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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 13, 2026

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PIANIST JOE ALTERMAN PUTS JAZZ SPIN ON CLASSICAL THEMES

Concert Series Brings Jazz Renderings of Bach, Brahms and Rachmaninoff to the Goizueta Stage for Youth and Families

ATLANTA – In January, pianist Joe Alterman inaugurates the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's Midtown After Hours jazz programming at the Goizueta Stage for Youth & Families.

Drawing inspiration from the music of Brahms, Bach and Rachmaninoff, Alterman curates genre-bending evenings that explore deep musical connections across centuries. Standards, stories, and humor keep the mix feeling fresh with serious roots.

Across three concerts, Alterman, drummer Justin Chersarek and bassist Kevin Smith present jazz-influenced takes on melodies by Bach, Brahms and Rachmaninoff. Witness the Goizueta Stage transformed into an intimate jazz club, creating an intimate listening-room atmosphere for Alterman's story-fueled performances.

"I'm sure Bach and Bud Powell would have gotten along. They're very similar, one just swings the eighth note," Alterman said, noting that his band will simply present a different way to look at cherished classical tunes. "Nancy Wilson called herself a song stylist. You could say the same thing for this, in a way. It's just interpreting melodies."

The series continues a long line of jazz musicians mining classical themes for inspiration. Pianist Fred Hersch explored Rachmaninoff, among other Russian composers, in 1993's "Red Square Blue," and John Lewis released an entire album of pieces from Bach's first *Well-Tempered Clavier* book.

"It's really hard to tell when Lewis veers off and starts improvising," Alterman said of the album, holding it up as a model of jazz-meets-classical programming done well.

“Everyone says these composers improvised, but we didn’t get to hear it; they probably didn’t play their pieces the same way every time.”

Alterman may be one of the busiest pianists based in Atlanta. New episodes of his WABE show, “The Upside of Jazz,” are broadcast on 90.1 FM on Saturday at 7 p.m., and when he’s not performing at clubs in New York City, he can be heard at Eddie’s Attic and other venues around town. The pianist released “Sincerely, Joe,” a live set from Birdland, in August, and his latest album, “Snow Day: Music for a Quarter Inch of Snow (Or More),” is out October 21.

Learn more at [Jazz Sessions | Atlanta Symphony Orchestra](#)

CALENDAR LISTING

Midtown After Hours Jazz Sessions

Goizueta Stage for Youth and Family, Woodruff Arts Center
Joe Alterman and Friends

Inspired by Rachmaninoff

Friday, January 8, 2027 8pm

Inspired by Brahms

Friday, February 26, 2027, 8pm

Inspired by Bach

Friday, April 23, 2027, 8pm

About the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Under the leadership of Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) offers live performances, media initiatives, and learning programs that unite, educate and enrich our community through the engaging and transformative power of orchestral music experiences. The ASO engages the diverse international community of our city, bringing people together in harmony—including our youngest citizens, with extensive opportunities for youth and families to experience the power of live orchestra music.

The Orchestra’s range and depth are featured in more than 150 concerts each year, including the flagship Delta Classical Series, Movies in Concert, Family Concerts, Coca-Cola Holiday series, and many community and education concerts. In addition, the ASO presents many vibrant, wide-ranging events and artists through its Delta Atlanta Symphony Hall Live presentations. The ASO also

performs regularly with the ASO Chorus, originally founded by Robert Shaw, and currently under the direction of Norman Mackenzie. The Chorus is featured on nine of the ASO's 27 GRAMMY® Award-winning recordings.

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