

I'm very pleased that the GRAMMY Museum has recognized the valuable and unique contributions that the Songbook Museum can make to their shared missions of ensuring that current and future generations appreciate how music has helped shape our nation and inspire many beyond its borders. The Songbook, its music, composers, performers and musicians have created significant works that continue to define America to the rest of the world.

Many of you may not realize how this all came to be. When I first ran for office in 1995, I asked residents what they felt was missing in the city and the majority wanted entertainment and cultural options ... some place to take their friends, families and visitors for dinner and a show. That was the encouragement I needed to pursue the idea and lay out the plans for a new downtown for Carmel called City Center to include state-of-the-art cultural venues. We researched what our region already offered and realized the Indianapolis metro needed a concert hall and chose to build a landmark building

constructed by craftsmen and artisans to last centuries. We wanted a building that inspired those that entered it. That is why we built the Palladium and designed it as we did. We also created the Tarkington and Studio Theaters to provide spaces for theatrical performances and flexible programming.

During the time we were designing the Center for the Performing Arts, Michael Feinstein was creating his Great American Songbook Foundation Initiative. Mutual friends made the connection and when we first met, it was clear

that we both had a similar passion for the American standards and understood what cultural amenities, such as the Songbook Foundation and the Center for the Performing Arts could bring to Carmel. It made sense to us to locate these places here because Indiana was the home to great writers such as Cole Porter and Hoagy Carmichael. Michael and I were speaking the same language and sharing the same vision for what could develop here with the right focus and enthusiasm.

We are truly fortunate to be living in a community with the foresight, the ability, and, most importantly, the will to build and foster an environment that allows the arts to flourish, setting the stage for future quality economic growth and creating a legacy for generations yet to come.

Throughout history, every significant civilization has embraced the arts because they are an embodiment of what makes a civilization great.

New ideas, new dreams, new futures are often first revealed through artistic expression. The

arts embolden, the arts encourage, and the arts excite the human imagination. That is why they are just as vital to our future as they have been to our past. That is also how we knew that the arts would help us attract companies and residents to our city to create a vibrant and thriving community.

The City of Carmel has been very successful in using the arts as an economic development tool. We have already seen more than half a billion of private investment within a two-mile radius of City Center. The vibrant walkable

community we are building with City Center, the Arts & Design District and the new Midtown neighborhood attract more and more people who want to live, work and play nearby. We are competing in an international market for high-paying jobs, corporate headquarters, and economic opportunity. Our commitment to the arts is one of the reasons Carmel is garnering such attention in the global marketplace and why even without mountains or oceans we are able to compete with the best and most successful cities on the globe.

Carmel is often listed among the best places to live, but we must continue to create unique ways to attract businesses and create the type of environment that helps them easily attract and retain employees. Broadening the cultural options offered by having a venue affiliated with the high-profile and well-respected GRAMMY Museum provides a quality educational platform from which we can continue to expand offerings and attract additional audiences.

It continues to be an honor to work with Songbook founder and Center Artistic Director



Michael Feinstein, Songbook Executive Director

Chris Lewis, Center Interim CEO Jeff McDermott

along with the Founding Executive Director of the

GRAMMY Museum Bob Santelli.