

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Pasadena Symphony Association**  
**Pasadena Symphony & POPS**  
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For images and artist bios visit: <http://pasadenasympphony-pops.org/press-release-music-under-the-stars-2018/>

June 12, 2019

**THE PASADENA SYMPHONY AND POPS CELEBRATES AMERICA WITH MUSIC UNDER THE STARS,  
A FREE CONCERT AT PASADENA'S CITY HALL**

*Presented by Bank of America, this annual family friendly event brings Pasadena's premiere orchestra to Centennial Square for one night only*

*Pasadena, CA – The Pasadena Symphony and POPS extends the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration with its annual free **Music Under the Stars** concert on **Saturday, July 7 at Pasadena City Hall's Centennial Square**. Presented with sponsorship support from **Bank of America**, the 2018 Music Under the Stars concert will illuminate the night sky with treasured songs penned by iconic American composers John Williams, John Philip Sousa and more. Celebrate America with old-fashioned favorites like *Birth of the Blues*, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, and *Hymn to the Fallen*, along with Broadway hits *Somewhere*, *Some Enchanted Evening*, and more.*

Under the baton of Tony Award-nominated, **Resident POPS Conductor Larry Blank**, the orchestra will welcome three guest vocalists and the **JPL Chorus** to the stage. Best known for his outstanding renditions of patriotic songs, **Maximo Marcuso**, the "Tenor of the Americas" will bring his booming voice to classics like "America the Beautiful." Regarded as a "musical and theatrical marvel" by the San Francisco Chronicle, **Lisa Vroman** has countless Broadway credits under her belt, most notably starring for over eight years on Broadway, in San Francisco, and in Los Angeles as Christine Daaé in *The Phantom of the Opera*. And, returning again this year is Broadway's Christina Saffran, a true triple threat, who will dazzle and amaze with her powerful yet sultry voice.

The family fun begins at 6:00pm with pre-concert activities, family-style picnicking and gourmet food trucks. Families can discover the wonder of creating their own music with the instruments of the orchestra at the instrument "petting zoo," where kids of all ages can toot flutes, blow trumpets, bow strings and bang on percussion instruments. Families can bring their own picnic along to enjoy at the site, or purchase a variety of offerings from a collection of gourmet food trucks.

This family-friendly event is presented with the support of Bank of America's arts program, which supports nonprofit arts and culture presenters at the local level and with leading world-class arts entities. Other programs include the *Museums on Us*® program, which offers Bank of America

customers free access to 150 of America's finest cultural institutions, and the *Art in our Communities*® program through which the company shares its corporate collection with museums throughout the world.

Gates open at 6:00pm and the concert begins at 8:00pm. Admission to this event is free, and guests are encouraged to bring a picnic, blanket and low-back chairs. Rental chairs will also be available for purchase. For more information, visit [PasadenaSymphony-Pops.org](http://PasadenaSymphony-Pops.org) or call 626.793.7172.

## IF YOU GO:

- **What:** Bank of America's Music Under the Stars with the Pasadena Symphony and POPS
- **Special Guests:** Larry Blank (conductor), Maximo Marcuso (vocalist), Christina Saffran (vocalist), Lisa Vroman (vocalist)
- **When:** Saturday, July 7, 2018. Gates open for pre-concert festivities at 6:00pm; concert begins at 8:00pm
- **Where:** Pasadena City Hall Centennial Square
- **Cost:** Free, Chair Rentals \$3
- **Parking:** Plaza Las Fuentes Structure (Union Ave & Los Robles); School House Parking Facility (Green St. & Raymond Ave); Pasadena Center/Sheraton Parking Structure (Marengo & Cordova); Paseo Colorado Subterranean Garage; Paseo Colorado Marengo Avenue Parking Structure; Paseo Colorado Los Robles Parking Structure; Arroyo Seco Park Parking (Raymond Ave or Arroyo Blvd), and Marriott Courtyard Hotel Parking (enter on Raymond).

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### Larry Blank Conductor

Resident Pops Conductor, Larry Blank is one of the most prolific and sought after composers, conductors, and orchestrators in the entertainment business today. His work has been presented all over the world, including some of Broadway's most successful musicals, Carnegie Hall, and top television and film projects.

Larry has received Tony and Drama Desk nominations for his orchestrations of *Catch Me If You Can*, *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *White Christmas*. Larry also received Drama Desk nominations for *A Christmas Story* and *Honeymoon in Vegas*.

Other Broadway orchestrations can be heard in the Lincoln Centre production of *The Nance* as well as *Fame Becomes Me*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *The Producers*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Tommy Tune: White Tie and Tails*.

Larry is currently orchestrating *Roman Holiday* (Golden Gate Theatre, San Francisco).

Recent projects include *Holiday Inn* (Universal/Roundabout Theater); *Guys and Dolls* (Chichester Festival Theatre, West End and Tour); *Mrs Henderson Presents* (Theatre Royal Bath, West End & Toronto); *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Vaudeville) and *Mack & Mabel* (Chichester Festival Theatre and UK Tour).

In the West End, Larry orchestrated *City of Angels* (Donmar Warehouse); *White Christmas* (Dominion); *Singin' in the Rain* (Palace Theatre, UK tour, Japan, International tour, Russia and Australia); *Carousel*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Producers*, *The Beautiful and Damned* and *Mack & Mabel*.

Larry's film orchestrations can be heard in *The Producers* and *Chicago*. Larry was the conductor/arranger/orchestrator for Jerry Herman's title song for the film *Barney's Great Adventure*, sung by Bernadette Peters, as well as orchestrating/arranging two songs for *South Park* for Marc Shaiman; music supervisor/orchestrator for Jerry Herman's *Mrs Santa Claus* with Angela Lansbury; arranger/orchestrator for the films *What's the Worst That Could Happen?*, *The Kid*, *Kiss the Girls*, *The American President*, *Forget Paris*, *City Slickers II: the Legend of Curly's Gold*, *The Net*, *That's Entertainment! III*, *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2*, *Bogus*, *North*, *Speechless*, *I'd Do Anything*, *Stuart Saves His Family*, *Aladdin and the King of Thieves*, *The Jungle Book 2* and *Cats Don't Dance*; composer for two episodes of the television series *In the Heat of the Night*, as well as music for *Sweating Bullets* and the Grammys.

Larry has arranged and/or conducted for Barbra Streisand, Michael Feinstein (including two tours of Australia and New Zealand), Marilyn Horne, Michael Crawford, Christine Andreas, Joe Williams, Yanni, Marvin Hamlisch, Bernadette Peters, Steve Lawrence, Vikki Carr, Pete Fountain, Elaine Stritch, Lorna Luft, Elaine Paige, Jason Alexander, Martin Short, Georgia Brown and many others.

Larry has orchestrated and arranged for four Academy Awards shows including parts of the (Marc Shaiman-arranged) Billy Crystal medleys.

Larry regularly conducts for BBC Radio 2 *Friday Night is Music Night*. Larry orchestrates the *Olivier Awards* for the Society of London Theatre. Larry conducted the *Olivier Awards* at the Royal Opera House in 2015 and 2016.

## **Maximo Marcuso** **Vocalist**

Maximo's outstanding voice and musical gifts flourished while attending The National Cultural Center and the prestigious Maria Callas School of Opera. In the United States, Maximo studied with Igor Stravinsky's protégé, soprano Arlene Slater-Stone, former voice teacher of the Juilliard School of Music.

He then enrolled in the vocal arts program of The Colburn School of the Performing Arts in Los Angeles and continued mastering his operatic techniques with Brent McMunn, Opera Director at the USC Thornton School of Music. Eager to strive for excellence, Maximo continued expanding his repertory under the coaching of Music Director Frank Fetta, conductor of the Culver City Symphony, and currently is working with California Philharmonic Chorale Director, Maestra Marya Basaraba.

Maximo performed for several years with the Crystal Cathedral's Hour of Power Philharmonic in Garden Grove, California under the baton of Music Director and Conductor Johnny Carl, and sang at the Cathedral for "The Passion of the Christ Concert," conducted by film composer John Debney. He also appeared as guest soloist for The Pasadena Symphony and Pops Orchestra's "Night at the Oscars Concert" and featured soloist for The Golden State Symphony Orchestra's "Holiday Spectacular Concert," as well as with The Los Angeles Philharmonic Ensemble and The Hollywood Ensemble Opera.

Maximo had the honor to receive the "Blood and Fire Award of Excellence" by Major General Megan P. Tatu, Chief of Staff of the 63D Regional Readiness Command of the United States Army, for his outstanding renditions of patriotic songs, including the "The Star Spangled Banner" and "God Bless America." As a musical ambassador to the world, Maximo has been honored and awarded by the California Legislature Assembly and by the California State Senate for his invaluable artistic contributions to the arts and education.

### **Christina Saffran** **Vocalist**

Christina's Broadway career is extensive, having starred as Kathy Seldon in *Singin' in the Rain*, (cast recording), Maggie in *A Chorus Line*, Shoo Shoo in *Sophisticated Ladies*, Rosa Bud and Edwin Drood in *Drood*, and Zaneeta in *The Music Man*.

A true triple threat, audiences throughout the world have been thrilled by her leading performances in *My Fair Lady*, *Showboat*, *South Pacific*, *Phantom*, *White Christmas*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Damn Yankees*, *Sound of Music*, *Pajama Game*, *She Loves Me*, *Street Scene*, *Grease*, *Company*, *My One and Only*, *Chess*, *Aspects of Love*, *Me and My Girl*, *I Do I Do...* the list goes on.

Her concert work includes a multitude of styles ranging from engagements as the lead chanteuse for Herbie Hancock, to soloist with numerous national symphony orchestras, and the Duke Ellington Orchestra as well opening for Don Rickles, with her own show in Las Vegas.

She has provided animated voices for Disney's *Aladdin*, *Mulan*, *Magic Flute*, *102 Dalmatians*, *A Bug's Life*, *Armageddon*, *Pocahontas II*, *Hunchback II*, and *Lady and the Tramp II*, and is heard on *Enchanted*, *Cinderella*, *Galaxy Quest*, *Polar Express*, *Christmas with the Kranks*, *The Lorax* and *The Santa Clause II*. Her solo CD entitled *Temporary Insanity* is available at [www.LMLMusic.com](http://www.LMLMusic.com)

Christina is a Founding Board member of Retinoblastoma International ([www.retinoblastoma.net](http://www.retinoblastoma.net)), an active member of SGI-USA and the International Committee of Artists for Peace. She is a private vocal teacher/coach/vocal contractor in Los Angeles and the mother of two amazing daughters, Grace and Emma.

### **Lisa Vroman** **Vocalist**

From Broadway to Classics, on stage and in concert, Lisa Vroman has established herself as one of America's most versatile voices. She has been regarded as a "musical and theatrical marvel" by the San Francisco Chronicle, as well as "one of American Musical Theater's most beautiful voices" by acclaimed Broadway producer Sir Cameron Mackintosh.

Lisa starred for over 8 years on Broadway, in San Francisco, and in Los Angeles as Christine Daaé in *The Phantom of the Opera*. Ms. Vroman starred as Rosabella in *The Most Happy Fella*, making her New York City Opera debut with Paul Sorvino playing the title role. She starred as Lili Vanessi in *Kiss Me Kate* with both Glimmerglass Opera and the MUNY Theater of St. Louis, Anna Leonowens in *The King and I* with Lyric Opera of Virginia, and played Marian Paroo in *The Music Man* with Shirley Jones (Mrs. Paroo) and Patrick Cassidy (Harold Hill) at The Bushnell Theatre in Hartford CT. Lisa sang the role of Birdie in *Regina* with Utah Opera, conducted by Keith Lockhart; made her New Jersey Opera debut as Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* (directed by Ira Siff); and premiered and recorded two Comic Operas by composers John Musto (Bastianello) and William Bolcom (Lucrezia) with the *New York Festival of Song*.

Her Broadway debut was in *Aspects of Love*, and she was the first to play both Fantine and Cosette in *Les Miserables*. For PBS she was featured with Colm Wilkinson and Michael Ball in Cameron Mackintosh's *Hey, Mr. Producer!* at a Royal Gala at the Lyceum Theatre in London. She sang the role of Johanna in the San Francisco Symphony's Emmy Award winning PBS production of *Sweeney Todd in Concert*, with Patti Lupone and George Hearn. Both are available on DVD. Lisa starred as Laurey in *Oklahoma*, filmed live in concert for the BBC Proms Festival at Royal Albert Hall in London, played Mary Turner in Gershwin's *Of Thee I Sing/Let 'em Eat Cake* in concert with Michael Tilson Thomas conducting the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus, and played Lucy Brown in *Threepenny Opera* at the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco with Bebe Neuwirth, Nancy Dussault, and Anika Noni Rose. Other roles have included Laurie in *The Tender Land*; Maria in *The Sound Of Music*; Josephine in *HMS Pinafore*, Yum-Yum in *The Mikado*; and Anna 1 in *The Seven Deadly Sins*. She has sung Maria in *West Side Story*, Guenevere in *Camelot*, Carrie Pipperidge in *Carousel*, Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, and Amalia Balash in *She Loves Me*, as well as many other well-known musical roles.

Lisa is a George London Competition Grant recipient and a 1999 Minerva Award recipient from the State University of New York at Potsdam. She received an Undergraduate degree in Music Education from the Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam, a Masters degree in Fine Arts, Opera Performance from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, and was recently awarded an honorary Doctor of Music from SUNY Potsdam. Ms. Vroman has become an active mentor and sought-after clinician with many colleges and universities across the country and around the world. She has acted as a judge in both the Lotte Lenya Competition for the Kurt Weill Foundation and UCLA's Walter Jurmann Competition. She has recently joined the teaching faculty of the Institute for American Musical Theatre in New York.

With a repertoire that ranges from Stravinsky to Weill to Broadway, Lisa is a frequent guest soloist with theater and opera companies, and orchestras including San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago, Atlanta, the National, Malaysia, Seattle, Hong Kong, Cleveland, Nashville, Pacific, Utah, Dallas, the Boston Pops with Keith Lockhart, the New York Pops at Carnegie Hall, and the Philly Pops with Peter Nero. She made her debut at The Hollywood Bowl in Disney's 75th celebration, singing and dancing with legend Dick Van Dyke in a medley from *Mary Poppins*. Lisa has sung in concert with composer Stephen Schwartz, organist David Higgs, and the Empire Brass Quintet. Her solo CD, *Broadway Classic*, features Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe and 47 of San Francisco's finest orchestral players. Lisa had the honor of singing at the Profiles in Courage Award dinner in Boston at the JFK Library, as a guest of the Kennedy family. She has also sung on separate occasions for Queen Elizabeth, former presidents Gerald Ford, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton, former Vice President Al Gore, and the Library of Congress.

Recent performances have included *An Evening of Rodgers & Hammerstein* with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, concert performances of Cole Porter's 1928 *La Revue Des Ambassadeurs* with l'Opéra

de Rennes in France, a multi-city concert tour in China, and playing the role of Maria Callas in Terrence McNally's award winning play, *Master Class*.

Lisa lives in Pasadena, CA with husband Patrick O'Neil and their beautiful dog Barber.

## **ABOUT THE PASADENA SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION**

Recent Acclaim for the Pasadena Symphony and POPS:

*"The Pasadena Symphony signals a new direction...teeming with vitality...dripping with opulent, sexy emotion." – Los Angeles Times.*

*"...full of pulsating energy from first note to last... the strings were lushly resonant, the wind principals were at the top of their games, and the brass rang out with gleaming vigor." – Pasadena Star News.*

Formed in 1928, the Pasadena Symphony and POPS is an ensemble of Hollywood's most talented, sought after musicians. With extensive credits in the film, television, recording and orchestral industry, the artists of Pasadena Symphony and POPS are the most heard in the world.

The Pasadena Symphony and POPS performs in two of the most extraordinary venues in the United States: Ambassador Auditorium, known as the *Carnegie Hall of the West*, and the luxuriant Los Angeles Arboretum & Botanic Garden. Internationally recognized, Grammy-nominated conductor, David Lockington, serves as the Pasadena Symphony Association's Music Director, with performance-practice specialist Nicholas McGegan serving as Principal Guest Conductor. The multi-platinum-selling, two-time Emmy and five-time Grammy Award-nominated entertainer dubbed "The Ambassador of the Great American Songbook," Michael Feinstein, is the Principal Pops Conductor, who succeeded Marvin Hamlisch in the newly created *Marvin Hamlisch Chair*.

A hallmark of its robust education programs, the Pasadena Symphony Association has served the youth of the region for over five decades through the Pasadena Youth Symphony Orchestras (PYSO), comprised of five performing ensembles with 300 gifted 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students from more than 50 schools all over the Southern California region. The PYSO has toured internationally at prestigious venues in New York, Vienna, and most recently San Jose, Costa Rica. They regularly perform throughout Southern California and have appeared on the popular television show *GLEE*.

The PSA provides people from all walks of life with powerful access points to the world of symphonic music.

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