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**Pasadena Symphony Association**  
**Pasadena Symphony & POPS**  
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For high-res images click here: [POPS 2026 Press Photos](#)

**PASADENA POPS ANNOUNCE 2026 RUSNAK SUMMER CONCERT SERIES AT THE LA COUNTY ARBORETUM**

*Upcoming POPS season includes tributes to John Williams, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Elton John,  
the Rat Pack and the Music of Motown  
June 20 – August 29, 2026*

**Pasadena, CA** – The Pasadena POPS and Resident Pops Conductor **Larry Blank** announce the **2026 Rusnak Summer Concert series** at the **Los Angeles County Arboretum**. The five-concert series will run from **June 20 to August 29, 2026** with a guest artist lineup boasting an impressive roster of Broadway credits including **Morgan James**, (*Godspell*), **Chester Gregory and Shayna Steele** (*Hairspray*), **Scarlett Strallen** (*Mary Poppins*), **Hugh Panaro** (*Phantom of the Opera*), **Valerie Perri** (*Evita*), Grammy Award-winning Jazz songstress **Carmen Bradford**, and the electrifying triple-threat of **Craig A. Meyer**. The POPS summer season offers something for every music lover with an exciting mix of sound from **Hollywood, Motown, the Rat Pack, Elton John**, and culminating with Larry Blank’s Broadway extravaganza paying tribute to legendary composer **Andrew Lloyd Webber**.

For his inaugural season at the helm of the POPS, Maestro Blank will kick off the summer on **June 20** with his **Star-Spangled Salute to the Movies**, paying tribute to two masters of Hollywood music – **John Williams** and **Marvin Hamlisch**. This opening night program will spotlight the talents of the Pasadena POPS orchestra, with epic scores from Williams’ *Star Wars*, *Raiders of the Lost Arc*, *Superman* and *E.T.* The silky vocals of Broadway and recording artist **Morgan James** will bring Marvin Hamlisch’s nostalgic soundtracks to life with **“Nobody Does it Better”** and **“The Way We Were.”**

The summer heats up on **July 11** with the return of the spellbinding **Shayna Steele** for **Dancin’ in the Street: The Music of Motown**. Steele will be joined by Broadway star **Chester Gregory** (*Hairspray*, *Dreamgirls*) and **Terron Brooks**, whose vocals have backed up Stevie Wonder and Somkey Robinson among others. This dynamic trio will bring fire to Motown hits “I’ll Be There,” “My Guy,” “I Feel Good,” “Superstition” and so much more. Then, harken back to the Golden Age of Vegas on **July 29** for **A Toast to the Rat Pack**, with Jazz royalty **Carmen Bradford**, crooner **Todd Murray** and famed Sinatra interpreter **Steve Lippia** bringing you songs made famous, by **Sinatra, Dean Martin** and **Ella Fitzgerald**, with “Come Fly with Me,” “Ain’t That a Kick in the Head,” “Lady is a Tramp” and more.

The music, costumes and charisma of the Rocketman will come to life on **August 15** when **Craig A. Meyer** takes the stage for **Remember When Rock Was Young: The Elton John Experience**. Meyer got his start touring with Franki Valli and **Barry Manilow**, who calls him “one of the most talented people I have ever worked with.” His

high-energy show brings unforgettable flair to chart-topping hits from *Benny and the Jets* and *Tiny Dancer* to *Candle in the Wind* and *Crocodile Rock* that will have audiences dancing in the aisles.

**Resident Pops Conductor Larry Blank** closes the season on **August 29** with an insider's journey through the world of legendary Broadway composer **Andrew Lloyd Webber**. *Phantom of the Opera's* **Hugh Panaro** and *Evita's* **Valerie Perri** will bring two of Webber's most popular shows to life, along with songs from *Cats*, *Sunset Blvd*, and music from Webber's contemporaries – **Stephen Sondheim, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Schwartz**. **This Broadway spectacular will be a season finale you won't want to miss!**

All concerts are held at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, located at 301 North Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA. 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 to the backdrop of the San Gabriel Valley's premier orchestra! Among many venue amenities, concertgoers can enjoy pre-ordered gourmet box dinners for on-site pickup just steps from their table from **Julienne** or **Bacchus Kitchen**, two full-service beverage centers, or a variety of food trucks.

Subscribers may purchase pre-paid onsite parking at the Arboretum, and all concertgoers can purchase guaranteed and convenient parking at Santa Anita Park, with complimentary non-stop shuttle service to the Arboretum's main entrance. Season subscriptions and single tickets, starting at \$38, are now on sale and available by calling the box office at (626) 793-7172, online at [pasadenasympphony-pops.org/tickets](https://pasadenasympphony-pops.org/tickets) or at the Arboretum on concert days.

### **2026 Rusnak Summer POPS Series Calendar**

#### **Star Spangled Salute to the Movies With a Special Tribute to John Williams**

June 20, 2026

**Larry Blank**, Resident Pops Conductor  
**Morgan James**, soloist

Resident Pops Conductor Larry Blank kicks off the season with epic scores from *Superman*, *E.T.*, *Raiders of the Lost Arc*, *Star Wars* and a tribute to the late Marvin Hamlisch with "Nobody Does it Better," "The Way We Were" and more Hollywood blockbusters for an unforgettable evening celebrating American film music.

#### **Dancing in the Street: Music of Motown**

July 11, 2026

**Larry Blank**, Resident Pops Conductor  
**Terron Brooks, Chester Gregory & Shayna Steele**, soloists

Get ready to groove to the Temptations, Supremes and Stevie Wonder for this soulful celebration of legendary Motown artists. Hits like *My Girl*, *I Feel Good* and *Superstition* will have you singin' and dancin' *All Night Long*.

## **A Toast to the Rat Pack**

July 25, 2026

**Larry Blank**, Resident Pops Conductor

**Carmen Bradford, Steve Lippia & Todd Murray**, soloists

Step back into the golden age of swing with the timeless hits of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Ella Fitzgerald in a dazzling evening of swagger, smooth vocals and big band with: *My Way, Come Fly with Me, I've Got the World on a String, Come Rain or Come Shine, Lady is a Tramp* and more.

## **Remember When Rock Was Young**

### **The Elton John Tribute**

August 15, 2026

**Larry Blank**, Resident Pops Conductor

**Craig A. Meyer & band**, guest artists

A spectacular theatrical experience capturing the Rocketman's music, costumes and charisma. From *Benny and the Jets* and *Tiny Dancer* to *Candle in the Wind* and *Crocodile Rock*, this high-energy show brings his chart-topping hits to life with unforgettable flair.

## **Music of the Night: Andrew Lloyd Webber & Friends**

August 29, 2026

**Larry Blank**, Resident Pops Conductor

**Hugh Panaro, Valerie Perri & Scarlett Strallen**, soloists

The season closes with an unforgettable evening of drama, passion and iconic melodies from Broadway's legendary Andrew Lloyd Webber and his contemporaries – Stephen Sondheim, Stephen Schwartz, Leonard Bernstein and more. Hits from *Phantom of the Opera, Cats, Evita, West Side Story, Les Mis* and will have you singing your favorite showtunes.

### **IF YOU GO:**

- **What:** The Pasadena POPS 2026 Rusnak Summer Concert Series; Larry Blank, Resident Pops Conductor
- **When:** June 20, July 11, July 25, August 15, August 29. Concerts start at 7:30pm. Gates open at 5:30pm.
- **Where:** The LA County Arboretum | 301 N Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007
- **Cost:** Tickets start at \$38
- **Dining:** Gates open at 5:30pm for picnicking. Guests are welcome to bring their own food and drink or pre-order from onsite food vendors.

- **Parking:** Table 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 for \$20.

## **ABOUT THE PASADENA SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION**

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

Brett Mitchell assumed the post of Pasadena Symphony Music Director on April 1, 2024. The multi-platinum-selling, Emmy and Grammy Award-nominated entertainer dubbed "The Ambassador of the Great American Songbook," Michael Feinstein, assumed the role of Principal Pops Conductor Emeritus in September 2025, after leading the POPS for 14 years, succeeding Marvin Hamlisch. Resident Pops Conductor Larry Blank will lead the POPS for the 2026 season.

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 Los Angeles Arboretum & Botanic Garden.

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). PYSO offers supplemental in-class instruction within the Pasadena Unified School District and eleven performance ensembles, serving over 700 4th-12th grade students from all over Southern California. The PYSO has performed at venues across the globe as well as on the television show *GLEE*.

The Pasadena Symphony Association provides people from all walks of life with powerful access points to the world of symphonic music. [www.pasadenasympphony-pops.org](http://www.pasadenasympphony-pops.org)

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

### **Larry Blank 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 in 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* and *Honeymoon in Vegas*.

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 program, *Friday Night Is Music Night in the UK* and has acted as Music Supervisor and Orchestrator 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 additional films he has 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 also be heard on the animated feature films, *Cats Don't Dance* and *All Dogs Go to Heaven* as well as the *101 Dalmatians 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. Most recently Larry orchestrated and conducted FX's *Fosse/Verdon* and Dolly Parton's latest project *Christmas on The Square* for Warner Brothers.

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.

## **Morgan James**

Soloist

Morgan James is a classically trained vocalist, Broadway veteran and recording artist.

Morgan recently premiered a few new symphonic programs with maestro Ted Sperling: *Clouds in my Coffee: the trailblazing music of Joni Mitchell, Carole King and Carly Simon*, *Kodachrome* celebrating Paul Simon and the upcoming *Let the Sunshine In: Summer of '69*. Her newest project *Sailing* premiered with Kansas City Symphony and celebrates soft rock of the 70s and 80s.

Ms. James is a frequent symphony pops soloist, whose appearances include San Francisco, Ravinia Festival, Philadelphia, Virginia, Wheeling, Cleveland Pops, Houston, Sun Valley Music Festival, American Pops Orchestra, Spokane, Detroit, Harrisburg, San Diego, Utah, Youngstown, Fort Meyers, Charlotte, Allentown, East Lansing, Atlanta, Colorado, Malaysia, New Zealand (and many more).

On Broadway, Morgan has appeared in five Original Broadway Casts: *Motown: The Musical*, *Godspell*, *Wonderland*, *The Addams Family* and Kristin Chenoweth's *For the Girls*. With viral sensation Postmodern Jukebox and her own channel, her videos on YouTube have garnered 300 million views (and counting).

As a recording artist, Ms. James just released her 6th studio album entitled *Soul Remains the Same*. Her music is available on all streaming platforms. Morgan received her voice training at The Juilliard School. For more information and tour dates, please visit her website: [www.morganjamesonline.com](http://www.morganjamesonline.com). Instagram:

@morganajames

## **Terron Brooks**

Soloist

Terron Brooks has traveled many roads in his life and career. On his journey there have been plenty of lessons, but the greatest has been discovering his authentic self and using his gifts to serve humanity. Through music, acting, writing, and speaking, Terron defies labels and breaks boundaries, encouraging all to reach their highest potential.

“Knowing my purpose to inspire keeps me going,” Terron, a two-time NAACP Award nominee, says. “I want people to feel like somebody sees and hears them. We are all connected in this life.”

A native of Southern California, Terron’s dreams were formed through music. With a voice described by the *Los Angeles Times* as “smooth and soulful,” many of the artists whose music colored his world, he’s had the pleasure of performing with. Those artists include Stevie Wonder, Josh Groban, David Foster, Randy Jackson, Stephanie Mills, Peter Cetera, Lizz Wright, Yolanda Adams, Sheila E., and One Republic. On Smokey Robinson’s record, *Smokey and Friends*, Terron’s vocals can be heard on six songs.

Terron’s artistry has taken him all over the world. He’s toured with the legendary Phil Collins and Golden Globe and Tony-nominated star Matthew Morrison. He also opened for The New Kids on the Block and Backstreet Boys’ tour. As a guest artist for the Atlanta, Colorado, and Taiwan Symphony Orchestras, he has delighted audiences with classic songs from Disney productions.

His Broadway credits include Simba in Disney’s *The Lion King* and Seaweed in *Hairspray*. He was also featured in the World Premieres of *Sleepless in Seattle: The Musical* and *First Wives Club: The Musical*. For his role as Daddy Brubeck in *Sweet Charity*, Terron earned an Ovation Award nomination.

His passion to develop and celebrate music, lead him to co-create and star in *The Soul of Broadway*, a show that offers Broadway classics to an audience in a fresh and contemporary way. About the production, Broadway World Los Angeles declared, “The sold-out evening proved to be a highlight of the 2019 season.”

No stranger to television, Terron is widely recognized for his critically acclaimed role as the great Eddie Kendricks in the Emmy Award-winning NBC mini-series *The Temptations*. He’s also starred in PureFlix’s hit feature *HavFaith* with Gary Sturgis and Brooklyn Tankard. Additionally, he’s sung on *The Voice*, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *American Idol*, and on numerous soundtrack albums including the Grammy-winning *Hairspray*, *Tears from the Sun*, *The Adventures of Brer Rabbit*, and ABC’s *Gepetto*.

Not only did Terron star in the hit romantic comedy *All About You* with the legendary Debbie Allen and Hamilton star Renee Elise Goldsberry, but he also co-wrote its theme song and contributed original material to the movie’s soundtrack, produced by American Idol’s Rickey Minor.

With the innate need to give back, motivate, and guide, he released his first book, *Something GoOD on the Table: Practical Proverbs for the Soul* in 2018. As Terron continues to open new doors, he makes sure he leads with his heart. With all he creates, he wants people to know that no matter how rough or dark a day may seem, it is a gift — and there is always “Tomorrow.”

## **Chester Gregory**

Soloist

Chester Gregory is an award-winning Broadway actor, singer, and recording artist, renowned for his extraordinary vocal talent, commanding stage presence, and deep emotional resonance. With starring roles in iconic productions such as *Hairspray*, *Dreamgirls*, *Sister Act*, Disney's *Tarzan*, and *Motown: The Musical*, Chester has become a dynamic force in musical theater and live performances, captivating audiences with a unique energy that resonates across both grand Broadway stages and intimate concert settings.

His breakthrough role as legendary singer Jackie Wilson in *The Jackie Wilson Story* earned him widespread acclaim and a personal standing ovation from Michael Jackson. Known for blending soul, storytelling, and precision, Chester brings authenticity to every performance, whether delivering an electrifying showstopper or a heartfelt ballad.

A recipient of the NAACP Theatre Award, Joseph Jefferson Award, and Black Theatre Alliance Award, Chester has performed across the U.S., gaining recognition not only for his vocal abilities but also for his emotional depth and stage presence. His influence extends beyond live performances through his social media, where he engages millions, sharing his artistic journey, humor, and passion for wellness.

Chester's social media presence reaches millions across platforms, where he shares humor, wellness, and the arts. Stay connected with Chester on social media @chestergregory for updates and visit [ChesterGregory.com](https://www.ChesterGregory.com) for more information.

## **Shanya Steele**

Soloist

Dynamic vocalist Shayna Steele puts new meaning to musical diversity and grass-roots talent. With Shayna's effortless execution of a multitude of genres from soul to blues and jazz and rock and roll, it's no surprise that she is one of the most in-demand singers in the industry today!

In 2023 Shayna debuted her solo symphony show, *American Diva*, with the prestigious Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, featuring orchestral arrangements of her original music and favorite covers by Grammy-winning conductor and composer Jeff Tyzik. Shayna has performed as the guest soloist with over 40 North American symphony orchestras including Dallas, Nashville, Detroit, Oregon, St. Louis, Fort Worth, Utah, Omaha, Hawaii, Milwaukee, Grand Rapids, Pittsburgh, Reno, Buffalo, Vancouver, Florida, Tucson, Augusta, Long Beach, Louisville, Virginia, Sarasota, Santa Barbara, North Carolina and the list goes on and on.

Throughout her career, Shayna has lent her talent to leading artists such as Grammy-winning trumpeter, Chris Botti and Moby, whose tracks *Raining Again*, *Disco Lies*, and *Extreme Ways*, featured Shayna's blockbuster vocals. Snarky Puppy's Michael League handpicked Shayna's original track, *Gone Under*, for inclusion in their huge hit, *Family Dinner, Volume 1* album (Ropeadope Records) which has become a viral sensation with over 2 million views and countless covers from musicians globally. And no stranger to both the small and silver screens, Shayna has sung on the *Hairspray*, the *Bourne Identity*, and *Sex and the City 2* soundtracks, as well as making a guest appearance on *The Sopranos*!

After spending her early years living mainly in Germany as the daughter of an Air Force master sergeant, Shayna spent her teen years in Biloxi, Mississippi, where she honed her musical theater and vocal talent. Her appearance on *Star Search* with Ed McMahon provided a bigger spotlight for her and, after leaving college, found herself in New York City appearing in the smash hit musical, *RENT*, as well as *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and then her original role in the massive Tony Awarding winning musical, *Hairspray*!

She then moved out on her own, providing background vocals for Bette Midler, Rihanna, and Kelly Clarkson, and appeared with countless A list stars. After going solo, writing, and putting her band together, Shayna released her album, *RISE*, in 2015 (Ropeadope Records), reaching #2 on the U.S. iTunes jazz charts. Shayna has done the work with her dynamic voice breathing life into what has become *Gold Dust*, her fourth studio album released in 2023 and available on all streaming platforms, CD and vinyl. Visit [www.shaynasteele.com](http://www.shaynasteele.com)

## **Carmen Bradford**

Soloist

Carmen Bradford is jazz royalty – A 2024 Grammy Award winner for *Basie Swings the Blues – the Count Basie Orchestra*. She has been nominated five times for Grammy Awards and is the recipient of the Los Angeles Jazz Society’s Jazz Vocalist Award. With her body of work, which reflects her vast experience, versatility, and technical brilliance, she has carved out her place in jazz history, and she continues to contribute to the preservation of this uniquely American art form.

Bradford was born in Austin, Texas, and raised in Altadena, California. The daughter of legendary cornetist and composer Bobby Bradford and world-renowned jazz vocalist, composer, and author Melba Joyce, and granddaughter of Melvin Moore (who sang with Lucky Millender and his Big Band, Dizzy Gillespie’s Big Band, and the Ink Spots), Bradford grew up with music in her home and in her heart. She was discovered and hired by William Count Basie when she was just 22; she went on to be the featured vocalist with the legendary Count Basie Orchestra for nine years and has continued to perform with them regularly throughout her career. All four of her Grammy Award nominations are for albums with the Count Basie Orchestra, including two in the 1980s and a third, *Big Boss Band*, with guitarist George Benson. (She and Benson performed the classic duet, “How Do You Keep the Music Playing,” on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*.) The fourth is 2022’s *Live at Birdland*. In 1992, Bradford released her debut album *Finally Yours* (Evidence Records) to critical acclaim. In 1995, the release of her second solo album, *With Respect* (Evidence Records), established Bradford as one of jazz music’s most diverse and exciting vocal stylists.

Bradford has performed and/or recorded with Patti Austin, Tony Bennett, George Benson, Shelly Berg, James Brown, Benny Carter, Dori Caymmi, John Clayton and the Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra, Freddie Cole, Lena Horne, Kurt Elling, Wynton Marsalis, Jeremy Monteiro, David Murray, Willie Nelson, James Newton, Kenny Rankin, Lou Rawls, Doc Severinsen, Frank Sinatra, Byron Stripling, Tierney Sutton, Jeff Tyzik, Joe Williams, Nancy Wilson, Liz Wright, and countless other artists around the world.

She has also performed and/or recorded with the Dallas Symphony, the Dani Felber Big Band, the Detroit Symphony, the DIVA Jazz Orchestra, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, the National Symphony, the Philadelphia Pops, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Vancouver Philharmonic, and many other organizations.

Bradford teamed with singer/composer Kenny Rankin for the *Benny Carter Songbook Project*, performing with him the duet, “And All That Jazz”. At the request of Benny Carter, Bradford also sang “Key Largo” on this Grammy Award-winning album. Bradford’s 2004 release, *Home with You* (Azica Records), is a warm and beautiful collection of vocal and piano duets with jazz great Shelly Berg. In 2008, with the release of *Live from Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Dizzy’s Club Coca-Cola: Sherrie Maricle & The DIVA Jazz Orchestra featuring Carmen Bradford*, Bradford returned to her big band roots and she continues to tour with the Count Basie Orchestra, always grateful to Count Basie for opening the door for her.

The 2015 release of *Invisible Design*, with jazz great John Mills, showcases Bradford's versatility. 2015 also saw the release of *A Very Swingin' Basie Christmas with the Count Basie Orchestra*, conducted by Scotty Barnhart and featuring Ledisi, Ellis Marsalis, and Johnny Mathis. In 2016, Bradford was the voice on the album *Imagination Nation*, a tribute to Nelson Mandela by South African trumpeter Darren English. This critically acclaimed album won the Pledge for Peace award from the Global Peace Song Awards and was named *Best in Jazz*. The 2019 Grammy Award-nominated album, *All About That Basie with the Count Basie Orchestra*, conducted by Scotty Barnhart on Concord Records, features Jamie Davis, Joey DeFrancesco, Kurt Elling, Jon Faddis, Wycliff Gordon, Stevie Wonder and Take 6. The Grammy Award-nominated album *Live at Birdland – the Count Basie Orchestra*, was released in 2021. Bradford sings on the critically acclaimed 2023 release, *Basie Swings the Blues* on Candid Records. In addition to Bradford, this album features some of the greatest blues artists alive today, including George Benson, Castro "Mr. Sipp" Coleman, Shemekia Copeland, Robert Cray, Jamie Davie, Buddy Guy, Charlton Johnson, Betty LaVette, Ledisi, Keb' Mo', Charlie Musselwhite, and Bobby Rush.

Bradford has loaned her inimitable voice to stage productions and the music of Hollywood films, cartoons for television and radio commercials, and the theater. She sang on the haunting soundtrack for Oprah Winfrey's *Beloved* and starred in the title role of Duke Ellington's Folk Opera, *Queenie Pie*, at the University of Texas at Austin's Butler School of Music. As she tours and performs around the world, Bradford continues to sing multiple genres, from straight-ahead jazz to fusion to blues.

In 2017, Bradford's gift for teaching and mentoring others inspired the San Francisco Conservatory of Music to recruit her to serve as Vocalist in Residence and Director of the Jazz Voice Department in the school's new Roots, Jazz, and American Music (RJAM) Program. Bradford joined the Michigan State University Jazz Studies Faculty as the new Associate Professor of Jazz Voice in 2024.

Bradford is an artist with Earthworks Audio. In 2017, she served as a panelist for AMPLIFY, part of the Emerging Black Composers Project (a partnership among the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM), the San Francisco Symphony, and the SFCM President's Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion). She was also a Governor of the Atlanta Chapter of the Recording Academy.

## **Steve Lippia**

Soloist

Grammy-nominated vocalist and leading interpreter of the Great American Songbook Steve Lippia is one of North America's most in-demand interpreters of the Great American Songbook. With his smooth, high-energy vocals and natural charisma, he bridges the golden era of classic standards with the artists who defined it, bringing swing, sophistication, and soul to audiences of all ages. A dynamic headliner, Steve has performed to sold-out crowds at iconic venues including the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas and Resorts Casino Hotel in Atlantic City—where fans routinely lined up hours in advance for the best seats. He has appeared at hundreds of performing arts centers and concert halls across the United States.

A favorite of celebrities and industry leaders, Steve has been invited to headline private events for the Walton Family (Walmart), the Crown Family (Aspen Mountain, Union Carbide, Maytag), film producer Irwin Winkler (*Rocky*, *Goodfellas*, *Raging Bull*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*), Aaron Spelling, Donald Trump, Michael Dell, and John Stamos' star-studded 50th birthday celebration.

More than 150 orchestras have presented Steve's shows, including the Boston Pops, Dallas Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, and Toronto Symphony. His jazz-infused style has also led to featured performances at Jazz Aspen, New York City's legendary Birdland Jazz Club, and a European tour with

the Woody Herman Orchestra that resulted in a nationally televised special on Finland's TV2. Steve's television appearances include NBC's Extra, Fox's Good Day New York, CNN's Showbiz Today, ABC, CNBC, and the BBC. His recordings include his self-titled debut album—cut with a 41-piece orchestra at the Eastman Scoring Stage at Warner Brothers in Los Angeles—the live album *Steve Lippia Live*, and his acclaimed third release, *Steve Lippia in Concert*, which earned him a Grammy nomination.

A native of Southington, Connecticut, Steve now resides in Las Vegas, Nevada, with his wife, Lori, and their two miniature German Schnauzers.

### **Todd Murray**

Soloist

During an era when there is a shortage of male baritone jazz and cabaret singers, Todd Murray has emerged as a notable interpreter of standards, newer material, and his own originals. Blessed with a deep baritone voice, Todd is an intimate performer who excels on romantic ballads, swings at every tempo, and does justice to the lyrics that he sings.

Born in a small farming community in Pennsylvania, he learned many older standards from his aunt who played stride piano. He moved to New York City not long after college and soon was performing as the lead singer for Royal Viking Cruise Line, many roles at the famous Paper Mill Playhouse, and the lead in New York Gilbert and Sullivan Player's off-Broadway production of *The Gondoliers*. He was in the first Broadway touring company of *The Secret Garden*.

"I moved to Los Angeles to pursue a business venture and as it happened, I was cast in a production of *Much Ado about Nothing* at South Coast Repertory that was set in the 1920s. They wanted me to sing in a Bing Crosby style and I began to realize my joy in singing American Standards." Todd was soon presenting his first cabaret show, *Let's Face the Music* directed by Art Manke at Hollywood's famed Cinegrill, then in New York and nationally.

His debut solo CD, titled *When I Sing Low*, features Murray's baritone accompanied by a full orchestra – a rarity these days, and was named "Best Vocal Recording" by TheaterMania.com. The sublime vocalist, Sue Raney, joined Todd on "Just in Time." The catchy "Could 'Ja," is one of his favorite numbers on the recording. He is only the third vocalist to perform this obscure song, joining the esteemed company of Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole. Another highlight is Todd's original composition, "When I Sing Low." "Since I have a bass-baritone voice and the tenor became king in most new Broadway shows, there were not a lot of new roles for me. This predicament led me to write 'When I Sing Low,' which in a witty way sums up the virtues of baritone singers."

The release of the CD, *When I Sing Low*, led to a higher profile on the national cabaret circuit. He performed many times at the acclaimed New York Cabaret Convention at Town Hall, NYC, Rose Hall at Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Annenberg in Palm Springs, LA's Catalina Jazz Club as well as artist series and notable cabaret venues throughout the nation. Todd's second CD, *Stardust & Swing*, also uses a big band and like *When I Sing Low*, was recorded at the legendary Capitol Records Studios.

"The criteria for the CD *Stardust and Swing* was to include songs that elicit a sense of well-being and happiness and sweet memories: 'Stardust,' 'Dream A Little Dream of Me,' 'Moonlight Becomes You,' 'I Wanna Be Around,' 'Teach Me Tonight' (with legendary singer Marilyn Maye), and the not-so-well-known 'If I Ruled the World' (with Broadway's Douglas Sills). In addition, Todd contributed two of his own new songs, 'Patricia,' penned for famed food writer Patricia Wells, and "The Girl from Waco" that could easily be mistaken

for 1930s standards.

Rex Reed, in the *New York Observer* called Todd “A cabaret prince headed for the big cabaret throne if I’ve ever spotted one...I felt privileged to listen.” And Stephen Holden, the esteemed *New York Times* music critic, recently wrote “This suave, handsome baritone is such a confident singer that his performance is the real deal. His unadorned interpretations of standards like ‘The Nearness of You,’ ‘You’ll Never Know,’ and ‘How Deep Is the Ocean?’ were impeccable.” As the finishing touch to these many recent successes, Todd was voted Broadwayworld.com’s 2015 “Best Male Vocalist” and “Best Cabaret Show.” A

third CD is now available called *Croon...when a whisper became a song* which has garnered much praise including a nomination by the Manhattan Association of Cabarets & Clubs (MAC) for best original song “And I’m Leaving Today,” written with notable NYC pianist Alex Rybeck. He is currently touring his critically acclaimed show by the same name around the world. He can often be heard guest starring with Johnny Holiday and the Johnny Holiday Big Band at the famed Cicada Club in downtown Los Angeles. [www.toddmurray.com](http://www.toddmurray.com) #toddEmurray

### **Craig A. Meyer**

Soloist

Craig A Meyer has traversed all four corners of the entertainment industry, making strong impressions in theatre, film, television and music.

On Broadway, Meyer created the role of Clinton Badger in MGM’s classic *Meet Me in St Louis* and toured nationally in *Cats* as Skimbleshanks, The Red Caboose in *Starlight Express*, and Mike Nulty in *Irving Berlin’s White Christmas*.

Atlanta performances include appearances at the Tony Award winning Alliance Theatre in the critically acclaimed *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* for which he also served as the choreographer. The production was honored with a Suzi Bass Award for Best Musical Production in 2008. Meyer was thrilled to win the Suzi Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Musical. Meyer’s creative contribution to the original production of *Brel...* was recognized with a Suzi nomination for Outstanding Choreography.

Regionally, he has starred in *Forever Plaid* (Frankie), *A Class Act* (Lehman Engel), *Crazy for You* (Bobby Child), *42nd Street* (Billy Lawlor), *The All Night Strut* and the West Coast Premiere of *The Thing About Men* (Man).

Television and film appearances include guest-starring roles on “Necessary Roughness”, “Will & Grace”, “Good Morning Miami”, “Family Law”, “General Hospital”, and “Fernwood 2nite” as well as working with Alan Menken on Disney’s *Aladdin*, and with Tim Rice and Elton John on *The Lion King*. Film credits include *Leatherheads* with George Clooney and Renee Zellweger, *Joyful Noise* with Dolly Parton and Queen Latifah and *Identity Thief* with Jason Bateman and Melissa McCarthy.

In music, Meyer has toured internationally and recorded with music legends Barry Manilow and Frankie Valli.

Throughout Meyer’s busy career, he was repeatedly approached about his striking resemblance to Elton John and his uncanny ability to sound like the rock and roll legend. Meyer was eventually persuaded to expand his repertoire and began impersonating Sir Elton John. Today, he is considered to be the best Elton John tribute artist in the market whose strong vocals, striking resemblance and amazing talent on the piano has audiences everywhere remembering when rock was young.

## **Hugh Panaro**

Soloist

Hugh Panaro is perhaps best known for having played the coveted role of the Phantom in Broadway's *The Phantom of the Opera* over 2000 times, including the 25th Anniversary production. In fact, Hugh is one of the few actors to be cast by Harold Prince as both The Phantom and Raoul in the show's Broadway production and recently starred as the title role in the New York production of *Sweeney Todd*.

Hugh made his Broadway debut in the original production of *Les Misérables* as Marius, the role he originated in the First National Company. He also created the roles of Buddy in the original *Side Show* (Sony cast recording); Julian Craster in Jule Styne's last musical, *The Red Shoes*; and the title role in the American premiere of Cameron Mackintosh's *Martin Guerre*. Hugh was nominated for an Outer Critics Circle Award for his performance in the title role of Elton John's *Lestat*, based on Anne Rice's *Vampire Chronicles*. He made his West End debut in the original London company of Harold Prince's *Show Boat* as Gaylord Ravenal, the role he previously played in the Broadway and Toronto productions.

At the prestigious 5th Avenue Theater in Seattle, Hugh played George Seurat in *Sunday in the Park with George*, and Robert in Stephen Sondheim's *Company*. Hugh's performance as Jean Valjean in the Walnut Street Theater's production of *Les Misérables* earned him the prestigious Barrymore Award, for which he was again nominated after a turn as Fagin in *Oliver!* In 2012, Hugh was honored with the Edwin Forrest Award for his long-term contribution to the theater.

An active concert artist, Panaro has performed with numerous symphony orchestras including the New York Pops at Carnegie Hall, The Cleveland Orchestra, Philly Pops, Dallas, Detroit, San Francisco, Seattle, Utah Symphonies, and the London Sinfonietta, among many others. Mr. Panaro's upcoming engagements include the Philly Pops, Charlotte Symphony, Cleveland Pops, Tucson Symphony, Maui Pops, Hawaii Symphony, among others. Hugh also recently returned as a guest soloist with the Festival Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic. He also had the privilege of performing in the world premiere of Penderecki's *Te Deum* at Carnegie Hall and was a guest soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic, conducted by Marvin Hamlisch. His recordings include *Jerome Kern Treasury*, the original cast recording of *Side Show*, *Tap Your Troubles Away* (Herman), *The Centennial* (Weil), and *Life On The Wicked Stage* (Kern). In addition, he toured throughout Europe with the legendary Barbra Streisand. A native of Philadelphia, Panaro graduated from Temple University and was awarded the Boyer College of Music Certificate of Honor. His first solo CD, recorded live at 54 Below, is set to be released in 2023.

## **Valerie Perri**

Soloist

Valerie Perri is an acclaimed, award-winning stage and screen actress celebrated for her commanding portrayals of complex women, brought to life with depth, elegance, and emotional power. She made her breakout debut in 1979 as Eva Perón in the Broadway National Company of *Evita*, directed by legendary impresario Harold Prince. Her performance launched an enduring association with the role, which she has performed internationally to critical acclaim. Her "dazzling" and "compelling" portrayal in *Chicago* earned her a nomination for the prestigious Sarah Siddons Award (*Chicago Tribune*).

She brings a distinctive insight to the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber, shaped by her experience working with him on *Evita*, lending a rare authenticity and immediacy to his work in performance.

Perri's Broadway and touring credits also include the first National Tour of *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*, directed by Robbins himself, and work with Tony Award-winning director Rebecca Taichman and the original Broadway company of *Indecent* at Center Theatre Group.

Her extensive regional theatre career includes a celebrated run in Steven Levenson's *If I Forget*, directed by Jason Alexander, earning a 2022 Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle nomination for Best Featured Performance. She also starred opposite Alexander in the record-breaking production of *Fiddler on the Roof* for McCoy Rigby Productions. Additional acclaimed performances include Emma Goldman in Pasadena Playhouse's Ovation Award-winning *Ragtime*, Dolly Levi in 3D Theatricals' *Hello, Dolly!*, and Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard* for Musical Theatre West—earning a StageSceneLA Scenie Award for Best Musical Performance and a BroadwayWorld Best Actress nomination. She later reprised Norma Desmond for Moonlight Amphitheatre.

Her recent stage work includes Ruth Bader Ginsburg in *Justice* (Southern California premiere at Ensemble Theatre Company); the Dowager Empress in Disney's *Anastasia* (Moonlight Amphitheatre in Vista, California); Genie Klein in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* (in Los Angeles and at the historic Cape Playhouse); and the American premiere of Arun Lakra's *Heist* at Arizona Theatre Company.

Off-Broadway and regional credits include *Diamonds*, *Angry Housewives*, and *Harry Chapin: Lies and Legends* at Pasadena Playhouse, for which she received a Los Angeles Drama Critics Award. She has also appeared opposite Melanie Griffith in *The Graduate* at Laguna Playhouse, and in the Maine premiere of *Admissions* as well as the West Coast premieres of *The Last Schwartz* and *The Sweepers*.

On screen, Valerie's television credits include *Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story*, *Truth Be Told*, *Criminal Minds*, *ER*, *Another World*, *Brooklyn Bridge*, and *Who's the Boss?*. Her film work includes *The Out-of-Towners* (with Goldie Hawn and Steve Martin), Disney's *George of the Jungle*, *Grease*, and *Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star* (with David Spade).

A celebrated concert artist, Valerie has performed with symphony orchestras across the United States and Europe, appearing at Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, the London Palladium, and the Frankfurt Opera House. She is also a recording artist; her album *Sweet Conversation* is available on all major streaming platforms.

Valerie shares her life with her husband, international photographer Cliff Lipson, and their twin sons, Jack and Benny, who are both composers, arrangers, and musicians—continuing a family legacy of artistry and musical expression.

## **Scarlett Strallen**

Soloist

Born and raised in London, Scarlett is best known on Broadway as Mary Poppins (a role she also played in London and Australia) and as Sibella in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, where she met her husband, Bryce Pinkham. Other New York Highlights include Gwendolyn in *Travesties* on Broadway, *Stephen Sondheim's Old Friends*, and Alice in the *The New Yorkers* with Encores at City Center. Scarlett's West End career highlight's include Kathy in *Singin' in the Rain* (Olivier Award Nomination) Cassie in *A Chorus Line*, Clara in *Passion* at the Donmar Warehouse, Josephine in *HMS Pinafore* (Olivier Award Nomination), and Truly Scrumptious in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*.

Scarlett's additional theater credits include the title role in *Nell Gwynn* at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* at Barrington Stage Company, Lady McDuff in *Macbeth* with Kenneth Branagh at the

Armory in New York, Cunegonde in *Candide* and Amalia in *She Loves Me* both at the Menier Chocolate Factory in London, Marion Paroo in *The Music Man* at Chichester festival theatre and starring alongside Judi Dench in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with the Royal Shakespeare Company. In 2014, Scarlett received the 'Whatsonstage' award for Best Actress in a Musical for her portrayal of Cassie in *A Chorus Line* and Cunegonde in *Candide* in the same season. Original casts include *Mamma Mia* and *The Witches of Eastwick*.

A frequent soloist with orchestras around the world, Scarlett's recent and upcoming engagements in the US include The Boston Pops, The Cleveland Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Grant Park Music Festival, Houston Symphony, Utah Symphony, Philly Pops, Phoenix Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Colorado Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, among many others. She made her German debut with the Philharmonie in Berlin with the John Wilson Orchestra in *A Celebration of the MGM Film Musicals* and performed with the Prague Philharmonic with Maestro Keith Lockhart. For the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall on the BBC Scarlett has performed *Cole Porter in Hollywood* and *Bernstein Stage and Screen* with the John Wilson orchestra along with playing Laurie in *Oklahoma*.

Her famous "Glitter and Be Gay" with the John Wilson Orchestra can be found on YouTube. Scarlett has recorded "Something's Gotta Give" with Simon Keenleyside and "State Fair and the 20th century Fox Songbook" for Chandos Records conducted by David Charles Abel and has recently finished a recording of *My Fair Lady* as Eliza with the Sinfonia of London. Scarlett was requested to sing on two separate occasions for Her late Majesty the Queen and once for His Royal Highness King Charles. Follow Scarlett @scarlettstrallenofficial on Instagram.

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