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# CALIFORNIA POPS ORCHESTRA PRESENTS “GOLD STANDARDS” APRIL 2, 2017

(FEBRUARY 19, 2017, Palo Alto, CA) - California Pops Orchestra, the country's only all-request pops orchestra, presents **Gold Standards: Gershwin, Porter, Berlin, and Friends**, performing songs from the Great American Songbook. Part of the Pops' 28<sup>th</sup> season, **Gold Standards** performs one time only at Cupertino's Flint Center on Sunday, **April 2, 2017, at 3 p.m.** For tickets (\$20-\$55, standard ticket service fees apply), the public can visit [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or call (650) 856-8432.

These are the songs everyone knows: classic, timeless melodies with lyrics guaranteed to make people smile. California Pops performs over 60 of some of the greatest popular songs – the gold standards to which all others aspire – by Irving Berlin, George and Ira Gershwin, Cole Porter, Harold Arlen, Hoagy Carmichael, Johnny Mercer and many more.

From “Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better” and “Over the Rainbow” to “Blue Skies” and

Star Dust”, it’s an afternoon of the greatest popular song hits collectively called “The Great American Songbook”.

Irving Berlin is often thought of as the quintessential American composer and lyricist, having penned such tunes as “God Bless America,” “White Christmas” and “Easter Parade.” He was born, however, in Belarus in the former Soviet Union and came to the U.S. with his family at the age of five. Always a prolific writer, Berlin wrote both music and lyrics, which was unusual for the time. At the age of 23 he had his first successful song, “Alexander’s Ragtime Band,” which sold over one million copies in sheet music in 1911. For fifty more years, Berlin would create shows for Broadway, Hollywood, and the radio: songs such as “Always,” “Puttin’ on the Ritz,” “There’s No Business Like Show Business,” “Blue Skies,” “What’ll I Do,” “Heat Wave,” “Anything You Can Do,” “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody,” and “How Deep is the Ocean?”, all of which are included on this show’s program April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

An equally prolific writer, Cole Porter was known for his witty turn of phrase in music. Although he, too, saw great success in writing both music and lyrics, his background could not have been more different from Berlin’s: rather than a childhood in a New York tenement, Porter was born into midwestern wealth and attended Yale. During his first year at Harvard Law School, the Dean successfully persuaded Porter to give up the law in favor of a career in music. Gracing both socialite parties as well as films and stage musicals, Porter’s hits include “Let’s Do It,” “Night and Day,” “Anything Goes,” “Begin the Beguine,” “You’re the Top,” “In the Still of the Night,” “It’s De-Lovely,” “I’ve Got You Under my Skin,” “Brush Up Your Shakespeare,” and “Just One of Those Things.”

Brothers George and Ira Gershwin, although successful individually, created their greatest works together. From 1924 until George’s death in 1937, the brothers wrote almost exclusively with each other, and in so doing introduced a new level of sophistication to American musical theatre – particularly musical comedy – as seen in their satirical trilogy “Strike Up the Band,” the Pulitzer Prize-winning “Of Thee I Sing,” and “Let ‘em Eat Cake.” Their now-classic folk opera, “Porgy and Bess” remains a staple in theaters. Using their

music, the modern musicals “My One and Only” (1983) and “Crazy for You” (1992) reached a new generation, with the latter winning the Tony Award for best musical. The United States Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Gershwins in 1985 (only the third time that songwriters had been so honored), and in 2007, the Library of Congress instituted the Gershwin Prize for Popular Song. Hits from Broadway and Hollywood in their canon include “I Got Rhythm,” “Summertime,” “An American in Paris,” “Rhapsody in Blue,” “Someone to Watch Over Me,” “S’ Wonderful,” “Embraceable You,” and “They Can’t Take That Away from Me.”

Like Cole Porter, Cab Calloway attended law school in the 1920s; but like his oldest sister Blanche who was a professional singer, Calloway wanted to entertain. During his school years he met Louis Armstrong, who taught him the popular 'scat' singing of the day. By 1930, Calloway and his band were playing a steady gig at The Cotton Club in Harlem; and the following year the tune “Minnie the Moocher” was released and sold over one million copies. His band soon broke every record for all-black band audiences. The success of the band meant Calloway could pay his musicians wages that were nearly as good as Duke Ellington's; and when the band traveled to the segregated South, their previous profits allowed the band to travel safely and comfortably by privately chartered trains. Hit songs included “Minnie the Moocher,” “Moon Glow,” “Reefer Man,” “Black Rhythm,” “The Jumpin' Jive,” and “Blues in the Night.”

**California Pops Orchestra** has spent nearly three decades proving that orchestral performances by highly trained and talented musicians do not have to be stuffy affairs! The Pops includes many of the Bay Area’s leading musicians with training from very distinguished conservatories including Oberlin, Julliard, and the Eastman School of Music. The Pops also draws from talented musicians who also happen to be scientists, educators, engineers, marketers, technology leaders, and other highly creative individuals. This diversity in background plus a single-minded purpose makes the Pops a delight to play with and a never-ending source of ideas, inspiration, and humor. California Pops Orchestra’s musicians and featured guests bring fun, family-friendly shows to the live stage with selections from the full range of the popular music repertoire. Every one of the Pops

performers loves the music of Broadway musicals, television, Hollywood movies, jazz, pop, comic novelties, and big band. This popular music is often scored for a unique set of instruments found in movie and recording studios but not in classical symphony orchestras: so concerts often include flugelhorns, a saxophone section, harmonicas, congas, whips, theramins, accordions, and other colorful instruments. For more information, visit [www.calpops.org](http://www.calpops.org).

#### FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

**WHAT:** California Pops Orchestra, the country's only all-request pops orchestra, presents **Gold Standards: Gershwin, Porter, Berlin, and Friends**, performing songs from the Great American Songbook. These are the songs everyone knows: classic, timeless melodies with lyrics guaranteed to make people smile. California Pops performs some of the greatest popular songs – the gold standards to which all others aspire – by Irving Berlin, George and Ira Gershwin, Cole Porter, Harold Arlen, Cab Calloway, and many more.

**WHEN:** Sunday, April 2, 2017 at 3:00pm

**WHERE:** Flint Center at De Anza College, 21250 Stevens Creek Blvd in Cupertino

**TICKETS:** For tickets (\$20-55, standard ticket service fees apply), visit [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or call (650) 856-8432.

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