FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Thursday, May 31, 2018

FOUR FINALISTS HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FROM A FIELD OF 41 CANDIDATES TO COMPETE FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONDUCT THE BOSTON POPS IN BERNSTEIN’S OVERTURE TO CANDIDE DURING A CONCERT IN SYMPHONY HALL ON JUNE 7

Tamara Dworetz (29), Jherrard Hardeman (20), John Masko (26), and Benjamin Wenzelberg (18) are all finalists in the Boston Pops’ 2018 Bernstein-inspired conducting competition. Click here for photos and bios of all four finalists

FINAL ROUND TO TAKE PLACE AT A BOSTON POPS REHEARSAL, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF KEITH LOCKHART ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, BETWEEN 10:30-1 P.M.


CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE 2018 SPRING POPS SEASON ANNOUNCEMENT;
For photos and artist bios for the 2018 Spring Pops season, click here

Four young finalists—from a field of 41 candidates—have been chosen to compete for a chance to conduct the Boston Pops in a performance of Leonard Bernstein’s Candide Overture at a concert to take place on Thursday, June 7, 8-10 p.m., at Symphony Hall. The final round to choose a winner for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity will take place at a Boston Pops rehearsal, under the direction of Keith Lockhart, on Wednesday, June 6, from 10:30-1 p.m. At that time, after each candidate has had a chance to conduct the
Boston Pops in Bernstein’s iconic score, Keith Lockhart, BSO Artistic Administrator Tony Fogg, and the Boston Pops members will choose a winner to lead the orchestra in the Overture to Candide during the following night’s Pops concert in front of a live audience.

The four finalists are:

- Tamara Dworetz, age 29, Boston University doctoral student, 2018-2021
- Jherrard Hardeman, age 20, Longy School of Music of Bard College Class of 2020
- John Masko, age 26, Providence, RI
- Benjamin Wenzelberg, age 18, Harvard University Class of 2021

BACKGROUND ON THE BOSTON POPS CONDUCTING COMPETITION

As part of the Boston Pops’ season-long centennial celebration of Leonard Bernstein’s birth, May 9-June 16, Keith Lockhart and the orchestra held a conducting competition open to students ages 18-30 who live in or attend school in New England or New York, offering an aspiring young conductor a chance to lead the Boston Pops in Bernstein’s Overture to Candide as part of a concert on June 7 at Symphony Hall. Inspired by Mr. Bernstein, the competition gives contestants the same opportunity that he had on July 11, 1941, when he made his professional conducting debut after winning a contest held by the Boston Herald. Sharing the podium with Arthur Fiedler, famed Boston Pops Conductor from 1930 to 1979, Bernstein led the orchestra in Wagner’s Prelude to Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg. It was an auspicious event in the life of the young Leonard Bernstein, who would go on to step in at the last minute to lead the New York Philharmonic for an ailing Bruno Walter in 1943, and take on the title of music director of that ensemble in 1958, among a multitude of other major accomplishments throughout his life as a musician.

CONTEST DETAILS

To enter, contestants had to submit a live performance video (with or without an audience) of themselves conducting an ensemble of any size in a musical piece of their choosing to Facebook or Instagram, using the hashtag #ConductingBernstein. Videos had to be shared publicly on the social media sites to be considered for the competition. With their social media post, contestants also had to share the reason, in 150 words or less, why they should be chosen to receive the opportunity of a lifetime to conduct the Boston Pops in Bernstein’s Overture to Candide on Thursday, June 7. Before or after their audition on June 6, the finalists will also take part in a short interview with Boston Pops Director of Artistic Planning Dennis Alves. The contest was open to students ages 18-30 who are legal residents of the United States and live in or attend school in New England or New York State.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN’S ASSOCIATION WITH THE BOSTON POPS

Born on August 25, 1918, Leonard Bernstein, a towering artistic figure of the 20th century, first set foot in Symphony Hall at age 14 in the spring of 1932 to attend a Boston Pops concert with his father; the program, led by Arthur Fiedler, included Ravel’s Bolero and Rossini’s The Barber of Seville Overture, among other selections. Bernstein later made his professional conducting debut on July 11, 1941, leading the Boston Pops in a concert in the Hatch Shell on the Charles River Esplanade as a result of a contest held by the Boston Herald. Sharing the podium with Arthur Fiedler, famed Boston Pops Conductor from 1930 to 1979, Bernstein led the orchestra in Wagner’s Prelude to "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg." It was an auspicious event in the life of the young Leonard Bernstein, who would go on to step in at the last minute to lead the New York Philharmonic for an ailing Bruno Walter in 1943, and take on the title of music director of the ensemble in 1958, among a multitude of other major accomplishments throughout his life as a musician.
Leonard Bernstein’s association with the Boston Pops also includes an appearance in 1944 leading a spring Pops program at Symphony Hall and doubling as piano soloist for Ravel’s Piano Concerto in G. In August 1955, Bernstein appeared as a piano soloist with the Boston Pops under the direction of Arthur Fiedler in a performance of George Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue. In 1964, he shared conducting duties with Arthur Fiedler for the 25th reunion concert for the Harvard Class of 1939’s “Night at the Pops,” returning to the podium 20 years later to take on the conducting duties for the “Harvard Night at Pops” program in conjunction with his 50th class reunion in 1989.

The Boston Pops has recorded music by Leonard Bernstein on 13 different albums from an Arthur Fielder recording featuring the Overture to Candide and selections from Bernstein’s Mass in 1976 to a Keith Lockhart recording of “Times Square: 1944” from On the Town in 1997. Among the highlights is a 1981 Boston Pops album, Bernstein by Boston, recorded under the baton of Boston Pops Conductor Laureate John Williams.

Leonard Bernstein was also closely associated with the Boston Symphony, especially through his near annual appearances at Tanglewood from 1940 until 1990. Bernstein’s close relationship with the Boston Symphony Orchestra—from the time he became a protégé of legendary BSO Conductor and Tanglewood founder Serge Koussevitzky as a member of the first Tanglewood Music Center class in 1940, until the final concerts he ever conducted before his passing, which were with the BSO and Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra at Tanglewood in the summer of 1990—solidified his place as one of the key figures in the BSO’s storied history. The spring Pops season is part of a year-long worldwide celebration of the centennial of Leonard Bernstein’s birth, which includes the 2018 Tanglewood season, entitled Bernstein Centennial Summer—Celebrating Lenny at Tanglewood!, and a celebration of the incomparable maestro during the BSO’s 2017-18 season at Symphony Hall in Boston.

For a detailed history of Bernstein’s relationship with the Boston Pops, BSO, Tanglewood, visit celebratebernstein.org. More information about the Leonard Bernstein Centennial is available at WCRB-FM’s bernstein.classical.org and leonardbernstein.com.

Tickets to the 2018 Boston Pops are on sale now at 888-266-1200 or www.bostonpops.org.

BOSTON POPS SPRING SEASON OVERVIEW
The 2018 Boston Pops spring season, May 9-June 16, under the direction of Keith Lockhart, will celebrate the centennial of Leonard Bernstein, one of the greatest international musical figures of the last century—an iconic American musician whose multidimensional talents spanning the worlds of composition, performance, education and conducting greatly influenced the culture at large throughout the mid- and late-20th century, resulting in a legacy that is sure to inspire music lovers far and wide for countless generations to come. The Boston Pops has an especially proud association with Leonard Bernstein, as he made his professional orchestra conducting debut leading the ensemble during a performance in the Hatch Shell on the Charles River Esplanade in 1941, on the cusp of establishing himself as one of the foremost musicians the country had ever seen.

The Boston Pops 2018 season celebration will spotlight Leonard Bernstein’s singular contributions as a multifaceted composer for orchestra, Broadway, and film, with a concert performance of West Side Story and a semi-staged performance of On the Town, both with star Broadway casts, along with a series of five Leonard Bernstein Centennial Tribute concerts featuring classic selections from Bernstein’s scores to
The 2018 season opens on Wednesday, May 9, with a welcome return appearance by multi-platinum selling pop artist Andy Grammer, who made his highly acclaimed Boston Pops debut during the 2017 Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular.

In addition to the tribute to Leonard Bernstein, the 133rd Boston Pops season—marking Keith Lockhart’s 24th season—features a wide spectrum of programs that showcase an impressive breadth and versatility of musical genres for which “America’s Orchestra” is so well known. Additional highlights of the 2018 Boston Pops season include special performances by two acclaimed stars of Hamilton, Renée Elise Goldsberry and Phillipa Soo (6/12, 6/13 & 14); Rock the Pops with British vocal sensation Alfie Boe singing favorite songs of Pink Floyd, Queen, The Who, the Rolling Stones, and Led Zeppelin (5/15 & 16); and Sutton Foster’s return to the Boston Pops stage for A Broadway Celebration with Sutton Foster (6/6 & 7). The June 6 concert will also feature the winners of the Fidelity Investments Young Artists Competition.

Keith Lockhart also leads a dynamic cinema-themed Dance to the Movies program that will feature TV and film star Lesley Ann Warren along with acclaimed performers from Dancing with the Stars, So You Think You Can Dance, American Idol, and The Voice (6/9), and Disney’s Broadway Hits, featuring Disney’s own world-class Broadway singers performing songs from nine Tony- and Academy Award-winning scores including Alan Menken’s Beauty and the Beast, The Little Mermaid, and Aladdin; Elton John’s Aida and The Lion King, and Richard & Robert Sherman/George Styles & Anthony Drewe’s Mary Poppins, among others (5/12 & 13). In addition, the hugely popular John Williams’ Film Night returns with Boston Pops Conductor Laureate John Williams joined on the podium by Youth and Family Concerts Conductor Thomas Wilkins for the first time (5/23 & 24); Mr. Wilkins will also lead two concerts celebrating the Best of the Boston Pops (5/22 & 25). Conductor Charles Floyd leads the 26th annual Gospel Night performance, featuring vocalist Melinda Doolittle and the Boston Pops Gospel Choir (6/2).

The 2018 Boston Pops season will also present four 3 p.m. matinee family concerts (5/12 & 13 and 6/9 & 16), with a 50% discount for young patrons 17 and under. Additional initiatives include a choose-your-own subscription option and a 15% discount for groups of 25 or more. Tickets to the 2018 Boston Pops season are on sale now at 888-266-1200 or www.bostonpops.org.

TICKET AND SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION
Tickets for the 2018 Boston Pops season at Symphony Hall, priced from $30 to $150, are on sale now at www.bostonpops.org or 888-266-1200. All performances start at 8 p.m., except for the matinee performances of Disney’s Broadway Hits on Saturday, May 12 and Sunday, May 13; Dance to the Movies on Saturday, June 9; and West Side Story in concert on Sunday, June 16. The 3 p.m. matinees include a 50% ticket discount for children aged 17 and younger. Groups of 20 or more receive 15% off regular ticket prices and waived handling fees. Please call the Group Sales Office at 800-933-4255 for these details.

In general, tickets may be purchased online at www.bostonpops.org or by phone through SymphonyCharge at 617-266-1200 or 888-266-1200, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturday from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (with a $6.50 handling fee for each ticket ordered online or by phone). Tickets may also be purchased in person at the Symphony Hall box office, open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Saturday when there is a concert at Symphony Hall. Most major credit cards and cash are accepted at the box office. For group sales of 25 or more, please call 617-638-9345 or 800-933-4255.

The Boston Symphony has a dedicated line for disabled patrons who would like to purchase tickets to BSO, Boston Pops, or Tanglewood concerts, or who need information about disability services at
Symphony Hall or Tanglewood. This line can be reached by dialing 617-638-9431. For access via TDD/TTY, please call 617-638-9289. Patrons with disabilities can access Symphony Hall through the Cohen Wing on Huntington Avenue or through the Massachusetts Avenue entrance.

Ticket packages to Presidents at Pops, the BSO’s exclusive spring corporate gala on Thursday, May 10, start at $5,500 and include floor and balcony tickets with a sponsor page in the evening’s commemorative program book. Lead Sponsorships are available from $25,000 to $75,000, and include premium seating; full-color sponsor pages; sponsorship of children at Days in the Arts at Tanglewood (DARTS), the BSO’s summer arts immersion camp in the Berkshires; membership in the BSO Business Partner, as well as recognition at the event and throughout the Pops season. For more information about Presidents at Pops contact Mary Thomson at mthomson@bso.org or 617-638-9278.

**SPONSORSHIP**
Opening Night at Pops and the entire 2018 Boston Pops season are sponsored by Fidelity Investments®. The Leonard Bernstein Centennial Tribute concerts (May 11, 12, 17, 29, and 30) are sponsored by Arbella Insurance Foundation. The May 23 concert is sponsored by Fairmont Copley Plaza, Official Hotel of the Boston Pops. Commonwealth Worldwide Executive Transportation is the Official Chauffeured Transportation Provider of the Boston Pops American Airlines is the Official Airline of the Boston Pops.

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