

Grandchildren of Country Music Royalty Perform Tribute

“Twitty & Lynn: A Salute to Conway and Loretta” comes to The Villages at 7 p.m. Friday at Savannah Center.

By TAYLOR STRICKLAND  
Daily Sun Senior Writer

To the world, they were Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn, the High Priest of Country Music and the Coal Miner’s Daughter. But to Tre Twitty and Tayla Lynn, they were just “Poppy” and “Memaw.”

In “Twitty & Lynn: A Salute to Conway and Loretta,” Tre Twitty, grandson of Conway Twitty, and Tayla Lynn, granddaughter of Loretta Lynn, offer country music fans the chance to look back in time. For 90 minutes, they pay tribute to two of the biggest names in country through music, song and a scandalous story or two.

“We talk about what it’s like for us as grandchildren of Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty and what they were like behind closed doors,” Tayla said.

The idea for the show was born at the Loretta Lynn Ranch in Hurricane Mills, Tennessee, where the late star held an annual “Remembering Conway” tribute concert to honor her close friendship and musical partnership with Conway Twitty. As the grandchildren of the iconic duo, Tre and Tayla often performed their grandparents’ respective songs during the tribute concert.

After one such performance in 2016, Tayla approached Tre and asked him if he would like to team up for a duet show.

“He said no at first,” Tayla said. “I’ll never let him live it down. He said he was really focusing on his photography. Then, a few months later, he came back and said he would love to do a duet show.”

Now, nearly a decade later, Tre and Tayla travel all over the world and perform about 100 shows a year. They will be playing at the 39th International Country Music Festival in Switzerland. It will be Tayla’s first time in the country, and she’s very excited. She plans on flying the whole family out to see the show.

Lynn also is excited to be performing in The Villages. It will be her first time visiting the community.

“We’ve been trying to get to The Villages for years,” she said. “We think the show is perfect for the community.”

Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn are considered one of the greatest country duet partners of all time. Both



Submitted photos

Tre Twitty and Tayla Lynn come to The Villages in “Twitty & Lynn: A Salute to Conway and Loretta” at 7 p.m. Friday at Savannah Center.

successful singer-songwriters in their own right, they made 11 studio albums together between 1972 and 1988. They racked up 12 Top 10 singles, including five No. 1 songs and four top albums, and earned four consecutive Country Music Association Duo of the Year Awards between 1972 and 1975.

Audiences were enraptured by Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn’s talent and chemistry on stage and charmed by their mutual respect and affection behind the curtains. Twitty and Lynn do their best to honor that history with the show.

“I think of us as the ambassadors of the Twitty and Lynn names — we’re just the new version of what they’ve already established,” Tre said. “But we also want to be caretakers of the past. At our shows, we get generations of fans because country music is passed down.”

Before her death in 2022, Loretta Lynn gave the show her support as well as her seal of approval. She helped Tayla pick out songs, shared stories about her and Conway Twitty’s friendship and gave constructive feedback and general advice on performing.

Tayla said her grandmother loved Tre’s stories about his grandfather’s life and music.



Tre Twitty is the grandson of Conway Twitty and Tayla Lynn is the granddaughter of Loretta Lynn.

“It would bring back all these memories for her,” Tayla said. “She used to say, ‘Tre and Tayla are out doing me and Conway’s show tonight.’”

During the show, Twitty and Lynn perform all their grandparents’ greatest hits, such as “Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man,” “Feelins’,” “We Only Make Believe,” “Two’s a Party,” “Diamond Duet” as well as solo hits like “Hello Darlin’” and “Coal Miner’s Daughter.”

The country duo also will sing a few songs from their 2024 album “Cookin’ Up Lovin’,” which is a compilation of 12 songs written and

performed in the style of Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn’s duets.

“Twitty & Lynn: A Salute to Conway and Loretta” graces the Scarlett O’Hara stage at 7 p.m. Friday at Savannah Center. Tickets for the show are \$35 and up. To buy, go to thevillagesentertainment.com.

Lynn also encourages fans to reach out on the show’s official Facebook page.

Senior writer Taylor Strickland can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5334, or taylor.strickland@thevillagesmedia.com.

‘La Bohème’ Comes To The Sharon In Its Original Italian

See the timeless romance at 3 p.m. Saturday at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.

By TAYLOR STRICKLAND  
Daily Sun Senior Writer

Opera aficionados may want to clear their Saturday for the upcoming production of “La Bohème.”

Maestro Bill Doherty and Significant Productions will present Puccini’s timeless romance and heartbreaking drama about young bohemians in Paris live at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center. It will be performed in the original Italian with English subtitles, making it a new experience for the theater and an exciting opportunity for Villagers to immerse themselves in classic opera.

“So many Villagers have asked me if I could produce an opera at The Sharon,” said Doherty, founder of the Central Florida Lyric Opera and music director for the production. “I decided on ‘La Bohème’ because of its appeal. It’s one of the most popular operas — a timeless story of love and friendship and, of course, tragedy.”

“La Bohème” follows the lives and love affairs of four struggling bohemians in 19th-century Paris.

Friends Rodolfo, Marcello, Colline and Schaunard pursue art and love in the face of adversity. Schaunard does his best to make it as a musician, and despondent philosopher Colline cannot sell his books. Romantic poet Rodolfo and serene seamstress Mimi try to overcome poverty and illness, while temperamental painter Marcello and the fiercely independent Musetta argue about Marcello’s jealousy and Musetta’s flirtatious nature.

Lauded alongside “Aida” and “Carmen” as part of the ABCs of opera, “La Bohème” contains some of the most famous opera music ever written.

Doherty opted for a production in the original Italian to preserve the beauty of the music and the narrative, which can be altered when performed in other languages.

But patrons don’t need to speak Italian to understand the opera. English subtitles or “surtitles” will be projected in large print on a screen above the actors and will be visible from every seat in the house.

“Luckily for those of us who are not fluent in Italian, the language of music is universal, and the outstanding passion

and talent of this cast will make the love and poetic despair of this Opera clear to any viewer with a heart,” said Sierra Weiss, the booking and contract manager for The Sharon.

Villagers may recognize some of the cast lending their voices to the production. Rodolfo will be played by Todd Wilander, who starred in the Opera Club of The Villages’ presentation of “Three Tenors Plus One.” David Gehring, who plays Schaunard, and Deanna Peden, who plays Musetta, recently performed in Doherty’s “The Best of Broadway” and “Hooray for Hollywood” at Savannah Center. Sam Reynolds, another recent “Hooray for Hollywood” singer, plays Colline, and former Central Florida Lyric Opera singer Ashley Thunder plays Mimi. Miguel Arturo Salas Bourgeois plays Marcello.

In addition to its memorable melodies and evergreen story, “La Bohème” is known for its many adaptations and other derivative works.

“A lot of the music from ‘La Bohème’ has been used in different movies and commercials,” Doherty said. “I think people will recognize the music even if they have never been to the opera before.”

Musical theater buffs may pick up on the similar story beats between “La Bohème” and “Rent,” which is a modern adaptation of the opera set in New York City, and cinephiles may know the music from the 1987 movie “Moonstruck.”

Like many classic opera productions, Doherty took a few liberties with the staging of “La Bohème.” The timeline diverges slightly from the original, taking place at the turn of the century instead of the 1830s.

“I wanted to set it at the turn of the century because I wanted the set to really scream Paris,” Doherty said. “I wanted to incorporate the Eiffel Tower. Puccini set the story in the past, before the Eiffel Tower was constructed. I wanted to set it a little later because I wanted people to really feel like they were in Paris.”

Patrons can be transported to Paris at 3 p.m. Saturday at The Sharon. Tickets for “La Bohème” are \$35 and up. To purchase, go to thevillagesentertainment.com.

Senior writer Taylor Strickland can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5334, or taylor.strickland@thevillagesmedia.com.

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