

the colorado symphony



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BROADWAY MEETS THE SILVER SCREEN AS THE COLORADO SYMPHONY
PRESENTS STEPPIN' OUT**

Escape into the world of classic Hollywood movies and Broadway legends; enjoy celebrated songs from musicals such as "Shall We Dance," "Top Hat," "West Side Story," "Babes in Arms" and "Music in the Air"

Artists: Colorado Symphony Orchestra
Scott O'Neil, *resident conductor*
Joan Hess and Kirby Ward

Performance: Friday, February 24 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: On sale now

DENVER – February 15, 2012 – On a night that would make Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers proud, the Colorado Symphony Pops Series presents *Steppin' Out*, a salute to the music that made Hollywood and Broadway legends. On Friday, February 24, *Steppin' Out* takes concertgoers on a journey back in time to the Golden Age of the Hollywood musical, then forward in time to the Great White Way and the Big Band Era as dancers and singers accompany the Colorado Symphony. Led by resident conductor Scott O'Neil and featuring Broadway's Joan Hess (*Mamma Mia*) and Olivier Award nominee Kirby Ward (*Crazy For You*), *Steppin' Out* showcases music by legendary composers and songwriters such as George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, Leonard Bernstein, and Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II.

Highlights of this fabulous evening include "Mambo" from *West Side Story*, "They Can't Take That Away From Me" and "Slap that Bass" from the 1937 Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers film *Shall We Dance*, and the jazz standard "I Got Rhythm" from the 1934 musical *Girl Crazy* (which film buffs may remember from the 1943 film starring Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland). Audiences will adore Colorado Symphony performances of "Cheek to Cheek" from the 1935 screwball comedy *Top Hat* (another Astaire/Rogers smash hit), "Someone to Watch Over Me" from the 1926 musical *Oh, Kay!*, and "The Song Is You" from the 1932 musical *Music is in the Air*. Plus, concertgoers will experience a proper Big Band live orchestra experience with Glenn Miller hits including "In the Mood," "A String of Pearls" and "Chattanooga Choo Choo." Tickets are on sale now.

About Joan Hess

Colorado native Joan Hess most recently completed her fifth Broadway show, playing the role of the wealthy and hilarious Tanya in Broadway's *Mamma Mia*. She was also seen as Jessica (the "Leggy Blonde") in HBO's award-winning comedy series, *Flight of the Conchords*. Previously, she had the great fortune to play the role of Billie Dawn in Garson Kanin's classic play *Born Yesterday*. Hess was also featured on Broadway as Sophia in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*. In addition, she appeared at Lincoln Center in the lead role in the powerful new Lynn Ahrens/ Stephen Flaherty piece, *Dessa Rose*.

Hess appeared as Betty in the first national tour of *Sunset Boulevard*, Polly in the first national tour of *Crazy for You*, and toured with *42nd Street* and *Beehive*. Regional theater audiences have enjoyed her in the title role in *Gypsy* at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, and as Picasso's first love, Fernande Olivier, in the world premiere of *La Vie en Bleu* at Philadelphia's Walnut Street Theater.

Hess was featured in the PBS Great Performances series *My Favorite Broadway: The Love Songs*, hosted by Julie Andrews. She has performed with many symphonies across North America, from the Atlanta Symphony, North Carolina Symphony and the Detroit Symphony to the Winnipeg Symphony and the Florida Sunshine Pops in Boca Raton. In 2002, she had the privilege of singing for the World Economic Forum following Mayor Bloomberg's address.

Hess served as script supervisor on the independent short film *Down in the Mouth*. She also hosted and produced live television for three seasons, acted in more than thirty commercials, and modeled for years. She is married to actor and powerhouse tenor David Hess, with whom she recently toured South Africa, England and Italy for the Travel Channel's *Fantasy Rails for Millionaires*.

About Kirby Ward

Kirby Ward has worked in the arts on five continents and in film, television and stage for almost thirty years. His portrayal of the lead character Bobby Child in the London production of *Crazy For You* netted him an Olivier Award nomination, as well as the honor of meeting and performing for the Royal Family on the occasion of the Queen Mother's birthday. You can hear Ward on the London cast album for First Night Records.

As an actor, Ward has run the gamut of song and dance roles, playing every "Billy" or "Bobby" from *My One and Only* to *42nd Street*, and a couple of Don's and Tom's thrown in to mix things up (*Singin' in the Rain* and *No No Nanette* for those keeping score). Departing from the song and dance motif has led him into such roles as King Herod in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Arnolph in *School For Wives*, Vernon in *They're Playin' Our Song*, and even a stint as Che in *Evita*.

On television, Ward has appeared on *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, *General Hospital* and *The Tonight Show*. Film appearances include *For the Boys*, *Pennies From Heaven* and *S.O.B.* He also appeared as Bob Hope with Dick Cavett at the Library of Congress' celebration for Bob Hope's 100th Birthday.

In Los Angeles, Ward choreographed portions of Debbie Reynolds' and Donald O'Connor's Las Vegas acts, appearing in both for a number of years as a singer and dancer. He also trained Bette Midler and

James Caan in song and dance technique for their film *For The Boys* for 20th Century Fox. In addition, he worked as a writer for television at Hanna Barbera Studios. Most recently, his original short film *Down in the Mouth* was awarded best short film at the Kent Film Festival in Connecticut. Currently, Ward lives in Connecticut with his family, where he is finishing the book of a new musical titled *Romancing the Throne*.

Tickets: Tickets are on sale now at www.coloradosymphony.org, the Colorado Symphony Box Office: (303) 623-7876 or (877) 292-7979 or in-person in the lobby of Boettcher Concert Hall in the Denver Performing Arts Complex. Hours are Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

About the Colorado Symphony

The state's only full-time professional orchestra, the Colorado Symphony embraces a tradition of musical excellence by presenting a diverse array of symphonic performances throughout the year. Originally established in 1989 as the successor to the Denver Symphony, the Colorado Symphony performs in Boettcher Concert Hall and throughout the Front Range, presenting outstanding education and outreach programs, as well as Masterworks, Pops, Holiday, Family, and the exciting new *Inside the Score* and *Symphony on the Rocks* series that have attracted a historic level of first-time concertgoers. By presenting music that is both timeless and inspiring, while taking risks with new musical collaborations and interactive concerts, the Colorado Symphony is attracting more diverse and younger audiences than ever before. The increasing popularity of Colorado Symphony concerts not only re-affirms the artistic excellence of the orchestra, but also reflects the Symphony's relevance to its Colorado community and deep-rooted enthusiasm for symphonic music felt by so many individuals across the region. For more information about the Colorado Symphony, visit www.coloradosymphony.org.

Media Contact:

Samantha Teter
Director of Marketing & Sales
303.308.2462
steter@coloradosymphony.org

###