

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 11, 2017

**BROADWAY FAVORITES COREY COTT,
SOLEA PFEIFFER, ANA VILLAFañE, EPHRAIM SYKES,
AND JOEL PEREZ JOIN
NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FOR
*WEST SIDE STORY IN CONCERT***

***Leonard Bernstein at 100* Celebration Continues**

**Directed by Francesca Zambello
Conducted by Steven Reineke**

February 14, 16 & 17, 2018

(WASHINGTON)—The National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Pops continues the international celebration of *Leonard Bernstein at 100* with ***West Side Story in Concert***, led by Steven Reineke. Featured soloists for this timeless tale of forbidden love and fierce family loyalties include: **Corey Cott as Tony** (Broadway's *Newsies* and *Bandstand*), **Solea Pfeiffer as Maria** (Eliza in *Hamilton* tour), **Ana Villafañe as Anita** (Gloria Estefan in Broadway's *On Your Feet!*), **Ephraim Sykes as Riff** (Seaweed in NBC's 2016 live production of *Hairspray Live!*), and **Joel Perez as Bernardo** (Broadway's *Fun Home*).

Bernstein's legendary musical interpretation of *Romeo & Juliet* features lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. This NSO presentation will be lightly staged, with theatrical lighting, and costumes, and is directed by Washington National Opera Artistic Director Francesca Zambello and assistant director Eric Sean Fogel. S. Katy Tucker and Mark McCullough are the visual designers; Lynly Saunders designed the costumes.

“What was originally a period piece about New York gangs in the 1950s has become one of the most relevant and provocative pieces of music theater ever as it continues to resonate about life in contemporary society,” said director Francesca Zambello.

“Revisiting *West Side Story* today with the NSO gives performers and audiences alike a chance to not only explore a work quintessential to American music theater history, but to see its many layers make a profound statement about America.”

“Leonard Bernstein has long been one of my personal idols as a conductor, composer, musician, and educator,” said Steven Reineke. “I’m thrilled to be celebrating his centennial with our NSO performances of one of the most classic and archetypal pieces of American Musical Theater ever written. With its powerful and iconic score, this story continues to resonate with audiences of all ages as it tells its timeless tale of forbidden love and social prejudice.”

Three performances of *West Side Story* in Concert take place in the Concert Hall at the Kennedy Center on [Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, February 14, 16, and 17, at 8 p.m.](#)

Leonard Bernstein at 100

Born on August 25, 1918, in Lawrence, Massachusetts, Leonard Bernstein became a towering figure of 20th-century music and culture. Bernstein was world-renowned as the composer of *West Side Story*, *Candide*, and *On the Town*, among numerous stage and orchestral works; as the celebrated music director of the New York Philharmonic and other leading orchestras, with whom he created a trove of acclaimed recordings; as an educator whose televised Young People’s Concerts with the New York Philharmonic created more than one generation of music lovers; and as a lifelong humanitarian who spoke out whenever he witnessed injustice.

“Leonard Bernstein at 100” is a year of local, national, and worldwide events that pay tribute to this iconic artist whose influence and impact on arts and culture in the U.S. and around the world have transcended both genres and generations. Throughout the centennial celebration, which begins at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., performances of theater, classical, jazz, choral works, dance, and education events will explore and celebrate the many facets of Leonard Bernstein as musician, composer, educator, and humanitarian.

While truly a citizen artist to the world, Washington, D.C. was one of Leonard Bernstein’s creative homes. Bernstein frequented the Kennedy White House, regularly composed for and conducted Washington ensembles and at area venues, served as emcee for the fundraiser for the National Performing Arts Center (later named the Kennedy Center) and premiered lasting

and notable works such as MASS—at the opening of the Center—and West Side Story here in the nation’s capital.

Concert details follow:

[Wednesday, February 14, 2018, at 8 p.m.](#)

[Friday, February 16, 2018, at 8 p.m.](#)

[Saturday, February 17, 2018, at 8 p.m.](#)

National Symphony Orchestra

Steven Reineke, conductor

Francesca Zambello, Director

Eric Sean Fogel, Assistant Director

S. Katy Tucker, visual designer

Mark McCullough, visual designer

Lynly Saunders, costume

CAST:

Corey Cott as Tony

Solea Pfeiffer as Maria

Ana Villafañe as Anita

Joel Perez as Bernardo

Ephraim Sykes as Riff

West Side Story in Concert

Part of the Kennedy Center’s *Leonard Bernstein at 100* celebration

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets (\$24–\$109) are available at the Kennedy Center Box Office, online at kennedy-center.org, and via phone through Instant Charge, (202) 467-4700; toll-free at (800) 444-1324.

For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

ABOUT THE NSO POPS

Show-stopping pops concerts have been a staple of the National Symphony Orchestra’s more than 80 years of performances. These concerts have ranged from performances on a barge on the Potomac River, to concerts on the Ellipse, and in National Parks around the greater Washington area. The 2000–2001 season saw the creation of the post of Principal Pops Conductor specifically for Broadway great Marvin Hamlisch, who held the position until the 2010–2011 season. The 2011–2012 season was the first with Steven Reineke as Principal Pops Conductor. NSO Pops performances take place at all the NSO’s principal performance venues: Wolf Trap, the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, and in the NSO’s primary home, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, with a subscription season featuring the Orchestra with guest artists from a variety of musical genres.

ABOUT STEVEN REINEKE

CAST BIOS

FUNDING CREDITS:

David and Alice Rubenstein are the Presenting Underwriters of the NSO.

AARP is the presenting sponsor of the NSO Pops Season.

Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center's *MyTix* program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. **For more information, visit kennedy-center.org/mytix**

nationalsymphony.org
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#NSOPops

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TICKETS & INFORMATION

(202) 467-4600; (800) 444-1324
www.kennedy-center.org