

"A Century of Simon" Events Coming up in Brenham

Returning due to public accolades, *A Century of Simon* History Exhibit will reopen for a month again this fall. November 27th is the actual 100th anniversary of The Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theatre (TBC) which opened in 1925.

The exhibit will reopen with an evening reception on Friday October 24, to run from 4pm to 7pm. While touring the displays, guests will enjoy light refreshments and period music by Jack Carr.

With the exhibit reopening, a new book will be available covering the same history found in the exhibit itself. The author of both, Sharon Brass, will be onsite to sign books and answer questions about the Simon, along with other Simon experts and researchers.

A live stage show with music from early Simon eras will be performed on-stage Saturday October 25th by international Swing and Jazz star, Gunhild Carling. The exhibit can be toured before and after the show.

"The Saturday live concert will be an exciting grand finale for the Simon's birthday year," said Alexandra Dill, TBC Manager. "Gunhild Carling is the very best artist to bring back the magic of Roaring 20's music (and beyond) on the old Simon stage.

"Gunhild is returning because of patron demand after her Barnhill Center performance in 2023. She dazzled the audience with her multi-instrumental genius and her joyous singing and dancing."

A Century of Simon Exhibit

HOURS

October 24 – November 21, 2025

Reception & Book Signing Friday Oct 24: 4pm – 7pm

Open Thursdays – Saturdays: 11am – 3pm

"The Simon's history is so fun, and so important to our community!" said author Sharon Brass. "Its saga is an almost impossible success story, having endured 100 years of challenges that most American downtown theaters didn't survive. It's amazing that this beauty is still serving our community today."

A Century of Simon Exhibit takes visitors on an interactive journey starting in 1881 when the Simon family entered the entertainment business, which led them to build and operate the elegant Simon Theatre.

Visitors see and hear fun and informative content, including samples of early vaudeville shows and movies that were shown – including "The Merry Widow," the first movie to be seen on the Simon screen.

The history includes the Simon's early vaudeville days, Hollywood's Golden Era, movies and events over the decades, and its eventual decline long after most other American downtown theaters closed.

Finally, the Simon's great revival story is told, which restored the magnificent building and the robust operation.

Personal stories, in written and video formats, are shared from locals who attended during all eras.

A Century of Simon Book Debut

The colorful 92-page hardbound book was written by Sharon Brass, author of *The Burning of Brenham*. It will be sold at the History Exhibit, starting with a book signing reception on Friday October 24. Book sales will also be at the Washington County Visitor Center and at Barnhill Center events.

Queen of Swing and Jazz Performing on October 25 at 7pm

"When Gunhild Carling performed on our stage in 2023, numerous people said it was the best show we've ever hosted," said Brass. "Bill Kaminer was one of these people, and he sees most of our shows. He was so enthusiastic that he insisted on a repeat, and he sponsored to make sure we'd bring her back."

This is the last show in the retro series celebrating the 100th birthday of the Simon Theatre.

"How appropriate it is that Gunhild's concert will highlight the Theatre's Roaring 20's beginnings!" said Brass. "Much of her music is the very best from



THE BARNHILL CENTER AT HISTORIC SIMON THEATRE

Help us celebrate A CENTURY of SIMON

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by Sharon Brass, author of *The Burning of Brenham*.
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★ GUNHILD CARLING
QUEEN OF SWING, JAZZ
AND VAUDEVILLE
Sponsored by Bill Kaminer SAT OCT 25, 2025
"One of the most feel-good, toe-tapping,
exhilarating shows you'll ever see!"





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Historic Downtown Brenham

that early Simon era, and she expertly bridges the gap to today's more modern arrangements.

"Part musical extravaganza, part Vaudevillian spectacle, Gunhild's live performance is guaranteed to be one of the most feel-good, toe-tapping, exhilarating shows you'll ever see."

Carling's style takes you back to the era of Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday. Some of her vintage songs are Minnie the Moocher, Sweet Georgia Brown, All of Me, It Had to Be You – all within a larger repertoire of old favorites.

Winner of many worldwide awards, Carling plays over 10 instruments in a single show, and three trumpets at the same time. She is often featured with big bands, symphony orchestras, chamber orchestras, and as a diva vocalist with Postmodern Jukebox. She has over 70 million online followers.

More Information

The Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theatre is located at 111 West Main Street in downtown Brenham. For more information, visit TheBarnhillCenter.com or call 979-337-7240.