Dierks Bentley, Counting Crows, The Fray, John Hiatt, Lady Antebellum, Paul Rodgers, Richie Sambora, Joe Satriani, Richard Thompson, and Keith Urban Launch Season Four of Public Television Series Front and Center

Ten new shows include a 10th anniversary CMA Songwriter's Series debut and a special 99th birthday commemorative concert for legendary guitar pioneer Les Paul

July 17, 2014 (New York) – Guitar legends, hit-makers and multi-Grammy Award-winners round out the line-up for Season Four of public television’s acclaimed music series Front and Center. This season marks the series’ most diverse line-up to date, including its first country music performances, and one-of-a-kind shows with Dierks Bentley, Counting Crows, The Fray, John Hiatt, Lady Antebellum, Paul Rodgers, Richie Sambora, Joe Satriani, Richard Thompson, and Keith Urban. The 10, one-hour episodes were filmed in high definition at the Highline Ballroom, the Iridium, the McKittrick Hotel, and the iHeart Radio Theatre in New York City, along with two special performances at Marathon Music Works in Nashville.

Season Four premieres in the New York metropolitan area late night Sundays beginning October 5 at 1:00 a.m. on THIRTEEN and Saturdays beginning October 11 at 11:10 p.m. on WLIW21. For airdates in other markets, check your local listings.

“The core of country music is its songs, and the CMA established the Songwriters Series 10 years ago to recognize a really important part of our genre, the songwriters,” said country
music star Dierks Bentley. “We don’t typically take the time to thank the songwriters, so collaborating with the CMA and Front and Center was the perfect place — a night with five guys on stools sharing stories, songs and whiskey.”

The Fray frontman Isaac Slade said of their performance, “The McKittrick was a stunning space to play our new songs in. Everyone was just right there with us the whole time. Felt so old school and up close and personal, like one of those hazy Gable & Garbo kissing scenes.”

“This season could be our best,” said Executive Producer Don Maggi. “We’re featuring some of the finest names in pop, rock and country, who have collectively sold millions of albums, won numerous awards and are easily some of the best live entertainers in the business.”

“Front and Center’s fourth season showcases a wide range of artists, from homegrown guitar heroes to country legends in the making and, as always, the stars of their generation, no matter the genre,” said Diane Masciale, general manager, WLIW21. “We are thrilled to be part of the team bringing these concerts to a broad audience, commercial free.”

Since its launch in 2012 on public television, Front and Center has presented some of the biggest and the best artists in the music industry — a mix of Grammy Award-winning, multi-platinum-selling industry vets and chart toppers, including Jack Johnson, Train, The Avett Brothers, Cyndi Lauper, and the Goo Goo Dolls.

Season Four episodes will air as follows (check local listings):

401 - Counting Crows: Consistently ranked as one of the best live bands today, the American rock band performs songs from their new album, Somewhere Under Wonderland, plus hits “Round Here” and “Washington Square.” The band has sold more than 20 million albums worldwide and received an Academy Award nomination (2004) for “Accidentally in Love.”

402 - John Hiatt: The legendary troubadour leads a musical journey through more than 40 years of his timeless songs. The Grammy nominee and Americana Music Association Lifetime Achievement Award winner for songwriting performs a career-spanning set of hits, from his 1974 debut, Hangin’ Around the Observatory, through to his 22nd studio album, Terms of My Surrender (2014).

403 - CMA Songwriters Series with Dierks Bentley: The 11-time Grammy Award nominee and six-time CMA Award nominee is joined on stage by some of Nashville’s best-known songwriters — Jim Beavers, Ross Copperman, Brett James and Jon Randall — for the 10th anniversary celebration of the CMA Songwriters Series. The taping included acoustic performances and stories about many of the songs performed, including hits “What Was I Thinking,” “Drunk on a Plane” and “I Hold On.”

404 - Joe Satriani: The instrumental rock guitarist honors Les Paul, the pioneer of the electric guitar, at the Iridium before a sold-out audience on what would have been the legend’s 99th birthday. Satriani has earned 15 Best Rock Instrumental Performance Grammy nominations as well as two Platinum and four Gold certifications for his solo recording career.
405 - CMA Presents Lady Antebellum: The six-time CMA Award winners share stories behind many of their hits, including “Need You Now” and “Downtown,” and songs from 747, in an exclusive acoustic performance at Nashville’s Marathon Music Works. The performance includes first-time onstage collaborations with songwriters Rodney Clawson, Tom Douglas, Josh Kear, Luke Laird and Abe Stoklasa.

406 - Keith Urban: The Grammy Award-winning country music superstar performs nearly all of his 16 No. 1 songs at New York’s Highline Ballroom, including his most recent chart-toppers “Cop Car” and “Somewhere in My Car” from his album FUSE.

407 - Paul Rodgers: British rock singer/multi-instrumentalist/songwriter Paul Rodgers (Free, Bad Company) performs the music of Stax Records with Memphis’ famed Hi Rhythm Section at the iHeartRadio Theatre in New York City. The multi-platinum selling artist and Grammy nominee also debuts songs from his first studio album in 13 years, The Royal Sessions.

408 - The Fray: In an intimate performance from New York City’s McKittrick Hotel, the four-time Grammy nominees and 2005 Billboard Music Awards New Artist of the Year, perform material from their new album Helios as well as hits including “You Found Me” and “How to Save a Life.”

409 - Richard Thompson: Named by Rolling Stone as one of the “Top 25 Guitarists of All Time,” the British songwriters showcases his iconic guitar work at the Iridium. The Grammy Award nominee performs hits from his most recent release Acoustic Classics (“Wall of Death,” “Vincent Black Lightning”) as well as songs from his 2013 studio album, Electric.

410 - Richie Sambora: Founding member of Bon Jovi, and co-creator of some of the most instantly recognizable songs today, Sambora performs songs from his solo albums Undiscovered Soul, Stranger in This Town and Aftermath of the Lowdown, and pays tribute to his idol Les Paul at the Iridium, where the guitar pioneer played weekly until his death in 2009.

Front and Center is a production of Front and Center Entertainment, LLC and is a presentation of WLIW LLC for WNET. The series is distributed nationally by American Public Television.

About WNET
As New York’s flagship public media provider and the parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21 and operator of NJTV, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than 5 million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as Nature, Great Performances, American Masters, PBS NewsHour Weekend, Charlie Rose and a range of documentaries, children’s programs, and local news and cultural offerings available on air and online. Pioneers in educational programming, WNET has created such groundbreaking series as Get the Math, Oh Noah! and Cyberchase and provides tools for educators that bring compelling content to life in the classroom and at home. WNET highlights the tri-state’s unique culture and diverse communities through NYC-ARTS, Reel 13, NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams and MetroFocus, the multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. WNET is also a leader in connecting with viewers on emerging platforms, including the THIRTEEN Explore iPad App where users can stream PBS content for free.

About American Public Television
American Public Television (APT) has been a leading distributor of high-quality, top-rated programming to America’s public television stations since 1961. For nearly 10 years, APT has distributed approximately half of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles. Among its 300 new program titles per year are prominent documentaries, news and current affairs programs, dramatic series, how-to programs, children’s series and classic movies, including Rick Steves’ Europe, Moyers & Company, Doc Martin, America’s Test Kitchen From Cook’s Illustrated, Nightly Business Report, Globe Trekker, BBC World News, Lidia’s Italy, Rosemary & Thyme, Live From the Artists Den, NHK Newsline, Simply Ming, Midsomer Murders, P. Allen Smith’s Garden Home and more. APT also licenses programs internationally through its APT Worldwide service. In 2006, APT launched Create® TV – the TV channel featuring the
best of public television's lifestyle programming. APT is also a partner in WORLD™, public television’s premier news and documentary channel.

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