosma, Johnny Mercer/Jacques Prévert)  
*On a Clear Day* (Burton Lane, Alan Jay Lerner)  
*I Wish You Love* (Charles Trenet, English version by Albert Beach)  
*Peel Me A Grape* (Dave Frishberg)

**LYNDA GORDON—Love Notes, A Memoir in Song**

*Everybody Says Don't* (Stephen Sondheim)  
*If I Never Met You* (music by Tom Snow, lyrics by Dean Pitchford)  
*Yes, My Heart* (Bob Merrill)  
*I'll Never Say Goodbye* (music David Shire, lyrics by Alan & Marilyn Bergman)  
*Time Heals Everything* (Jerry Herman)  
*It's All Right With Me* (Cole Porter)  
*Bring On The Men* (music by Frank Wildhorn, lyrics by Leslie Bricusse)  
*Today Is The First Day Of The Rest Of My Life* (music by David Shire, lyrics by Richard Maltby, Jr.)

**ACT II**

**CAROL WESTON, ARLENE ARMSTRONG & RUTH FUERST—  
Thank You for the Music**

*Grand Night for Singing* (Oscar Hammerstein) and  
*Here's to Us* (music by Cy Coleman, words by Carolyn Leigh).....Ensemble  
*The Late, Late Show* (Murray Berlin & Roy Alfred).....Arlene  
*It's My Turn* (Carole Bayer Sager & Michael Masser)..... Carol  
*My Husband's First Wife* (music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by Irene Franklin & additional lyrics by Ruth Fuerst).....Ruth  
*Two Sleepy People* (Frank Loesser & Hoagy Carmichael).....Carol  
*Straighten Up and Fly Right* (Nat King Cole & Irving Mills).....Arlene  
*Where or When* (music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart).....Ruth  
*Arm Candy* (Debi Smith)..... Ensemble  
*What a Wonderful World* (Bob Thiele & George David Weiss).....Arlene  
*That's a Lot of Malarky/ Gospel According to Jimmy Fuerst* (music by Hans Wurman, lyrics by Jimmy Fuerst).....Ruth  
*Portrait* (Amanda McBroom)..... Carol  
*His Eye Is on the Sparrow* (lyrics by Civilla D. Martin, music by Charles H. Gabriel).....Arlene  
*Mr Sandman* (Pat Ballard)..... Carol  
*You're the Top* (Cole Porter).....Ensemble  
*Things Are Just Where They Should Be* (Craig Carnelia).....Ruth  
*Thank You for the Music* (Benny Andersson & Bjorn Ulvaeus)..... Ensemble

*To all of tonight's performers, we want to send our best wishes for a fantastic night...*

*Break a leg!  
- Patricia and Ted Salinski*

*This is my Thank You note to you gals for the wonderful music and new friendships you've added to my life.*

*Break a leg!  
-Cardi Fleck*

