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BOSTON POPS CONDUCTOR KEITH LOCKHART LEADS THE ORCHESTRA IN ITS FIRST-EVER HOLIDAY POPS SENSORY-FRIENDLY CONCERT ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, AT 10 A.M.

DESIGNED FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN OR ADULTS DIAGNOSED WITH AN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER OR SENSORY SENSITIVITIES, THE 60-MINUTE VERSION OF THE REGULAR HOLIDAY POPS CONCERT INCLUDES A SPECIAL CHILDREN’S SING-ALONG, PERFORMANCE OF THE POLAR EXPRESS WITH BOSTON-BASED ACTOR JEREMIAH KISSEL AND THE TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL CHORUS, AND A POST-CONCERT PHOTO OP WITH SANTA CLAUS

SYMPHONY HALL MODIFICATIONS INCLUDE LOWER VOLUME AND LIGHTING LEVELS, RELAXED HOUSE RULES, DESIGNATED SUPPORT SPACES, AND AUTISM THERAPIST VOLUNTEERS ON SITE

Click here for complete details of the 2019 Holiday Pops season, December 4–30; For downloadable photos and artist bios, click here; for press tickets, email ecotten@bso.org or call 617-638-9287

TICKET PRICES RANGE FROM $25–$80; MEMBERS OF THE PRESS ARE INVITED TO COVER AND ATTEND THE CONCERT

The Boston Pops Orchestra and conductor Keith Lockhart are pleased to offer the Pops’ first-ever Holiday Pops sensory-friendly concert on Saturday, December 7 at 10 a.m. Following upon the success of the orchestra’s inaugural sensory-friendly concert Once Upon a Time last June, the holiday program is designed for all families with children or adults diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder or sensory sensitivities. The concert will be a shortened 60-minute version of the regular Holiday Pops concert. Modifications also include relaxed house rules, reduced volume and lighting levels, extra space for
movement, available noise-reduction headphones, designated quiet rooms and support spaces, and credentialed autism therapist volunteers on site.

“At the Boston Pops we play music for everyone, so we are very proud to be presenting our first sensory-friendly Holiday Pops concert this December,” says Boston Pops Conductor Keith Lockhart. “This is a concert where all are welcome to experience our magnificent orchestra and the wonder of the holidays in a flexible, judgment-free environment.”

Among the offerings in which Maestro Lockhart will lead the Boston Pops Orchestra are the March and Trepak from Tchaikovsky’s The Nutcracker; the orchestra’s signature musical rendition of “Sleigh Ride”; a festive sing-along featuring holiday classics; and a performance of The Polar Express, an arrangement based on the children's classic by Chris Van Allsburg featuring music from the score of the 2004 feature film of the same name, with narration by veteran Boston-based actor Jeremiah Kissel and singing by the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. After the concert is an opportunity for parents to take photos of their children with Santa Claus. (Please note that floor service concessions will not be available at this performance.)

This Holiday Pops program is the first of a three-concert series this season intended for audiences with autism spectrum disorder or sensory sensitivities. The other two are the Concert for Very Young People on February 1, 2020 and the Family Concert on March 14, 2020. The Boston Pops has teamed with several organizations and consultants to make these concerts a reality. Among the local partners are Autism Speaks New England, Juvo Behavioral Health of Massachusetts, Autism/Asperger Network of New England, and Wheelock Family Theater.

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a general term used for a group of complex disorders of brain development. These disorders are characterized, in varying degrees, by challenges with social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, sensory sensitivities, and repetitive behaviors. Autism affects an estimated 1 out of 59 children in the U.S. today. Research has shown that early intervention and Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) are effective methods in managing autism. The Holiday Pops sensory-friendly concert is intended for anyone with sensory sensitivities or developmental, cognitive, and physical disabilities. More information about the concert, including a Q&A for prospective attendees, is on the Pops’ website.

Tickets for all Holiday Pops concerts are available for purchase at 888-266-1200 and www.bostonpops.org.

**BOSTON POPS HOLIDAY POPS OVERVIEW**

Under the direction of Boston Pops Conductor Keith Lockhart, the 46th annual Holiday Pops season presents a festive program of holiday music from the orchestra’s ever-expanding repertoire. The Holiday Pops program opens with “Joy to the World - A Fanfare for Christmas Day” (a selection from the Pops’ Sleigh Ride recording) followed by the famous “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah. The program
also features selections from Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker* and Menotti’s *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, as well as the “Carol of the Drum.” The centerpiece of the program is music from the film based on the celebrated children’s book *The Polar Express*. This 20-minute-long ethereal piece, which features the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and includes words and projected images from Chris Van Allsburg’s classic book, is narrated by veteran Boston actors Jeremiah Kissel and Will LeBow.

The second half of the concert opens with David Chase’s “Wonderfull,” followed by “Of Lights, Nights, and Brass” in a new arrangement, highlighting the virtuosity of the Boston Pops brass section. The program also includes David Chase’s wildly popular arrangement of “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” featuring the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and a new arrangement of the orchestra’s signature holiday tune: Leroy Anderson’s “Sleigh Ride,” a piece written expressly for the Boston Pops, and regularly ranked the most popular Christmas tunes by ASCAP. After a visit from the one-and-only Santa Claus, the entire Holiday Pops audience will be welcome to join in *A Merry Little Sing-Along*, including “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” “Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!,” “The Christmas Song,” “Winter Wonderland,” and “Jingle Bells.”

The 2019 Holiday Pops program also includes a special performance of “Let There Be Peace on Earth,” which features students from five Boston Public Schools performing in a video alongside the live performance by the Pops and Tanglewood Festival Chorus. The Boston Public School students from all five schools—Boston Arts Academy in Dorchester, Chittick Elementary School in Hyde Park, Rafael Hernández K–8 School in Roxbury, Orchard Gardens K–8 Pilot School in Boston, and Donald McKay K–8 School in East Boston—will also be joining Keith Lockhart and the Pops for a performance at Symphony Hall on December.

**TICKET AND SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION**

Tickets for the Boston Pops Holiday Pops series range from $35 to $110 for regularly priced concerts; $42 to $150 for special-priced concerts; and $45 to $162 for premium-priced concerts. Tickets for the Sensory-Friendly Concert on December 7 at 10 a.m. range from $25 to $80; children under 2 are admitted free.

Tickets can be purchased by calling 888-266-1200 or visiting bostonpops.org. The Symphony Hall Box Office is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday. The Box Office remains open through intermission on performance nights. American Express, Visa, Discover, Diners Club, and cash are also accepted at the Box Office. There is a $6.50 per ticket handling fee for tickets ordered by phone or online.

All Holiday Pops patrons, regardless of age, must have a ticket. Patrons with disabilities can access Symphony Hall through the Cohen Wing on Huntington Avenue and the Box Office entrance on Massachusetts Avenue. An access service center, accessible restrooms, and elevators are available inside this entrance. For ticket information, call the Disability Services Information Line at 617-638-9431 or TDD/TTY 617-638-9289.

**SPONSORSHIP**
The 2019 Holiday Pops Season is sponsored by Fidelity Investments. Special thanks for the Holiday sensory-friendly program go to corporate sponsor Celebrity Cruises.

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BOSTON POPS PROGRAM LISTING – DECEMBER 7

*Holiday Pops Sensory-Friendly Concert*
Keith Lockhart, conductor
Jeremiah Kissel, narrator
Boston Pops Orchestra
Tanglewood Festival Chorus
Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m.