

JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY CELEBRATES AMERICAN SONGBOOK LEGENDS IN *FRANK AND ELLA*

They were the undisputed singing stars of their era, and they ignited the stage when they joined forces — Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald.

Jacksonville, FL (March 20, 2019) --- On March 29 & 30, the Jacksonville Symphony will be joined by singers Tony DeSare and Capathia Jenkins who will take on the legendary roles of Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and more. This will be Tony DeSare's second time performing Sinatra songs for the Jacksonville audience, and others may remember Capathia from a rousing performance of Motown favorites in previous seasons.

WHAT: Ol' Blue Eyes. The Voice. Swoonatra. All names that appeared at the height of Frank Sinatra's popularity. He was an icon, a legend that transformed the music industry in America. With over 150 million records sold worldwide, Sinatra is still one of the best-selling artists of all time. From record sales to an acting career, the country was smitten with the "Come Fly With Me" singer.

As great as he was, Sinatra did hold respect for at least one other singer in his era: Ella Fitzgerald. Sinatra once said, "Ella Fitzgerald is the only performer with whom I've ever worked who made me nervous. Because I try to work up to what she does. You know, try to pull myself up to that height, because I believe she is the greatest popular singer in the world, barring none—male or female."

Noted for her purity of tone, the American jazz singer had her fair share of nicknames as well: First Lady of Song, Queen of Jazz and Lady Ella. With 14 Grammy awards, the National Medal of Arts and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Fitzgerald clearly made just as much of an impact in and out of the music industry.

With duets "Can't We Be Friends" and "The Lady is a Tramp," not including their own individual successes, it is more than fair to say that these two icons redefined music in America.

WHO: The Brooklyn-born and raised singer/actor, **Capathia Jenkins**, most recently released the critically acclaimed CD *Phenomenal Woman: The Maya Angelou Songs* with her collaborator Louis Rosen. The pair sold out the world-famous Birdland Theatre in NYC for three nights. She starred as Medda in the hit Disney production of *Newsies* on Broadway. She made her Broadway debut in *The Civil War*, where she created the role of Harriet Jackson. She then starred in the Off-Broadway 2000 revival of *Godspell*, where she wowed audiences with her stirring rendition of "Turn Back, O Man" which can still be heard on the original cast recording. Jenkins then created the roles of The Washing Machine in *Caroline, Or Change* and Frieda May in *Martin Short-Fame Becomes Me* where she sang "Stop the Show" and brought the house down every night. In 2007 she went back to Off-Broadway and starred in *(mis) Understanding Mammy-The Hattie McDaniel Story* for which she was nominated for a Drama Desk Award. She was also seen in Nora Ephron's *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*.

An active concert artist, Jenkins has appeared with numerous orchestras around the world including the Cleveland Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, National Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, the Hong Kong Philharmonic and many others. She was a soloist with the Festival Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic multiple times. Jenkins had the great

honor of performing in the *Broadway Ambassadors to Cuba* concert as part of the *Festival De Teatro De La Habana*. She has appeared several times at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops and also sang in a Tribute to Marvin Hamlisch at the Library of Congress.

Her Television credits include *30 Rock*, *The Practice*, *Law & Order SVU*, and *The Sopranos*. She can be seen in the film *Musical Chairs* directed by Susan Seidelman. Jenkins was also seen in *The Wiz* in a live performance on NBC. She can be heard on the following film soundtracks: *Nine*, *Chicago* and *Legally Blonde 2*.

Named a Rising Star Male Vocalist in *Downbeat* magazine, **Tony DeSare** has lived up to this distinction by winning critical and popular acclaim for his concert performances throughout North America and abroad. From jazz clubs to Carnegie Hall to Las Vegas headlining with Don Rickles and major symphony orchestras, DeSare has brought his fresh take on old school class around the globe. DeSare has three top ten Billboard jazz albums under his belt and has been featured on the CBS Early Show, NPR, *A Prairie Home Companion*, the Today Show and his music has been posted by social media celebrity juggernaut, George Takei. DeSare has also collaborated with Youtube icons Postmodern Jukebox.

DeSare is an accomplished award-winning composer. He not only won first place in the USA Songwriting Contest, but has written the theme song for the motion picture, *My Date With Drew*, several broadcast commercials and has recently composed the full soundtracks for the Hallmark Channel's *Love Always*, *Santa* and Lifetime's *Nanny Nightmare*.

WHEN: *Frank and Ella* will take place on Friday, March 29 and Saturday, March 30, both at 8 p.m.

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

TICKETS: For more information or to purchase tickets, please call the Ticket Office at 904.354.5547 or visit JaxSymphony.org.

SPONSORS: *Frank and Ella* is a part of the Fidelity National Financial Pops Series and is presented by David and Linda Stein in honor of the Stein Scholars from Jacksonville University and The University of North Florida.

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The Jacksonville Symphony is North Florida's leading music nonprofit offering live performances at Jacoby Symphony 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 Orchestras. For more information about the Symphony, visit JaxSymphony.org, like them at facebook.com/JaxSymphony; follow them on Twitter @jaxsymphony, on Instagram at JaxSymphony and on YouTube at JacksonvilleSymphony.