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# CALIFORNIA POPS ORCHESTRA PRESENTS SEASON FINALE, “AMERICAN JUBILEE” MAY 20, 2018

(APRIL 14, 2018, Palo Alto, CA) – California Pops Orchestra, the country's only all-request pops orchestra, finishes its triumphant season with a celebration of the greatest American composers and their most beloved songs. “American Jubilee” performs one time only on Sunday, **May 20, 2018, at 3 p.m.** at the Flint Center in Cupertino. For tickets (\$20-\$55, standard ticket service fees apply), the public can visit [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or call **(650) 856-8432**.

“This concert is a full-blown love letter to the American songwriters and composers who make us happy each and every day,” said Conductor and Emcee **Kim Venaas**. “From Big Band’s Johnny Mercer and Jimmy McHugh to Hollywood’s Jerry Goldsmith and John Williams, it’s amazing how much absolutely terrific music America has brought to the world. With all the requests we get, it’s really a matter of what do we have to leave out of

each concert, and that's really hard. Yes, there will be John Phillip Sousa but there will also be Oklahoma, Bali Hai, Jaws, Superman, Edelweiss, and Indiana Jones – a buffet of American musical favorites!”

Singers **Carly Honfi** and **Matthew Hall**, both musical theatre veterans and California Pops regulars, will be on hand for this concert. “These two are entertainers, through and through – fearless, always up for whatever crazy ideas I have,” said Venaas. “There's nothing I can think up that they don't jump in and take to a new level, all in the service of giving our audiences the time of their lives.”

This show will feature Honfi singing requested songs from the big band era like “Don't Blame Me” and “I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me,” in addition to tunes from Cole Porter and Stephen Sondheim. Matthew Hall's past versions of Frank Sinatra and Michael Buble hits have become Pops audience favorites and he will take the stage in this concert to add some Broadway magic.

American Jubilee will also include everything from Gershwin's “S'Wonderful” and Cole Porter's “Easy to Love” to “It's a Grand Night for Singing” from the Broadway musical State Fair to music from television's 'Star Trek,' and Hollywood's 'Harry Potter' films. Audiences will recognize songs from television westerns and sci-fi series, the classic Americana of Aaron Copland and Ferde Grofe, and American Pops legend Leroy Anderson.

Brothers **George and Ira Gershwin**, although successful individually, created their greatest works together. From 1924 until George's death in 1937, the brothers wrote almost exclusively with each other, and in so doing introduced a new level of sophistication to American musical theatre – particularly musical comedy – as seen in their satirical trilogy “Strike Up the Band,” the Pulitzer Prize-winning “Of Thee I Sing,” and “Let 'em Eat Cake.” Their now-classic folk opera, “Porgy and Bess” remains a staple in theaters. Using their music, the modern musicals “My One and Only” (1983) and “Crazy for You” (1992) reached a new generation, with the latter winning the Tony Award for best musical. The United States Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Gershwins in 1985 (only the

third time that songwriters had been so honored), and in 2007, the Library of Congress instituted the Gershwin Prize for Popular Song. Hits from Broadway and Hollywood in their canon include “I Got Rhythm,” “Summertime,” “An American in Paris,” “Rhapsody in Blue,” “Someone to Watch Over Me,” “S’ Wonderful,” “Embraceable You,” and “They Can’t Take That Away from Me.”

A tremendously prolific songwriter, **Cole Porter** was known for his witty turn of phrase in music as well as his lavish parties and opulent lifestyle. He learned violin at age six, piano at eight, and wrote his first operetta (with help from his mother) at ten (although she falsified his recorded birth year to make him appear more precocious). His father, who also had talent as a vocalist and pianist, as well as being an amateur poet, may have also influenced his son's artistic development. Although Porter attended Yale followed by Harvard Law School, he was persuaded in his first year at Harvard by the Dean to give up the law in favor of a career in music (a move which was kept secret from his wealthy grandfather, who had pushed him to become a lawyer). Gracing both socialite parties as well as films and stage musicals, Porter's hits include “Let's Do It,” “Night and Day,” “Anything Goes,” “Begin the Beguine,” “You're the Top,” “In the Still of the Night,” “It's De-Lovely,” “I've Got You Under my Skin,” “Brush Up Your Shakespeare,” and “Just One of Those Things.”

When it comes to rousing, patriotic orchestral music, it's hard to beat **John Philip Sousa**, often called “The March King.” Among Sousa's best-known marches are “The Stars and Stripes Forever” (the National March of the United States of America), “Semper Fidelis” (the Official March of the United States Marine Corps, with which Sousa had a lifelong affiliation), “The Liberty Bell,” “The Thunderer,” and “The Washington Post.” As a child, Sousa studied [voice](#), alto horn, baritone horn, cornet, flute, piano, and trombone. When Sousa was 13, his father (a trombonist in the Marine Band) enlisted him in the United States Marine Corps as an apprentice to keep him from joining a circus band. He served in the US Marine Band until 1875, whereupon he left the service and focused on conducting and the writing of music, as well as assisting in the development of the sousaphone. He eventually rejoined the Marine Band and served there for 12 years as director. At the outbreak of

World War I, Sousa was commissioned as a lieutenant commander and led the Naval Reserve Band, but did not return to active service. He conducted the Naval Reserve Band as well as the Sousa Band until his death in 1932.

Another American treasure is **Aaron Copland**, referred to by his peers and critics as "the Dean of American Composers." His works suggest the open American landscape and pioneer spirit, a highly accessible sound that many called "populist" and Copland himself referred to his "vernacular" style. While composing in the early 1930s, Copland found financial success elusive when presenting modern, orchestral music in the midst of the Great Depression. In the mid-30s, he moved into the more accessible music that would make him famous, following the German concept of 'gebrauchsmusik' ('music for use') which could serve utilitarian ends as well as artistic ones. His best known works, composed in the 1930s and 40s include "Fanfare for the Common Man," "Third Symphony," and the richly evocative ballets "Appalachian Spring," "Billy the Kid," and "Rodeo." He also created many works of chamber music, vocal works, opera and film scores.

**Leroy Anderson**, called "one of the great American masters of light orchestral music" by John Williams, is the composer behind the songs "Blue Tango," "A Trumpeter's Lullaby," "The Syncopated Clock," "The Typewriter," "Promenade," and "Bugler's Holiday," among many others. A Magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard College, Anderson developed a compositional style that often employs creative instrumental effects (such as using a trumpet to create a horse's whinny in the winter classic "Sleigh Ride") and which occasionally makes use of non-musical instruments such as whips, typewriters and sandpaper. From 1952 to 1961, Anderson's composition "Plink, Plank, Plunk!" was used as the theme for the CBS panel show *I've Got a Secret*. For his contribution to the recording industry, Anderson has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, at 1620 Vine Street.

**California Pops Orchestra** has spent nearly three decades proving that orchestral performances by highly trained and talented musicians do not have to be stuffy affairs! The Pops includes many of the Bay Area's leading musicians with training from very distinguished conservatories including Oberlin, Julliard, and the Eastman School of Music.

The Pops also draws from talented musicians who also happen to be scientists, educators, engineers, marketers, technology leaders, and other highly creative individuals. This diversity in background plus a single-minded purpose makes the Pops a delight to play with and a never-ending source of ideas, inspiration, and humor.

California Pops Orchestra's musicians and featured guests bring fun, family-friendly shows to the live stage with selections from the full range of the popular music repertoire. Every one of the Pops performers loves the music of Broadway musicals, television, Hollywood movies, jazz, pop, comic novelties, and big band. This popular music is often scored for a unique set of instruments found in movie and recording studios but not in classical symphony orchestras: so concerts often include flugelhorns, a saxophone section, harmonicas, congas, whips, theramins, accordions, and other colorful instruments. For more information, visit [www.calpops.org](http://www.calpops.org).

#### **FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** California Pops Orchestra, the country's only all-request pops orchestra, concludes its triumphant 2017-18 season with **American Jubilee**, celebrating the best from American composers such as George and Ira Gershwin, Cole Porter, John Phillip Sousa, Glenn Miller, Aaron Copland, Leroy Anderson, and more. Come enjoy some red-blooded, stars and stripes orchestral music with the Pops!

**WHEN:** Sunday, **May 20, 2018** at 3:00pm

**WHERE:** Flint Center at De Anza College, 21250 Stevens Creek Blvd in Cupertino

**TICKETS:** To purchase tickets the public can visit <http://www.ticketmaster.com> or call (650) 856-8432.

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