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The Pink Panther's Daughter

By Bekah Wright

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A familiar strain of music will have those passing Royce Hall on March 21 on the lookout for the character most associated with the song's title – *The Pink Panther*. This is the opening tune of Monica Mancini's upcoming concert, and perhaps, a tip-off to the playful personality of the lady behind the microphone. Of what one can expect from her show, Mancini hints, "It's a little slice of my life."

Mancini's life was rooted in music from the get-go. "I grew up with a father who wrote some amazing music," she says. *The Pink Panther* is just one of the iconic songs from Mancini's Grammy and Academy Award-winning father, renowned composer Henry Mancini. In tribute, Mancini's concert line-up includes hits from her father like *Moon River*, *Charade* and *Days of Wine and Roses*. But papa's melodies competed with others for her attention as a teen. Joining her patriarch's tunes are a few from favored films, including *Baby Mine* from *Dumbo* and the title song from *Cinema Paradiso*. A montage of movie clips playing behind the songstress will contribute to the nostalgic mood.



Photo by Randee St. Nicolas.

Film scores weren't the only songs on Mancini's playlist while growing up in the '60s and '70s. "I used to wait at the door for the record store to open so I could get the next Beatles cut," she says. Her sizable album collection included artists like Paul Simon, Brian Wilson and Jackson Browne, musical heroes she's now honoring through a soon-to-be-released fifth CD. These influences will be heard in the concert as well, with Mancini performing Simon's *American Tune*, Wilson's *God Only Knows* and Browne's *These Days*. Not to be left out – The Beatles, *I'll Follow the Sun*.

Since her father's death in 1994, she's followed in his footsteps, maintaining his legacy through concerts with the Chicago Symphony, Seattle Symphony and London Metropolitan Orchestra. Along the way, she garnered two Grammy nominations for her album, *Ultimate Mancini*. Saturday's concert not only honors Mancini's father, but allows her to give voice to her own sound. Indeed, Mancini says the concert isn't about waxing nostalgic. Instead, it's about songs that hold a special place in most everyone's heart, much like the theme from *The Pink Panther*. "Everyone in the world is familiar with that cat," says Mancini. "It crosses generations." And of music she says, "Good songs are timeless."

UCLA Live presents Monica Mancini in concert: Saturday, March 21, 8 p.m., Royce Hall. Tickets \$70, \$56, \$44, \$28. Call (310) 825-2101 or visit [UCLALive](#).

Hear Monica Mancini sing in this [PBS show](#).