

## **SANTA MONICA LIFE: PLEASURES, PASTIMES & THE SPIRIT OF THE CITY**

Posted by The Argonaut | Mar 15, 2017 | Santa  
Monica | 0 |



Share

### **PHOTO BY SHILAH MONTIEL**

### **GREG COOTE CONCERT FOR THE ARTS @ BARNUM HALL**

Few concerts featuring multiple Grammy winners start the night off with the Pledge of Allegiance, but last Saturday's Greg Coote Concert for the Arts at Santa Monica High School stands as a noteworthy exception.

The annual Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation benefit filled Samohi's 1,200-seat Barnum Hall with parents and donors looking to support public school arts programs by doing a little rocking out.

Michael McDonald of Doobie Brothers and Steely Dan fame was joined onstage by his wife Amy Holland ("How Do I Survive," "Shake Me Wake Me"), with additional performances from Richard Page of Mr. Mister ("Broken Wings," "Kyrie"), as well as noted parody artist "Weird Al" Yankovic.

Listening to such amazing sounds in the 80-year-old Art Deco theater, it would be easy to forget the high school setting — until a look on stage revealed a backing section of student musicians, keeping time with a coterie of pros. The Westside natives who make up the band Venice (including two cool dads of current Samohi students) lent support as the house band for their 12th Concert for the Arts appearance.

Over the years, the concert has contributed to a \$2.9 million endowment for education, and that education was eminently visible in the outstanding musicianship of the students.

From duets with the visiting artists to a three-girl chorus donning goofy clothes to accompany Weird Al on “Tacky” (a parody of Pharrell Williams’ ubiquitous 2013 hit “Happy”), the student musicians of Samohi made the best argument for supporting the arts all night.

— Andy Vasoyan