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**Pasadena Symphony Association**  
**Pasadena Symphony & POPS**  
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For artist bios and images visit: <https://pasadenasympphony-pops.org/2019-pops-season-announcement/>

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW FOR MICHAEL FEINSTEIN & THE PASADENA POPS  
2019 SUMMER CONCERT SERIES**

*JUNE 22 - SEPTEMBER 14, 2019*

**Pasadena, CA** – Principal Pops Conductor **Michael Feinstein** leads the **Pasadena POPS** for the **2019 Sierra Summer Concert Series** at the **Los Angeles County Arboretum** with five concerts sure to make your summer sizzle. The 2019 POPS season runs **June 22<sup>nd</sup>** through **September 14<sup>th</sup>** with a jam-packed line-up of multiple award-winning guest artists including **Grey's Anatomy's Kevin McKidd**, Sag Award winner **LaChanze** (*The Help*), Tony nominees **Melissa Errico**, **Tony Yazbeck**, **Michael Cavanaugh** and **Gavin Creel** (*Hello Dolly*, *Book of Mormon*), Tony Award winner **Karen Ziemba** and **Michael Feinstein** in concert.

Feinstein kicks off the summer on **June 22** with Kevin McKidd singing **The Great American Songbook**. The POPS season opener will celebrate icons from sea to shining sea covering everything from Broadway and Tin Pan Alley to Hollywood. On **July 13** Feinstein delivers **Rhapsody in Blue**, Gershwin's masterpiece that changed the course of music as we now know it, along with your favorite jazz and swing standards with Tony nominees **Tony Yazbeck** and **LaChanze**, and renowned pianist Frederick Hodges.

Feinstein returns as soloist on **August 3** to sing the best of **Cole Porter**, followed by a rockin' **Tribute to Elton John** on **August 24** starring singing sensation **Michael Cavanaugh**, dubbed "the new voice of the American Rock and Roll Songbook" (*Billboard*). For the POPS' annual movie night on **September 14**, Feinstein has curated a very special tribute to the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Wizard of Oz* for **MGM Movie Classics**. Hear favorites from *Singin' in the Rain*, *Meet Me in St. Louis* and the Golden Age of Hollywood for this unforgettable season finale.

All concerts are held at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden. Grounds open for picnicking and dining at 5:30pm and performances begin at 7:30pm. Don't miss the best outdoor dinner party in town with spacious circular table seating with fine linens, or lawn seating for those who want to bring a blanket – each option carries on the tradition of picnic-dining with your family

and friends with Michael Feinstein and the San Gabriel Valley's premier orchestra! Among many venue amenities, concert goers can enjoy pre-ordered gourmet dining packages for on-site pickup just steps from their table from Julienne, Marston's and Claud & Co. The venue also hosts mouth-watering food trucks and the convenience of two full beverage centers serving fine wines, beer, coffee and soft drinks.

Audiences get the ultimate outdoor concert experience with large LED video screens to see the artists and orchestra up close, superior sound and the high-quality production value that is a signature of the Pasadena POPS. For those who want to make a night of it, exclusive hotel packages are available for POPS patrons at Pasadena's landmark Hotel Constance.

The Arboretum is located at 301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA. Subscribers may purchase pre-paid onsite parking at the Arboretum, and all concertgoers can purchase guaranteed and convenient parking at Santa Anita Park, located just across Baldwin Ave., with complimentary non-stop shuttle service to the Arboretum's main entrance.

Single tickets start at \$25. Season subscriptions and single tickets are now on sale, and are available by calling the box office at (626)-793-7172, online at PasadenaSymphony-Pops.org or at the Arboretum on the day of the concerts.

### **2019 Sierra Summer POPS Series Calendar**

**The Great American Songbook:  
Icons from Broadway, Tin Pan Alley and Hollywood**  
June 22, 2019

**Michael Feinstein**, *conductor*  
**Melissa Errico**, *soloist*  
**Kevin McKidd**, *soloist*

**Rhapsody in Blue**  
July 13, 2019

Michael Feinstein, conductor  
Frederick Hodges, piano  
LaChanze, soloist  
Tony Yazbeck, soloist

**Michael Feinstein Sings Cole Porter**  
August 3, 2019

Michael Feinstein, *soloist*  
Larry Blank, *conductor*

**Music of Elton John**  
**Starring Michael Cavanaugh**  
August 24, 2019

Larry Blank, Conductor

**MGM Movie Classics:**  
***Wizard of Oz* 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
September 14, 2019

Michael Feinstein, *conductor*  
Gavin Creel, *soloist*  
Karen Ziemba, *soloist*

**IF YOU GO:**

- **What:** The Pasadena Symphony and POPS presents the 2019 Sierra Summer Concert Series with Principal Pops Conductor Michael Feinstein
- **When:** June 22, July 14, August 3, August 24, September 14 at 7:30pm
- **Where:** The LA County Arboretum | 301 N Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007
- **Cost:** Tickets start at \$25.00
- **Dining:** Gates open at 5:30pm for picnicking. Guests are welcome to bring their own food and drink or visit one of the many onsite food vendors.
- **Parking:** Subscribers have the opportunity to purchase onsite Arboretum parking. Single ticket holders may purchase guaranteed and convenient parking at Santa Anita Park, located just across Baldwin Ave., with complimentary non-stop shuttle service to the Arboretum's main entrance.

**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.*

*“In his five years leading the PSO, Lockington has taken an ensemble that was already quite good and elevated it into one where excellence is the byword.” – 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.

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

**Michael Feinstein**  
**Principal Pops Conductor**  
*Tom and Erika Girardi Chair*

Michael Feinstein has built a dazzling career over the last three decades bringing the music of the Great American songbook to the world. From recordings that have earned him five Grammy Award nominations to his Emmy nominated PBS-TV specials, his acclaimed NPR series and concerts spanning the globe – in addition to his appearances at iconic venues such as The White House, Buckingham Palace, Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall and Sydney Opera House – his work as an educator and archivist define Feinstein as one of the most important musical forces of our time.

In 2007, he founded the Great American Songbook Foundation, dedicated to celebrating the art form and preserving it through educational programs, Master Classes, and the annual High School Songbook Academy. This summer intensive open to students from across the country has produced graduates who have gone on to record acclaimed albums and appear on television programs such as NBC's "America's Got Talent." Michael serves on the Library of Congress' National Recording Preservation Board, an organization dedicated to ensuring the survival, conservation and increased public availability of America's sound recording heritage.

The most recent album from his multi-platinum recording career is *A Michael Feinstein Christmas* from Concord Records. The CD features Grammy Award -winning jazz pianist Alan Broadbent (Paul McCartney, Diana Krall, Natalie Cole). Feinstein earned his fifth Grammy Award nomination in 2009 for *The Sinatra Project*, his CD celebrating the music of “Ol’ Blue Eyes.” *The Sinatra Project, Volume II: The Good Life* was released in 2011. He released the CDs *The Power Of Two* – collaborating with “Glee” and “30 Rock” star Cheyenne Jackson – and *Cheek To Cheek*, recorded with Broadway legend Barbara Cook. For Feinstein’s CD *We Dreamed These Days*, he co-wrote the title song with Dr. Maya Angelou.

His Emmy Award-nominated TV special *Michael Feinstein – The Sinatra Legacy*, which was taped live at the Palladium in Carmel, IN, aired across the country in 2011. The PBS series “Michael Feinstein’s American Songbook,” the recipient of the ASCAP Deems-Taylor Television Broadcast Award, was broadcast for three seasons and is available on DVD. His most recent primetime PBS-TV Special, “New Year’s Eve at The Rainbow Room” – written and directed by “Desperate Housewives” creator Marc Cherry – aired in 2014. For his nationally syndicated public radio program “Song Travels,” Michael interviews and performs alongside of music luminaries such as Bette Midler, Neil Sedaka, Liza Minnelli, Rickie Lee Jones, David Hyde Pierce and more.

Feinstein was named Principal Pops Conductor for the Pasadena Symphony in 2012 and made his conducting debut in June 2013 to celebrated critical acclaim. Under Feinstein’s leadership, the Pasadena Pops has quickly become a premier orchestral presenter of the Great American Songbook with definitive performances of rare orchestrations and classic arrangements. He launched an additional Pops series at the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in Palm Beach, Florida in 2014. Michael’s book *The Gershwins and Me* – the *Los Angeles Times* best-seller from Simon & Schuster – features a new CD of Gershwin standards performed with Cyrus Chestnut at the piano.

Feinstein serves as Artistic Director of the Palladium Center for the Performing Arts, a \$170 million, three-theatre venue in Carmel, Indiana, which opened in January 2011. The theater is home to diverse live programming and a museum for his rare memorabilia and manuscripts. Since 1999, he has served as Artistic Director for Carnegie Hall’s “Standard Time with Michael Feinstein” in conjunction with ASCAP. In 2010 he became the director of the Jazz and Popular Song Series at New York’s Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Feinstein’s at the Nikko, Michael’s nightclub at San Francisco’s Nikko Hotel, has presented the top talents of pop and jazz since 2013. He debuted at Feinstein’s/54 Below, his new club in New York, late in 2015. His first venue in New York, Feinstein’s at the Regency, featured major entertainers such as Rosemary Clooney, Glen Campbell, Barbara Cook, Diahann Carroll, Jane Krakowski, Lea Michele, Cyndi Lauper, Jason Mraz and Alan Cumming from 1999 to 2012. He has designed a new piano for Steinway called “The First Ladies,” inspired by the White House piano and signed by several former First Ladies. It was first played to commemorate the Ronald Regan centennial on February 6, 2011.

In 2013 Michael released *Change Of Heart: The Songs of Andre Previn* in collaboration with four time Oscar and eleven time Grammy Award-winning composer-conductor-pianist Andre

Previn. The album celebrates Previn's pop songs and motion picture classics. Earlier album highlights include *Hopeless Romantics*, a songbook of classics by Michael's late friend Harry Warren, recording with legendary jazz pianist George Shearing. His album with songwriter icon Jimmy Webb, *Only One Life – The Songs of Jimmy Webb*, was named one of "10 Best CDs of the Year" by *USA Today*.

Feinstein received his fourth Grammy nomination for *Michael Feinstein with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra*, his first recording with a symphony orchestra. The year before, Rhino/Elektra Music released *The Michael Feinstein Anthology*, a two-disc compilation spanning 1987 to 1996 and featuring old favorites and previously-unreleased tracks.

Michael was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, where he started playing piano by ear as a 5-year-old. After graduating from high school, he moved to Los Angeles when he was 20. The widow of legendary concert pianist-actor Oscar Levant introduced him to Ira Gershwin in July 1977. Feinstein became Gershwin's assistant for six years, which earned him access to numerous unpublished Gershwin songs, many of which he has since performed and recorded. Gershwin's influence provided a solid base upon which Feinstein evolved into a captivating performer, composer and arranger of his own original music. He also has become an unparalleled interpreter of music legends such as Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer, Duke Ellington and Harry Warren. Feinstein has received three honorary doctorates.

Through his live performances, recordings, film and television appearances, and his songwriting (in collaboration with Alan and Marilyn Bergman, Lindy Robbins, Bob Merrill and Marshall Barer), Feinstein is an all-star force in American music.

For more information, please visit [www.MichaelFeinstein.com](http://www.MichaelFeinstein.com).

## **Larry Blank** **Resident Pops 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.

He was the Music Director/Conductor and/or vocal arranger for many shows on Broadway and in Los Angeles including *They're Playing Our Song*, *Evita*, *Sugar Babies*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Phantom Of The Opera*, *Onward Victoria*, *Copperfield*, *Colette*, *A Chorus Line* and *A Little Night Music*. He has been nominated three times for both the Tony Award and the Drama Desk Award for his orchestrations in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Irving Berlin's White Christmas* and with Marc Shaiman for *Catch Me If You Can*. Larry received a Drama Desk Nomination for orchestrations for *A Christmas Story*

Larry contributed to the orchestrations for both the stage and film production of *The Producers*, the film *Chicago* and is a regular conductor and arranger for BBC RADIO 2 Friday Night Is Music Night in the UK. Larry is also the Music Supervisor and Orchestrator (along with Mark Cumberland) for the *Olivier Awards* in London.

Blank has worked with top talent from varied fields of the entertainment world, notably as personal conductor to Michael Crawford. He has also worked with Michael Feinstein, Marvin Hamlisch, Bernadette Peters, Kelsey Grammar, Christine Baranski, Roberta Flack, Pete Fountain, Peabo Bryson, Sally Kellerman, Nancy Dussault, Marc Shaiman, Jerry Herman, Ann-Margaret, Davis Gaines, Bette Midler, George Benson, Placido Domingo, Randy Newman, Trisha Yearwood, Tom Scott, Quincy Jones, Michael Bolton, John Raitt and Diana Rigg.

Blank's background includes orchestrating and arranging songs for *South Park* and was Music Supervisor and Orchestrator for Jerry Herman's movie, *Mrs. Santa Claus* starring Angela Lansbury and Charles Durning. Some of the films he lent his talent to include *The Kid*, *Kiss The Girls*, *The American President*, *Forget Paris*, *City Slickers II*, *The Net*, *That's Entertainment III*, *North*, *I'd Do Anything*, and *Stuart Saves His Family*. Blank's music can be heard on the animated feature films, *Cats Don't Dance* and *All Dogs Go To Heaven* as well as the *101 Dalmations Christmas Special*.

Mr. Blank's television work includes orchestrating and composing music for several of the *Grammy Awards* and *Academy Award* shows as well as numerous television movies and shows.

Mr. Blank has guest conducted most of the orchestras throughout the world, including *The San Francisco Symphony*, *The New York Philharmonic*, *Western Australia Symphony Orchestra*, *The Los Angeles Philharmonic*, *Palm Beach Pops*, *Auckland Symphony*, *The National Symphony Orchestra*, *The Boston Pops*, *The Chicago Symphony Orchestra*, *Calgary Symphony*, *New Orleans Symphony* and *Toronto*.

## **Melissa Errico**

Soloist

Melissa Errico is an actress, a singer and a writer. She was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Actress for the musical *Amour*, and starred in *My Fair Lady*, *High Society*, *Dracula*, *Les Miserables* and others. She's also starred in several productions with Irish Repertory Theatre and has 6 Drama Desk nominations.

As a singer, Melissa has made five solo studio CDs and has performed with most of the major symphonies in America and the UK. Her latest album *Sondheim Sublime* was recently released to critical acclaim, with *The Wall Street Journal* calling it "The best all-Sondheim album ever recorded." In the past 2 years she has performed numerous sold-out Sondheim concerts in New York City, Chicago at The Ravinia Festival, DC and London. Her connection to Sondheim's work began when she played Dot in *Sunday in the Park with George* at The Kennedy Center. She then went on to star in *Passion* at Classic Stage Company and *Do I hear a Waltz?* at New York City Center.

Her other solo cds include *Blue Like That* (EMI/Capitol Records), *Lullabies and Wildflowers* (VMG/Universal), *Legrand Affair* (Ghostlight/Sony) and *What About Today? Melissa Errico Live at 54 Below* (Broadway Records; CD & DVD). She also recently appeared in television guest-starring arcs on Cinemax's "The Knick" directed by Steven Soderbergh, and "Billions" on Showtime. Melissa has served on The National Endowment for the Arts, has published multiple essays in *The New York Times*, and is a contributing essayist in *The Purist* and other magazines.

## **Kevin McKidd** **Soloist**

Kevin McKidd is a well-known Scottish actor. He was born and spent his childhood in Elgin, Moray, Scotland. He is best known for his portrayal of Tommy in the film *Trainspotting* and his work on the critically acclaimed television show *Rome*.

As a teenager, he was part of a rock band called Plan 9. The group achieved a moderate amount of success and toured all over Scotland. He got into acting at a young age, joining the local Moray Youth Theatre group as a teenager. He shifted gears, however, and enrolled at the University of Edinburgh with a focus on engineering. He soon dropped out though and switched to the Queen Margaret College to study drama. Kevin fully immersed himself in his studies, even joining the University's student theatre company, Bedlam Theatre.

Kevin landed his first television role in 1996, playing Father Deegan in the British sitcom *Father Ted*. This led to his seminal role in the international hit *Trainspotting* and several small parts on British serials and miniseries.

In 2002, he caught the eye of acclaimed director Ridley Scott. Ridley cast him against Orlando Bloom and Liam Neeson in his war epic *Kingdom of Heaven*. This led to further work in films such as *Nicholas Nickleby* and the *Silence of the Lambs* prequel *Hannibal Rising*. 2005 found him cast as Lucius Vorenus in the HBO series *Rome*. The show received tremendous acclaim and was on the air for two full seasons. In late 2007, McKidd began his role as the lead character in the American fantasy television series *Journeyman* on NBC.

His role in *Rome* led to McKidd's casting in the medical drama series *Grey's Anatomy* as Dr. *Owen Hunt*. He made his directorial debut in the series' seventh season, directing the episode "Don't Deceive Me (Please Don't Go)". He won the award for "Best Performance in a Drama Series Multi-Episode Storyline" at the 14th Prism Awards for his work in *Grey's Anatomy*. He played the role of Poseidon, god of the seas, and the father of *Percy Jackson* in *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*.

McKidd has done voice work and voiced the character of Jezz Torrent, flame haired lead singer of the fictional Scottish hard rock band Love Fist in the video game *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. He is credited with playing a voice-over for the character John "Soap" MacTavish in *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2* and *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*. McKidd was in talks in 2008 to portray Connor MacLeod in a remake of the 1986 fantasy film *Highlander*, though the role has subsequently been associated with Ryan Reynolds. In 2012, he voiced the characters of Lord MacGuffin and his son Young MacGuffin in the Disney/Pixar film *Brave*.



**Frederick Hodges**  
**Piano**

Hailed by the press as one of the best concert pianists in the world, Frederick Hodges is sought after by today's foremost orchestras, festivals, conductors, and collaborative musicians. His absolute artistry, virtuosity and charisma have brought him to the world's most renowned stages numerous times, leaving audiences around the globe repeatedly captivated. Mr. Hodges has made regular appearances at major music festivals throughout the US as well as world tours with the Royal Society Jazz Orchestra under the baton of conductor Don Neely.

Renowned as a pianist and singer, Frederick Hodges is recognized by audiences around the world for his mastery of diverse repertoire from Rachmaninoff to Gershwin. He has established a reputation as a truly versatile artist equally sought after as soloist, singer, guest soloist with the California Pops Orchestra, and dance band pianist. He has appeared on national television, radio, and in several Hollywood films. He is also a sought-after silent film accompanist for both live performances and on DVD. He performs regularly at the Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum.

His extensive repertoire includes the great European classical masters as well as the best American composers such as George Gershwin and Cole Porter. His distinguished discography, primarily on Rivermont Records, Stomp Off, and Aristophone Records, includes piano works by George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Jerome Kern, and Scott Joplin.

Frederick Hodges is a native of California, where he began his piano studies at age eight. At thirteen, he began intense classical piano study with two famed San Francisco Bay Area piano teachers who were both graduates of the Juilliard School of Music: Virginia Moore and Trula Whelan. At age seventeen, he won the prestigious Music Teachers of California Young Artist Award. At twenty, while still an undergraduate at the University of California at Berkeley, he joined Don Neely's Royal Society Jazz Orchestra as pianist. Since then, he has toured extensively. Frederick has enjoyed a career playing solo piano for society parties and holding down steady engagements at legendary San Francisco establishments such as L'Etoile in the Huntington Hotel, Masons in the Fairmont Hotel, and the Ritz Carlton Hotel.

In 2001, Frederick earned a doctorate in history from Oxford University in England, where he lived for five years as a member of Magdalen College. From 2001 to 2002, he served as a postdoctoral research associate at Yale University. Frederick has participated in many prestigious festivals including the Monterey Jazz Festival, the Sacramento Music Festival, the WestCoast Ragtime Festival, The Blind Boone Festival in Columbia Missouri, the Templeton Ragtime Festival at Mississippi State University, the El Segundo Ragtime Festival, and the Sedalia Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival, Cinecon Film Festival in Hollywood, among others.

**La Chanze**  
**Soloist**

Without question, LaChanze is one of the brightest stars and voices to ever hit Broadway. She currently stars as Diva Donna in the high voltage production *Summer The Donna Summer Musical* at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre. Of her performance, *The Hollywood Reporter* says,

“LaChanze brings class” with *Vulture* proclaiming, her voice “might in fact be able to bring plaster down from the ceiling.” Her volcanic performance landed her nominations for the 2018 Tony Award nomination for Leading Actress in a Musical, 2018 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Actress in a Musical and 2018 Drama League Award for Distinguished Performance Award. In addition to her consistently brilliant stage work, LaChanze continues to make her mark in film and television and concert stages across the U.S.

In television and film, she stars in writer/director Marishka Phillips’ suspense filled film *Melinda*. She also appeared in the award-winning film *The Help* where she landed a SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture. Other screen projects include *Side Effects*, *Heartbreak Hotel*, *For Love or Money*, *Leap of Faith* and *My New Gun*. On television, she appeared in the award-winning HBO special *The Night of*, *Person of Interest*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *One Life to Live*, *Lucy*, *Sex and the City*, *The Cosby Show*, among others.

LaChanze is an accomplished and sought-after concert performer who has the honor of appearing in the PBS special and cast album *Handel’s Messiah Rocks: A Joyful Noise*. This appearance resulted in her earning the covenant Emmy Award for her performance Her electric and highly praised tour *Feeling Good* continues to raise roofs and touch the heart of audiences’ worldwide. With her tour and album of the same name, LaChanze’s *Feeling Good* mixes the perfect blend of emotional intensity with sultry vocals leaving onlookers feeling every pain, joy and excitement she felt during those moments of her life.

With a long list of accolades to her name, she is among today’s most highly regarded performers. Hailed by the *New York Times* as “magnetic,” LaChanze theatre credits are vast, including *The Color Purple* (2006 Tony Award for Best Performance by a Leading Lady in Musical), *Once on this Island* (nominations, Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle), *If/Then*, *Ragtime*, *Company*, and *Uptown It’s Hot*. Some of her Off-Broadway credits include *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds her Chameleon Skin* (Drama Desk nomination), *Dessa Rose* (Obie Award), *Inked Baby*, *Spunk* and *From the Mississippi Delta*.

Not one to rest on her laurels, LaChanze is the author of *Little Diva* (with illustrations by Brian Pinkey). Released in May 2010, *Little Diva* offers a realistic and endearing view of a little girl’s dream of taking to the stage like her mother, a Broadway star.

## **Tony Yazbeck Soloist**

Born in Riverside, CA, Tony Yazbeck moved to Bethlehem, PA at age 4, when he first saw Fred Astaire dance on a black and white TV screen. Tony danced around the living room, pretending he was Mr. Astaire, so his mom and dad put him in dance class right away. At age 11, he auditioned to be a replacement “Newsboy” in the Tyne Daly *Gypsy*, directed by Arthur Laurents. For the next two years, his mother drove him two hours in each direction, six days a week, from Bethlehem, PA to the stage door of The St. James Theater.

A year after closing *Gypsy*, at age 14, his family moved to The Poconos, where Tony worked on a farm to make extra money. He moved to Orlando at age 16, where he studied at Dr. Phillips

Performing Arts High School. He attended Point Park University in Pittsburgh for two years, working at Disney his first summer and in the ensemble at the PCLO his \_\_\_\_\_second. He then transferred to Cincinnati Conservatory of Music for his third year of college. In April of 2000, he was cast in the national tour of *Annie Get Your Gun*.

In 2001, Tony made the dream of being a true New Yorker a reality, when the tour closed and he officially moved to the city. Various Broadway/Off-Broadway/Encores!/Regional Theatre/Television/National Tours/London Concerts have subsequently ensued, culminating most recently in a Tony Award Nomination for Best Leading Actor in a Musical for his turn as “Gabey” in the Broadway revival of *On The Town*.

Tony is exceedingly passionate about directing, choreographing and writing in new and creative ways for stage and TV. The first incarnation of these efforts is his solo show *The Floor Above Me*. Tony is also a devoted teacher, most frequently at the National Young Arts Foundation, where he is a master teacher, panelist and assistant director to the legendary Bill T. Jones.

The most important achievement of his life-to-date, however, happened in October 2014, when, right after opening in the aforementioned revival of *On The Town*, Tony married the love of his life, actress, dancer, singer, choreographer and budding director Katie Huff.

## **Michael Cavanaugh** **Soloist**

Michael Cavanaugh is the new voice of the American Rock & Roll Songbook and a charismatic performer and musician made famous for his piano/lead vocals in the Broadway musical *Movin’ Out*. Handpicked by Billy Joel to star in *Movin’ Out*, Cavanaugh evokes a style rivaling the Piano Man. He appeared in the show for 3 years with over 1,200 performances, and received multiple accolades. The show culminated in 2003 with both Grammy and Tony award nominations.

Michael began playing at age 7, when his parents bought their first piano. Encouraged by family and friends, and inspired by his hero Billy Joel, Michael formed his first band at age 10 and began playing local functions, fine-tuning the craft that would become his chosen career. His first full time gig as a musician was an extended engagement in Orlando, Florida at a piano bar called Blazing Pianos. In January of 1999, Michael received an offer that would unknowingly change his life: an opportunity to play Las Vegas at the famed New York, New York Hotel and Casino. It was there that Billy Joel spotted Michael and joined him on stage one fateful night of February 2001. It only took 2 songs before Billy was convinced that he had found his new Piano Man: Michael Cavanaugh. Michael closed up shop at New York, New York and moved to New York City to work alongside Billy Joel and Twyla Tharp, to shape the Broadway Musical that would be called *Movin’ Out*. In the lead role, he received both Tony and Grammy nominations.

With the close of *Movin’ Out* at the end of 2005, Michael began touring in his own right, creating a show that reinterprets the modern pop/rock songbook. Michael soon became one of the hottest artist’s in the private events market and he continues to perform worldwide for

company and charity events as well as sporting events including countless PGA tour events, the SuperBowl, and the Indy 500. His interpretation of the modern rock/pop songbook led to Billboard calling him “The New Voice of the American Rock and Roll Songbook” and he was recognized by Reuters as Entertainer of the Year for the private events market.

It wasn't long before Symphony Orchestras discovered Michael's talents and audience appeal. He accepted his first orchestral booking, “Michael Cavanaugh – The Songs of Billy Joel and More” which debuted in April 2008 with the Indianapolis Symphony and continues to tour today. In October 2008, he signed with Warner/ADA to distribute his first CD, *In Color*. In June 2010, Michael debuted his second symphony show in the Generations of Rock series entitled “Michael Cavanaugh: The Songs of Elton John and More” and then debuted his third symphony show “Singers and Songwriters: the Music of Paul Simon, Neil Diamond and James Taylor,” in 2012. In 2015, He debuted his fourth symphony show: *Rockin' Christmas with the Pops*. He continues to tour all four symphony productions along with performing with his band in Performing Arts Centers and other public venues.

“The Way I Hear It” , his second commercial album, was released in April 2017 and it debuted at #17 on the Billboard Heatseekers chart.

### **Gavin Kreeel** **Soloist**

Multiple Tony Award-nominee Gavin Creel received the 2017 Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Best Featured Actor in a Musical for his performance as “Cornelius Hackl” in the Broadway revival of *Hello, Dolly* starring Bette Midler and David Hyde Pierce. He most recently appeared as Dr. Pomatter in *Waitress*, with other Broadway credits including "Jimmy Smith" in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Broadway debut, Tony nomination), “Jean-Michel” in the revival of *La Cage Aux Folles*, “Claude” in the revival of *Hair* (Tony nomination), “Stephen Kodaly” in the Roundabout's revival of *She Loves Me*, and “Elder Price” in *The Book of Mormon*.

His off-Broadway credits include *Bat Boy* and *The Mystery Plays* and he has been in the national tours of *The Book of Mormon* and *Fame*. He's been seen regionally in *Bounce* (Goodman Theatre/Kennedy Center), *Prometheus Bound*(American Repertory Theater) and *The Mystery Plays* (Yale Repertory Theatre). He has performed in London in “Elder Price” in *The Book of Mormon* (2014 Olivier Award for Best Actor in a Musical), “Bert” in Disney's *Mary Poppins*, and *Hair*. Television credits include ABC's “Eloise at the Plaza” and “Eloise at Christmastime,” opposite Julie Andrews.

He can be heard on the original recordings of *GoodTimeNation*, *Quiet*, *Get Out*, and the single “Noise,” and co-founded Broadway Impact. A native of Findlay, Ohio, Gavin is a proud graduate of University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance.

### **Karen Ziembra** **Soloist**

Karen Ziemba received the Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Award for her portrayal of The Wife in *Contact* at Lincoln Center Theatre. For her performance as Georgia Hendricks in the Kander and Ebb musical *Curtains*, she received the Outer Critics Circle Award and was nominated for the Tony, Drama Desk and L.A.'s Ovation Award. Other appearances on and off-Broadway include *Never Gonna Dance* (Tony nomination, Outer Critics Circle Award); Kander and Ebb's *Steel Pier* (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle nominations); *And The World Goes 'Round* (Drama Desk Award), *I DO! I DO!* (Drama Desk nomination), *Chicago*, *A Chorus Line*, *42nd Street*, *Crazy For You*, and leading roles at the New York City Opera in *110 in The Shade* and *The Most Happy Fella*.

For Encores! at City Center she starred in *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Pajama Game*, *Ziegfeld Follies Of 1936*, and *Allegro*. Regionally she has appeared in *The Three Penny Opera* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Six Degrees Of Separation*, *The First Wives Club*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Broadway Bound* (San Diego's Old Globe), *Much Ado About Nothing* (The Shakespeare Theatre Company, D.C. and Hartford Stage), *Sylvia* (New Haven's Long Wharf Theatre) and in *Shooting Star* (Penguin Rep.). Her film and TV appearances include *The Producers*, *Once More With Feeling*, *Scrubs*, all three *Law and Order* series, *The Kennedy Center Honors*, in tributes to Angela Lansbury and Julie Harris, and for PBS' *Great Performances*, "My Favorite Broadway: The Leading Ladies", "Gershwin at 100", and "Stephen Sondheim: A Celebration at Carnegie Hall". Karen has sung on many recordings including several original cast albums and received an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts from Niagara University.

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