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CALIFORNIA POPS ORCHESTRA PRESENTS “SWING! SWING! SWING! BIG BAND TRIBUTE” September 25, 2016 at 3pm

(28 AUGUST 2016, Palo Alto, CA) - California Pops Orchestra, the country's only all-request pops orchestra, opens its 28th performance season with “Swing! Swing! Swing! Big Band Tribute.” This concert marks the first performance for the organization at Cupertino's Flint Center. “Swing! Swing! Swing! Big Band Tribute” performs on Sunday, September 25, 2016 at 3pm. For subscriptions (\$111-312) and individual tickets (\$20-55, standard ticket service fees apply), the public can visit

<http://www.ticketmaster.com/promo/lin3sm> or call (650) 856-8432.

Always an audience favorite, the Big Band tribute brings back the greatest hits of the Big Band era, including blockbuster tunes from famous Big Band composers and band leaders such as Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Harry James and more.

The 60-piece California Pops Orchestra will be joined for this two-hour show by the Black

Tie Band, which has delighted big band audiences throughout the Bay Area. From the grand hotel ballrooms of San Francisco to the stage at Davies Symphony Hall, the Black Tie Jazz Band has brought the Big Band Era to life with the sparkling arrangements of the American music that kept a nation energized in the 30's, 40's, and beyond. This is the band San Francisco icon Herb Caen called “that great swingin' band.”

Seen on the big screen in the movie “Swing,” the Black Tie Jazz Band includes violins and cello in its usual ranks, just like the Glenn Miller Army Air Corps band when they recorded the morale-boosting V-disks for our fighting forces. This band makeup allows them to perform not only the original big band charts but also the vast number of Broadway, Hollywood, and vocal arrangements that sound best with a lush compliment of strings. Conductor and emcee Kim Venaas leads both Black Tie and the California Pops in their separate endeavors but revels in the opportunity to bring them together, just once each year, in a show of special arrangements that Venaas calls “the biggest big band in the country.”

Palo Alto resident Venaas comes to this music from birth, the son of a stride piano player and touring big band musician: “my earliest memories as a child were of falling asleep in the front row of the hall at band rehearsals.”

The dedication to both big band and all great popular music is a passion shared by both Venaas and the musicians of the Pops Orchestra. “Every time we play a piece, it's different. Different solos, different tempos and styles,” conductor Venaas notes. “Popular music was never, ever intended to be put into an academic straight-jacket like classical music. Popular music was intended to be for everyone, to lighten the heart, to bring a big smile, to inspire a few tears on occasion. A wag once said a symphony hall is just a jukebox with a chandelier. Isn't that great? That's why we're an all-request orchestra. We play what our audience wants. Shouldn't all orchestras?”

Like so many other forms of American music, big band was born out of jazz - organized around rhythms and accents which could change within a single musical piece, shifting in

relation to one another, open to improvisation, influenced by the musicians and even the audience themselves. As the popularity of jazz grew, many bands began expanding their size, adding more and more musicians until they were considered orchestras. New and different instruments were added - trumpets, trombones, saxophones, drums (according to at least one historian, a result of military bands at the end of the Spanish-American war having many instruments to sell), guitars, pianos, and more. These “big” bands began creating a sound which was a combination of jazz, blues, ragtime, black spirituals, European music, and the very popular hotel dance bands of the day. Unlike jazz, which was often small groups of musicians playing 'off the cuff,' these larger groups required more structure. The arrangers became key partners in creating music where each section had its place, but still left ample room for individual improvised solos.

As the country entered the Depression, bands toured less and less, and turned more and more to the relatively new and very affordable phenomenon of radio, which allowed large bands to play and be heard coast to coast; and when bands did play live, fans who had enjoyed their music by radio were more likely to spend their limited cash to attend. Big band, although existing as a sound as early as the 1920s, really took off in the United States in 1935 with Benny Goodman, who became known as the “King of Swing,” who began playing arrangements by Fletcher Henderson and other talented artists with his new band on the radio. He was soon followed by Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Duke Ellington and others; and a new style of dancing - swing dance - followed fast on their heels. To this day, Big Band has remained a popular sound with American audiences.

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 love 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.californiapops.org.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **California Pops Orchestra**, the country's only all-request pops orchestra, opens its 28th performance season with “**Swing! Swing! Swing! Big Band Tribute.**” Always an audience favorite, the Big Band tribute brings back the greatest hits of the Big Band era, including blockbuster tunes from famous Big Band composers and band leaders such as Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Harry James and more.

WHEN: Swing! Swing! Swing! Big Band Tribute
Sunday, September 25, 2016 at 3:00pm

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

TICKETS: For subscriptions (\$111-312) or individual tickets (\$20-55, standard ticket service fees apply) the public can visit <http://www.ticketmaster.com/promo/lin3sm> or call (650) 856-8432.

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