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PHILLY POPS BRINGS CAROLE KING'S MUSIC TO PHILADELPHIA

**THREE CONCERTS FEATURE CAROLE KING'S CHART TOPPING HITS
WITH THE 65-PIECE POPS ORCHESTRA AND BROADWAY'S LIZ CALLAWAY, ALLISON
BLACKWELL AND BRYCE RYNESS**



Philadelphia, PA (January 7, 2015) – The Philly POPS will open 2016 with a tribute to singer-songwriter Carole King.

POPS Music Director Michael Krajewski will lead the 65-piece POPS orchestra and guest vocalists Liz Callaway, Allison Blackwell and Bryce Ryness in three *Carole King Songbook* concerts that celebrate King's prolific musical career and her 118 chart-topping hits.

The show features songs from King's iconic *Tapestry* album, including *I Feel the Earth Move*, *It's Too Late* and *So Far Away* along with the unforgettable hits she penned for other artists like *You've Got a Friend* made famous by James Taylor, *Natural Woman* recorded by Aretha Franklin and, one of her earliest number one hits, *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow* originally recorded by The Shirelles.

"I wore out my 8-track of *Tapestry* in my 1971 Eldorado," said Frank Giordano, President and CEO of the Philly POPS. "I can't wait for audiences to hear Carole King's award-winning music performed by the 65-piece Philly POPS orchestra with Tony-nominated Liz Callaway as our guest artist."

King's 400-plus compositions have been recorded by more than 1,000 artists. In December 2015, she received Kennedy Center Honors for her lifetime of artistic achievement.

Each concert will be preceded by a *Conversation* in the Kimmel Center's Commonwealth Plaza featuring a guest artist in an up-close-and-personal setting as well as a performance featuring local school troupes. On Friday night, the acclaimed GAMP (Girard Academic Music Program) Concert Choir will

perform Carole King pieces. GAMP is a magnet Philadelphia School District secondary school located in South Philadelphia and part of the *POPS in Schools* initiative which brings supplemental music education to a dozen Philadelphia public schools.

Guest vocalist Allison Blackwell will conduct a Master Class on Thursday, February 4 at 10am with the GAMP Concert Choir at the school.

The three concert weekend series is sponsored by Beneficial Bank.

Ticket prices range from \$35 to \$125 and can be purchased by visiting www.PhillyPOPS.org.

Schedule of events:

Friday, February 5

6:30pm: Pre-concert conversation

7pm: Pre-concert entertainment by the GAMP Concert Choir

8pm: Performance

Saturday, February 6

1pm: Pre-concert conversation

2pm: Pre-concert entertainment by local school

3pm: Performance

Sunday, February 7

1pm: Pre-concert conversation

2pm: Pre-concert entertainment by local school

3pm: Performance

About Liz Callaway

Tony nominee and Emmy winner Liz Callaway made her Broadway debut in Stephen Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along* and went on to star in *Baby* (Tony nomination), *Miss Saigon*, *The Look of Love*, *The Three Musketeers*, and for five years appeared as Grizabella in *Cats*.

Liz sang the Academy Award-nominated song "Journey to the Past" in the animated feature *Anastasia*. Other film work includes Jasmine in the two *Aladdin* sequels, *The Swan Princess*, and *Beauty and the Beast*. Her extensive concert and symphony career has included appearances in London, Paris, Iceland, Australia, China, and nearly every major city in the U.S. She performs regularly with her sister Ann Hampton Callaway.

About Allison Blackwell

Allison Blackwell, a Philadelphia-area native with a versatile range from opera to gospel, is a current cast member of the Tony Award winning musical *The Lion King*. She's performed on Broadway in *A Night With Janis Joplin* as Aretha Franklin and *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*. She was a cast member of the 2015 Emmy Award winning production of *Sweeney Todd* starring Emma Thompson and Bryn Terfel at Avery Fisher Hall, *Guys and Dolls* at Carnegie Hall starring Nathan Lane and Megan Mullally and *Show Boat* starring Vanessa Williams and Norm Lewis at Avery Fisher Hall. She attended Springfield Township High School in Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

About Bryce Ryness

Bryce Ryness has appeared on Broadway in *First Date*, *Leap of Faith*, the 2009 Tony Award-winning revival of *Hair* at the Hirschfeld Theater (where he received a Drama Desk nomination for 'Best Featured Actor in a Musical') and *Legally Blonde* at the Palace. Most recently, he's been touring the country starring as 'Miss Trunchbull' in the first National Tour of *Matilda*. He's been thrilling audiences and garnering critical praise for his unique interpretation of an extraordinary character.

About The Philly POPS

The Philly POPS, the largest standalone pops orchestra in the United States, delights audiences with the inspired performance of American popular music. The POPS celebrates this distinctive musical heritage through an expanding repertoire of innovative concert presentations and a robust set of educational and engagement initiatives.

Now in its 37th season, the official POPS orchestra of Pennsylvania serves a consistently growing audience of over 81,000 annually. Music Director Michael Krajewski and the 65-piece Philly POPS orchestra keeps listeners tapping their toes to an impressive repertoire of songs from colonial times to the 1920s up through today's chart toppers.

Outside the concert hall, *Salute Series* performances – including POPS on Independence on July 3 and the *I'll Be Home for Christmas: A Salute to the Military and First Responders* – celebrate the American tradition of service around important national holidays; *POPS in Schools* enhances music education for Philadelphia School District students; and *POPS Outside* brings POPS music to local communities.

The Philly POPS performs as a founding resident company of The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, and at venues throughout the mid-Atlantic region.