

The background is a light-colored wooden surface decorated with various winter-themed items: a box of gingerbread cookies in the top left, a mug of hot beverage with a cinnamon stick and star-shaped cookies in the bottom right, a silver flute in the bottom left, and scattered pinecones, star-shaped cookies, and small evergreen branches throughout.

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DECEMBER 2017

performances
MAGAZINE

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COMEDY QUEEN

ICONIC SUPERSTAR
CAROL BURNETT
STOPS IN SAN
DIEGO THIS MONTH.

by JORDAN FRASER

AT 84 YEARS YOUNG, Carol Burnett has the multifaceted, star-studded, award-winning career that aspiring performers dream of attaining. She's been quoted on numerous occasions, including in this interview for *Performances Magazine*, of having an internal age of about 8. This has allowed her to transcend generations and broaden her appeal to all types of audiences.

And it explains what's coming next in her career.

Burnett has been honored over the past six decades with numerous Emmy and Golden Globe awards and nominations, a Peabody Award and a Grammy. She was inducted into the Television Hall of Fame and received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Screen Actors Guild in 2015. She has written multiple memoirs, co-wrote a play with

her daughter Carrie Hamilton, received Kennedy Center Honors and was the grand marshal for the 109th Rose Parade. And that list is hardly exhaustive of her television, film and Broadway credits.

So ... what's she excited about now? "Because my show is all over YouTube, I've been getting fan mail from 10-year-olds, teenagers and people in their 20s," she says. "People who weren't born when we did our



"We had a true rep company. My name was on the show, but we would do sketches where we all would support Tim, Harvey, Vicki. Every one of us was allowed to score a touchdown."

show. As a consequence, when I do these evenings now, I'm getting kids in [the audience]. Sometimes there's an age range of 9 to 90, and that's such a thrill for me."

"These evenings," of course refers to her hit live performance question and answer series, *An Evening of Reflection and Laughter*, which comes to San Diego's Copley Symphony Hall on Dec. 11. During the show, Burnett will take unscripted questions from the audience and show video clips in the same vein as the legendary openings of *The Carol Burnett Show* where the studio

audience had an opportunity to ask some questions and receive spontaneous answers. The questions serve as a jumping-off point for Burnett to engage and entertain with highly personal stories, anecdotes and tales of amusing moments from her well-seasoned life and career.

How does she prepare for something so nebulous? "I don't!" Burnett laughs. "There are never any planned questions, because I don't like that. I like to be in the moment. I show a few clips in the beginning of my favorite moments, and that gets the audience in the mood. Then I come

out, and off we go for 90 minutes. People ask me why I do it that way, and I always say it keeps the ol' brain matter ticking, because you really have to be in the now. You can't be thinking about what you're going to do tomorrow or what you did yesterday."

In addition to a local appearance—"I've always liked San Diego," she says of getting to perform in America's Finest City—December is a big month for Burnett, who is being honored with a two-hour special to celebrate the 50th anniversary of *The Carol Burnett Show*. Filmed on the show's /CONTINUED ON PAGE 60

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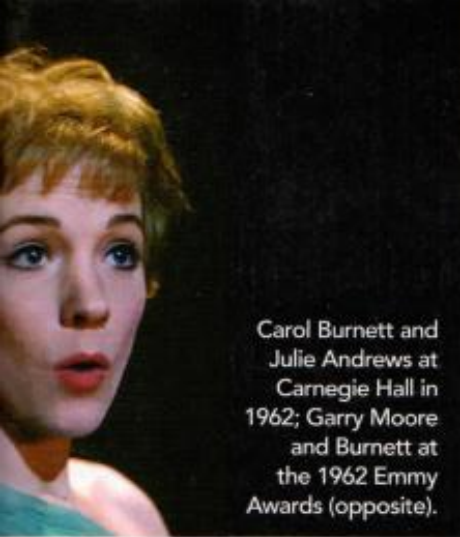
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CAROL BURNETT / CONT'D. FROM PAGE 18
original sound stage, Stage 33 at CBS Television City in Los Angeles, the celebration will air on Dec. 3 on CBS.

"It never occurred to me that we would even go one season! But we just kept on trucking, and we were so fortunate that our chemistry was so great. We had a true rep company. My name was on the show, but we would do sketches where we all would support Tim, Harvey, Vicki and everyone. Every one of us was allowed to score a touchdown," she says of the show's group dynamic and soaring success. In 2007, *The*





Carol Burnett and Julie Andrews at Carnegie Hall in 1962; Garry Moore and Burnett at the 1962 Emmy Awards (opposite).

Carol Burnett Show was named one of the best 100 TV shows of all time by *Time* magazine.

In *The Carol Burnett 50th Anniversary Special*, audiences of all ages will laugh along as Burnett reflects back on the show's 11 seasons with a host of special guests—including former co-stars Vicki Lawrence and Lyle Waggoner, costume designer Bob Mackie, and famous friends such as Jim Carrey, Kristin Chenoweth, Stephen Colbert, Harry Connick Jr., Bill Hader, Jay Leno, Jane Lynch, Bernadette Peters, Maya Rudolph, Martin Short and many more. "Everyone we asked to join us said yes," Burnett reflects humbly about gathering those who mean so much to her.

Being 84 going on 8 also makes Burnett the perfect host for Netflix's upcoming series, *A Little Help with Carol Burnett*. Slated to air in 2018, the show teams Burnett with a panel of her "peers," all between ages 5 and 9, to tackle some of life's

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the Netflix series. That age is so wonderful because the kids have not yet censored themselves. If you ask them a question, they're going to answer with the truth, without thinking 'Should I say that or not?' and that's the fun of [the show.]"

She didn't want to spoil the punchlines, but gave away a small tease about the kinds of diverse, unfiltered insights to expect on the show. "When we were auditioning, a woman came in with her dilemma and said she was going to marry a man who was raising two very young kids, and asked, 'How do I get them to like me?' One kid raised his hand and said, 'Bribery always works for me.'" In another scenario with a little girl, I don't remember the dilemma, but her advice was to just follow your heart. It was so sweet, and so profound."

The panel of five rotates each show between a total of 15 children, none of whom are professional actors. "We didn't want them to be too precocious, or too aware of themselves. It's all so innocent, and oh my gosh, they are so smart," Burnett says. She's learning a lot trying to keep up with the younger generations, too. "I just learned what [the expression] 'stay woke' means, even though it's passé now" she quips.

No matter the situation, Burnett is authentically funny, eager to share the laughter

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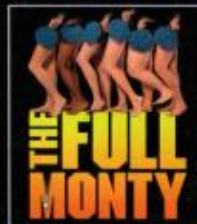
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