



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 3, 2025

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U.K. CHART-TOPPING PERFORMERS JONNY & THE BAPTISTS HOLD MUSICAL COMEDY U.S. PREMIERE IN SANTA BARBARA TO BENEFIT NEW BEGINNINGS

SANTA BARBARA, CALIF-NEW BEGINNINGS This fall, comedy meets compassion as New Beginnings brings internationally acclaimed British duo Jonny Donahoe and Paddy Gervers to Santa Barbara for a two-night benefit, performing their hit show, *Jonny & The Baptists*. Known for their razor-sharp wit, music, and fearless satire on mental health, the performers will take the stage to raise awareness—and critical funds—for New Beginnings’ programs serving low-income residents.

Fresh off a five-month, rave-reviewed U.K. tour, British comedy sensations Donahoe and Gervers are bringing their hit show *Jonny & The Baptists* to Santa Barbara’s Center Stage Theater for two nights only—Thursday, October 23, and Saturday, October 25—in their highly anticipated U.S. debut. Known for selling out theatres for over a decade, the duo will deliver their trademark blend of biting wit, music, and satire, with the Saturday performance featuring an exclusive pre-show dinner for sponsors. Blending sharp humor with heartfelt storytelling, this musical comedy delves into the links between personal tragedy, grief, and hope. Praised for its mix of post-modern absurdity, unflinching honesty, and anthemic musical numbers, the production showcases the duo’s signature unbridled mix of laughter and truth.

Additionally, Donahoe, a Drama Desk Award-nominated writer and performer will bring back his wildly popular and magnificent one-man show *Every Brilliant Thing*, previously showcased by New Beginnings in 2022. This unique and critically acclaimed play has become a global stage phenomenon, playing more than six hundred times over four continents, including five months off-Broadway at the Barrow Street Theatre and its current run on London’s West End. *Every Brilliant Thing* follows a child who, to lift his mother’s spirits, begins a heartfelt list of life’s small joys—a list that grows over the years and comes to shape their own journey. Both poignant and funny, the play explores the extraordinary ways we care for the people we love. Donahoe will reprise his role in a performance that will be featured on Friday, October 24th, and a matinee show on Sunday, October 26th. The show was filmed by World of Wonder and screened as a special on HBO. It is currently receiving rave reviews on London’s West End.

New Beginnings has a history of using live shows to put a human face on challenging issues like mental health and homelessness—transforming what could be “just another black-tie gala” into an evening that invites understanding, sparks conversation and inspiration. “At New Beginnings, we believe in the power of storytelling to address complex social issues like mental illness and homelessness. Through engaging narratives, we can break down the psychological barriers that often prevent individuals from understanding or acting on these issues,” says Kristine Schwarz, New Beginnings’ Executive Director. This year’s fundraiser shines the spotlight on a cause more urgent than ever: making mental health care accessible to all. New Beginnings is working to raise both funds and awareness for its counseling programs, which offer compassionate, confidential support on a sliding fee scale.

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Since their founding in 2000, New Beginnings has grown to be a leading provider of mental health counseling and homeless services assistance county-wide for low-income and unhoused individuals, veterans and families. Our program services are available to all residents of Santa Barbara County. In the most recent fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, New Beginnings served a total of 2,174 unduplicated clients - a 2% increase from the previous fiscal year and an all-time high for the agency for the second year in a row. —helping neighbors in crisis find stability, hope, and a path forward.

“We are honored to welcome Jonny Donahoe back to Santa Barbara as we continue the New Beginnings tradition of using the arts to educate and inspire our community. New Beginnings is receiving more and more inquiries for mental health supportive services, and we are thrilled to offer four presentations of Jonny's powerful work so that more community members can learn about our work and how to access low cost/no cost counseling and case management support.” said Jacqueline Kurta, President of New Beginnings Board of Directors.

Each performance will be followed by a guest reception. The premiere performance of ***Jonny & The Baptists***, on October 25 will precede with a dinner for sponsors at Bouchon restaurant. Sponsor levels range from \$500 to \$20,000. All proceeds will directly support the nonprofit’s mission to provide accessible, life-changing mental health services to the community.

Sponsors include Montecito Bank & Trust, American Riviera Bank, Cottage Health, The Zegar Family Fund, Mowrer Homeless Legal Defense Fund, Anne Towbes, Susan Rose, Mary Howe-Grant, Mary Becker, Robin Rickerhauser, Charles & Eileen White Read Sandra Schoolfield, Glenn & Amy Bachelor, Eva & Yoel Haller, Linda Burrows, and Sheila M. Stone.

Jonny & The Baptists ~ U.S. Premiere

Starring Jonny Donahoe and Paddy Gervers

Written by Jonny Donahoe and Paddy Gervers

Duration: 1 hr 15 minutes

Preview Show: Thursday, October 23 at 7:00 PM

Premiere Show: Saturday, October 25 at 7:30 PM (Sponsor dinner at Bouchon restaurant preceding show)

Complimentary guest reception including appetizers and wine following each show

Center Stage Theater

751 Paseo Nuevo, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Every Brilliant Thing

Starring Jonny Donahoe

Written by Duncan Macmillan with Jonny Donahoe

Duration: 1 hr. 15 minutes

Friday, October 24 at 7:00 PM

Sunday, October 26 at 2:00 PM

Complimentary guest reception including appetizers and wine following each show

Center Stage Theater

751 Paseo Nuevo, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

For tickets or to become a sponsor go to: www.sbnbcc.org. or contact our development department at (805) 963-7777 x112 or email Leana Orsua at development@sbnbcc.org

New Beginnings provides quality, affordable counseling, shelter, case management and education that strengthens our community and provides their clients with the ability to lead healthy and productive lives. New Beginnings, located at 324 East Carrillo Street, Suite C, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

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