

HOLIDAY POPS WITH THE JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY IS BACK!

Jacksonville, FL (November 29, 2017) --- The Jacksonville Symphony's annual Holiday Pops concerts are right around the corner. There will be six showings starting Thursday, December 7 and going through Sunday, December 10.

WHAT: Everyone has their favorite holiday music. Some like the traditional carols, some wouldn't think of celebrating without attending a performance of Handel's *Messiah* and others like the more modern music that has been built around family experiences.

Whatever your preference, Holiday Pops has something for you. This year's event is full of special guests including the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus. Accompanying them will be dancers from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts Dance and Theater program. **And don't forget the finale will include Jacksonville's one and only guaranteed snowfall!**

Highlights of this year's performance include:

- The arrangement of *Hanukah Festival* by Jeffrey Biegel featuring the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus.
- Throughout the evening you'll hear some of your favorites from the timeless sound of *White Christmas* to the always fun *Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town*.
- Selections from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* will also be performed. Wanting to see the entire *Nutcracker*? The Jacksonville Symphony's First Coast Nutcracker will be performed December 15, 16 & 17.
- And how could we go through the holidays without hearing that horse whinny and slapstick in Leroy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride*.
- You do not want to miss the entertaining duo, Melodica Men, in their rendition of some holiday favorites including *Winter Wonderland*.

WHO: Holiday Pops will be conducted by Jacksonville Symphony Associate Conductor **Nathan Aspinall**. Recent performances of Aspinall's have included Handel's *Messiah*, Prokofiev's *Cinderella* and a special event concert with organist Cameron Carpenter. Formerly, he held the position of young conductor with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra where he assisted Chief Conductor Johannes Fritzsich and visiting guest conductors and conducted concerts for the education series. Aspinall studied French Horn and Conducting at the University of Queensland and upon graduation was awarded the Hugh Brandon Prize.

GUEST ARTISTS: Joining Aspinall on stage will be three guest artists!

Mezzo-soprano **Caitlin McKechney** is quickly making a name for herself as a dynamic singing actress. McKechney's 2017 season proved quite varied, spanning from the title role in Offenbach's *La Perichole* with Tacoma Opera to playing guitar and belting out U2 at the Bucks County Center for the Performing Arts for Frank McCourt's *The Irish and How They Got That Way*.

Baritone **John Dooley** has been praised by the *The Wall Street Journal* as “a warm, supple baritone.” He is an outstanding crossover singer whose opera talent equals his flair for musical theater.

The **Melodica Men** will also be making an appearance at this year's Holiday Pops performances. The duo, Tristan Clarke (Jacksonville Symphony Principal Trumpet) and Joe Buono, became friends while studying music at the Peabody Conservatory, and they have been playing melodica together since May 2016. The Melodica Men have been featured on ABC's "The Gong Show" and seen on NBC's "America's Got Talent."

WHEN:

- Thursday, December 7 at 7:30pm
- Friday, December 8 at 11:00am (Coffee Concert with abbreviated program) & 8:00pm (full concert)
- Saturday, December 9 at 3:00pm & 8:00pm
- Sunday, December 10 at 3:00pm

WHERE: All performances will take place in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts in Jacoby Symphony Hall.

SPONSORS: Holiday Pops Coffee Concert is sponsored by Westminster Woods on Julington Creek. Holiday Pops is a part of the Fidelity National Financial Pops Series. Holiday Pops is presented by PRI Productions. Support is provided by the Jess and Brewster J. Durkee Foundation, Harbinger Sign, Stein Mart and SunTrust Bank.

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The Jacksonville Symphony is North Florida's leading music nonprofit offering live performances at Jacoby Hall in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts and other venues throughout the area. In addition, the Symphony provides music instruction for youth and operates the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestra. For more information about the Symphony, visit JaxSymphony.org, like them at facebook.com/JaxSymphony, follow them on @jaxsymphony, on Instagram at JaxSymphony and on YouTube at JacksonvilleSymphony.