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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BPMM and Bronx Music Heritage Center present
PIANIST VALERIE CAPERS AT BARTOW-PELL FIRST FRIDAY!

Bronx, NY, September 20, 2012 - On Friday, October 4, Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum and Bronx Music Heritage Center will present the incomparable pianist, composer, and educator Valerie Capers for *First Friday!* from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Dr. Capers, a lifelong Bronx resident, has performed across the country and in Europe in solo concerts, with her highly acclaimed ensemble, and with a roster of outstanding artists, including Dizzy Gillespie, Mongo Santamaria, and Tito Puente.

A lifelong Bronx resident who received her early schooling at the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, Dr. Capers went on to obtain both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The Juilliard School of Music. (She holds the distinction of being Juilliard's first blind graduate.) She served on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music, and from 1987 to 1995 was chair of the Department of Music and Art at Bronx Community College of the City University of New York (CUNY), where she is now professor emeritus.

Honors she has received include awards and commissions from the National Endowment for the Arts—including a special-projects grant to present a jazz series at the Bronx Museum of the Arts—Meet the Composer, the CUNY Research Foundation, the Smithsonian, and The Fund for Artists of Arts International. Dr. Capers received the prestigious Bronx Living Legend award from the Bronx Music Heritage Center for excellence in jazz music performance and music education.

Free Transportation and Refreshments

In addition to enjoying the music, visitors may explore the mansion; view the fall exhibition, *A Gardener's Library: Vintage Books from the Bartow-Pell Collection*; stroll the grounds (including the newly restored formal garden); and partake of light refreshments from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. The free Bronx Seaside Trolley makes a continuous loop from the Bx29 bus stop at Pelham Bay Park/#6 Pelham Bay Park subway station to Bartow-Pell and to City Island.

***First Friday!* begins at 5:30 p.m. Valerie Capers will play from 6 to 8 p.m. Registration requested: call 718-885-1461 or email info@bpmm.org. Cost \$10 adults, \$8 seniors & students, BPMM members free.**

First Friday! music at Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum is made possible with public funds from the Bronx Council on the Arts through the New York State Council on the Arts decentralization program.

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Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum is located at 895 Shore Road, Pelham Bay Park, Bronx, New York. To reach us by public transportation, take the #6 Lexington Avenue Local subway to Pelham Bay Park station, followed by the Westchester Bee-Line #45 bus direct to the mansion gate. For driving directions, please visit www.bpmm.org. The mansion and carriage house are open to the public for guided tours on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. The gardens and grounds are open daily from 8:30 a.m. to dusk. Mansion admission is \$5 adults, \$3 seniors and students; free for children under six. Visiting the garden and grounds is free.

The **Bronx Music Heritage Center (BMHC)** is committed to preserving and promoting Bronx music, cultivating Bronx artists, spurring neighborhood revival, and making cultural programs accessible to the community. For more information: bronxmusic.org.

The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corp. (WHEDco) reaches 35,000 people annually through energy-efficient and affordable homes; early childhood education and youth development; family support; and home-based childcare microenterprise and food business incubation. WHEDco's Bronx Music Heritage Center furthers its mission to make the Bronx a more beautiful, equitable and economically vibrant place to live and raise a family. For more information: www.whedco.org