

# THE NEW YORK POPS

SKITCH HENDERSON FOUNDER AND MUSIC DIRECTOR

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 2005

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**BROADWAY'S MOST HAPPY FELLA: MUSIC OF FRANK LOESSER AT CARNEGIE HALL ON FRIDAY, APRIL 1. Program opens with music by legendary pops composer Leroy Anderson.**

**What a Cast! The New York Pops; Skitch Henderson, conductor; Rob Fisher, guest conductor; Catherine Wilson, piano; PLUS Broadway's Brent Barrett, Susan Derry, Noah Racey and Emily Skinner, vocalists.**

**Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation presents awards to five U.S. music teachers.**

NEW YORK – Audiences can decide for themselves if Frank Loesser was Broadway's



*New York Pops Founder and Music Director Skitch Henderson*



*Guest conductor Rob Fisher*

"Most Happy Fella" when The New York Pops led by Skitch Henderson surveys the composer's hits at Carnegie Hall on Friday, April 1 at 8:00PM. Skeptics will be at a decided disadvantage, however, up against pieces such as "Once In Love with Amy" from *Where's Charley?*, "Adelaide's Lament" from *Guys and Dolls*, "Brotherhood of Man" from *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, and "Somebody, Somewhere" from *The Most Happy Fella*. Not to mention "Spring Will be a Little Late This Year" from the film *Christmas Holiday*. A dream team of Broadway performers brings these songs to life: Brent Barrett, Susan Derry, Noah Racey and Emily Skinner will join The New York Pops and Skitch Henderson with guest conductor Rob Fisher of City Center *Encores!* fame to perform the Loesser tribute on the Carnegie Hall stage.



*Catherine Wilson performs Leroy Anderson's Piano Concerto in C Major*

Setting the mood at the start will be the effervescent music of pops composer Leroy Anderson. Everyone knows *Sleigh Ride* (which we will save for a winter holiday concert), but we'll wager that Anderson's classic

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## BROADWAY'S MOST HAPPY FELLA: MUSIC OF FRANK LOESSER AT CARNEGIE HALL ON FRIDAY, APRIL 1

Page 2 of 6

orchestral bon-bons *The Captains and the Kings*, *The Syncopated Clock*, *The Typewriter* and *Home Stretch* – all heard on the April 1 concert – have planted smiles on more than a few scowling faces. There's also a rare treat on the Carnegie Hall bill: Leroy Anderson's seldom-performed Piano Concerto in C Major will be performed by Canadian pianist Catherine Wilson, who recorded the work with Skitch Henderson for the Leroy Anderson documentary *Once upon a Sleigh Ride*.

The joyous creative output of Frank Loesser and Leroy Anderson goes well beyond the capacity of one concert and one stage. "We could spend many nights honoring these gentlemen," said Skitch Henderson, "so look upon this evening as a night of highlights, as it were, and applaud vociferously for the artists on this stage."

One group of dedicated people deserving of applause are the five music teachers who will be presented with the Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation Award after intermission on the April 1 concert. Thanks to the generosity of Guitar Center, Inc., the following teachers will each receive the award and a \$10,000 prize for dedication to their students and service to their profession:

Eugene Cottrell, Northwood High School, Pittsboro, NC  
Suann Degenhardt, Norwalk-Ontario-Wilton Brookwood (NOW), Ontario, WI  
Keely Gould, Warwick Valley Middle School, Warwick, NY  
Stephen Pelkey, Clardy Elementary, Kansas City, MO  
Victoria Zieber, Main Street Middle School, Soledad, CA

The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation supports music education and its many benefits through the donation and repair of musical instruments to underserved schools, community music programs and individual students nationwide. Founded by composer Michael Kamen in 1997, The Foundation has served 528 music programs and 53 individual student musicians across the country, donating new and refurbished instruments with a value of nearly \$5,000,000.

The other applause-getters on April 1 will be the guest artists, whose biographies are printed below:

**Rob Fisher**, conductor and pianist, is pleased to share another concert with Skitch Henderson and The New York Pops. A recognized authority on all kinds of American music, Mr. Fisher's particular specialty has been conducting classic musical theatre. Rob Fisher has been music director and conductor of the Tony Award-winning *Encores!* series at New York's City Center since its inception in 1994. The Broadway hits *Chicago* and *Wonderful Town* began at *Encores!*. Mr. Fisher was instrumental in their successful Broadway transfers and remained supervising music director of both companies, as well as the international and touring companies of *Chicago*. He conducted the Grammy-winning *Chicago* cast recording and the recently released *Wonderful Town*. Mr. Fisher was the music director for the New York premiere of *Stephen Sondheim's Saturday*

**MORE → → →**

## BROADWAY'S MOST HAPPY FELLA: MUSIC OF FRANK LOESSER AT CARNEGIE HALL ON FRIDAY, APRIL 1

Page 3 of 6

*Night* in February of 2000. In 2001, he conducted *Sweeney Todd* with Patti LuPone, George Hearn and the San Francisco Symphony, broadcast on PBS. On New Year's Eve, Rob Fisher made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut. For four seasons he was music director for Garrison Keillor's American Radio Company.

Toronto native **Catherine Wilson** has been repeatedly honored for her exceptional artistry and sensitive musicality. As a virtuoso pianist and recording artist, Catherine Wilson has won the hearts of fans and critics alike with inspired, soulful interpretations that are as sensual, sweet, smart and expressive as the artist herself. Her renditions of Chopin have been compared to the great Arthur Rubenstein. Her recent recording of Leroy Anderson features the world premiere recording of seven of Anderson's own arrangements for intimate chamber settings of his original orchestral compositions, as well as Anderson's only piano concerto, which she recorded with Skitch Henderson and members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Filmed by PBS, the third movement of this performance of the Concerto is featured in the documentary on Anderson's life, *Once upon a Sleigh Ride*, which continues to be broadcast continent-wide.



**Brent Barrett** is currently starring on Broadway as Billy Flynn in *Chicago*. He played Frank Butler to Reba McEntire's Annie Oakley in the Broadway revival of *Annie Get Your Gun*. For the *Encores!* series at City Center, Mr. Barrett starred in *Pajama Game* and *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*. Mr. Barrett made his Broadway debut as Tony in the revival of *West Side Story* directed by Jerome Robbins, a role he reprised for the international tour. As a soloist, Brent Barrett has performed with the BBC Concert

Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, National Orchestra of France, Vienna Radio Symphony, Boston Pops, New York Festival of Song in Carnegie Hall, and the Berlin Philharmonic under the direction of Sir Simon Rattle. Recently, he performed with the New World Symphony under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas. Mr. Barrett's numerous recordings include his two solo CDs: *The Kander and Ebb Album* and *The Alan Jay Lerner Album* on Fynsworth Alley. Additional television and film appearances include *Longtime Companion* and guest-starring roles on *Hercules*, *Another World*, and *The Guiding Light*. He is still recognized as Tony Barclay, the man who killed Jenny Gardner on *All My Children*. He will be seen in the upcoming film of *The Producers*.



**Susan Derry** makes her Carnegie Hall debut with this concert. She has worked with Rob Fisher on seven productions at City Center's *Encores!* series, including *Pajama Game*, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, and most especially *Wonderful Town*, which served as Ms. Derry's Broadway debut in the recent revival directed by Kathleen Marshall. Her operatic credits include Alexandra in *Regina*, Adele in *Die Fledermaus* and Olivia in a new version of *Twelfth Night* at American Opera Projects. Leading role credits include regional theater

**MORE → → →**

## BROADWAY'S MOST HAPPY FELLA: MUSIC OF FRANK LOESSER AT CARNEGIE HALL ON FRIDAY, APRIL 1

Page 4 of 6

productions of *West Side Story*, *Company*, *A Little Night Music*, *Brigadoon* and *The Sound of Music*. She has helped to develop new works in readings and workshops, including roles in *A Little Princess*, *Einstein's Dreams*, *The Man in the White Suit* and *The Playboy of the Western World*. In concert, Ms. Derry has appeared as guest soloist with the Westsächsische Philharmonie in Leipzig, Germany, the Manhattan School of Music Symphony, and several *Messiahs*. In December Ms. Derry appeared at Joe's Pub singing the music of composer Lance Horne.



**Noah Racey** returns to Carnegie Hall for a second time with this concert, having appeared in Skitch Henderson's New Faces of 2004 gala concert last year. Noah just returned from Tokyo where he choreographed the Japanese company of *Never Gonna Dance*. This past summer he won rave reviews in the title role of Tony Walton's production of *Where's Charley* at the Goodspeed Opera House. Before that he starred as Lucky Garnett in the Broadway production of *Never Gonna Dance*. In addition, Noah has appeared on Broadway as an original cast member and Associate Choreographer of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* as well as a revival of Stephen Sondheim's *Follies* as Young Theo. His other New York credits include City Center Encores! *Do Re Mi* and *Babes In Arms*, and the Broadway by The Year series at Town Hall. He was part of the original workshops of *Never Gonna Dance*, *Dirty Dancing The Musical*, *The Mancini Project*, and Tommy Tune's *Easter Parade*. Last year at Town Hall he directed *Brooklyn to Hollywood* starring Tovah Feldshuh. He is a Boston Conservatory graduate and a product of – and strong proponent for – arts funding in Public Schools.



**Emily Skinner** recently starred in the City Center *Encores!* production of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. She has also appeared in other *Encores!* productions *No Strings*, *Pardon My English*, and *Broadway Bash 2003*. She was nominated for an Outer Critics Circle award for her Broadway appearance in *Dinner at Eight*. She received a 1998 Tony Nomination for Best Actress in a Musical, as well as a Drama League Award nomination for *Sideshow*. Ms. Skinner's additional Broadway credits include *The Full Monty*, *James Joyce's The Dead*, and *Jekyll & Hyde*. She also began the national tour of *Disney's on the Record*. Off-Broadway, she has appeared in leading roles at WPA Theater, Playwright's Horizons, and Manhattan Theater Club. Her regional theater credits include the Kennedy Center, McCarter Theater, Long Wharf, Old Globe, Ford's Theater, St. Louis MUNY, and many others. Ms. Skinner has performed in concert with the Pittsburgh Symphony, Virginia Symphony, Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, The New York Pops at Carnegie Hall, and at the popular New York venues Town Hall, Merkin Hall and Avery Fisher Hall. Her long list of recordings includes *Duets* and *Unsuspecting Hearts* with Alice Ripley, *The Stephen Sondheim Album*, *The Stephen Schwartz Album*, 20th Century Fox's animated feature *Anastasia*, her solo, self-titled CD, as well as countless cast albums.

**MORE → → →**

**BROADWAY'S MOST HAPPY FELLA: MUSIC OF FRANK LOESSER AT CARNEGIE HALL ON FRIDAY, APRIL 1**

Page 5 of 6

Here is the complete program for the April 1 concert:

**Frank Loesser: *The Most Happy Fella***  
**Friday, April 1, 2005, 8:00PM, Carnegie Hall**  
**The New York Pops**  
**Skitch Henderson, *Conductor***  
**Rob Fisher, *Guest Conductor***  
**Catherine Wilson, *Piano***  
**Brent Barrett, *Vocalist***  
**Susan Derry, *Vocalist***  
**Noah Racey, *Vocalist***  
**Emily Skinner, *Vocalist***

Leroy Anderson (1908-1975)  
*The Captains and the Kings*  
*The Syncopated Clock*  
*The Typewriter*  
*Home Stretch*  
Piano Concerto in C major

Frank Loesser (1910-1969)  
Overture to *Guys and Dolls*  
"Adelaide's Lament" from *Guys and Dolls*  
"I've Never Been in Love Before" from *Guys and Dolls*  
"Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year" from *Christmas Holiday*  
"No Two People" from *Hans Christian Andersen*  
"Once In Love with Amy" from *Where's Charley?*  
Symphonic Impressions of *The Most Happy Fella*  
"Ooh, My Feet!" from *The Most Happy Fella*  
"Joey, Joey, Joey" from *The Most Happy Fella*  
"Somebody, Somewhere" from *The Most Happy Fella*  
"Been a Long Day" from *How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying*  
"Brotherhood of Man" from *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*

Tickets are \$24, \$28, \$38, \$65, \$85 and \$95, and may be purchased online at [www.carnegiehall.org](http://www.carnegiehall.org), by calling CarnegieCharge at 212-247-7800, or by visiting the Carnegie Hall Box Office at 57<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Dates, programs and artists are subject to change.

The New York Pops was founded by former NBC Music Director Skitch Henderson in 1983 to give New York a permanent professional symphonic pops orchestra that would create greater public awareness and appreciation of America's rich and diverse musical heritage. The orchestra is now the largest independent symphonic pops orchestra in the United States.

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**BROADWAY'S MOST HAPPY FELLA: MUSIC OF FRANK LOESSER AT CARNEGIE HALL ON FRIDAY, APRIL 1**

Page 6 of 6

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