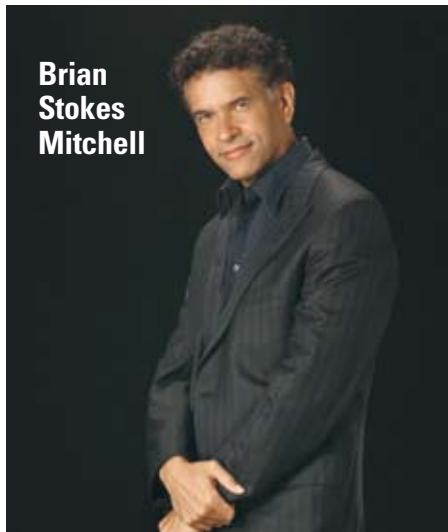


Westchester Philharmonic
Presents

Winter Pops

Saturday, December 20, 2008
at 3 pm

STARRING



**Brian
Stokes
Mitchell**



**Constantine Kitsopoulos,
conducting**

Brian Stokes Mitchell's appearance made possible in part with generous support from Barbara and Richard B. Dannenberg.

This season is made possible, in part by the basic program support of the Westchester Arts Council with funds from Westchester County government and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.



Brian Stokes Mitchell

dubbed “The Last Leading Man” by *The New York Times*, Stokes is the quintessential musical theatre performer, yet his work on the big and small screens as well as in concert halls around the country has been equally acclaimed.

In fact, in the past few years, Stokes’ performances as a solo vocalist have been praised by critics nationwide with sold-out evenings at the Hollywood Bowl, Disney Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Tanglewood, Ravinia and Symphony Hall. His musical versatility and thrilling voice — an instrument *The New York Times* says “rumbles out of him like thunder underlined by drum rolls” — has kept him in demand by some of the country’s finest conductors and orchestras, performing Broadway tunes, jazz standards and contemporary pieces under the batons of Leonard Slatkin, Marvin Hamlisch, John Williams and Paul Gemignani.

Most recently, Stokes took to the famed stage

at Carnegie Hall for his solo debut, a sold out evening with a 42 piece orchestra conducted by Paul Gemignani. Joining him for a few select numbers were some of his past leading ladies including Reba McEntire, Heather Headley and Phylicia Rashad. Stokes last took to the stage at Carnegie Hall in the summer of 2005 for a star-studded concert version of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *South Pacific* co-starring Reba McEntire, which was aired on PBS’ *Great Performances* (also under the baton of Gemignani). Stokes, McEntire and Gemignani brought the critically acclaimed concert to the Hollywood Bowl in 2007.

Stokes is equally at home in more intimate venues; in 2005, he made his cabaret debut as both singer and musical arranger in Manhattan at Feinstein’s at the Regency in the critically hailed *Love/Life*, which subsequently transferred to Broadway’s Vivian Beaumont Theater at Lincoln Center. That performance led

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to a 2006 Nightlife Award for Outstanding Cabaret Male Vocalist in a Major Engagement.

It may be on the Broadway stage, however, where Brian Stokes Mitchell has received the most adulation, including Broadway's highest honor, the Tony Award. Stokes was most recently on Broadway in the revival of *Man of La Mancha*, portraying the dual roles of Cervantes and Don Quixote and earning a Tony nomination and a Helen Hayes Award for his work. It was the revival of Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate*—in the roles of Fred Graham and Petruccio—that earned him Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle awards. The actor was also Tony-nominated for his performance as Coalhouse Walker, Jr. in the epic musical *Ragtime*, and for his dramatic turn as the title character in August Wilson's Tony-nominated play *King Hedley II*. His other Broadway outings include *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Jelly's Last Jam* (replacing Gregory Hines), David Merrick's *Oh, Kay!* and *Mail*, which earned the actor a Theatre World Award for Outstanding Broadway Debut. In 1998 he joined the likes of Helen Hayes, Sir John Gielgud, Alec Guinness and James Earl Jones when he became the sole recipient of the Drama League's Distinguished Performance Award, the nation's oldest theatrical honor, for his commanding turn in *Ragtime*.

Last year, he released his self-titled CD as the inaugural artist on the newly-formed Playbill Records label to rave reviews from fans and critics alike.

For more information, please visit www.brianstokes.com.



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Constantine Kitsopoulos, Conductor

Constantine Kitsopoulos has made a name for himself as a conductor whose musical experiences comfortably span the worlds of opera and symphony, where he conducts in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall and Royal Albert Hall, and musical theater, where he can be found leading orchestras on Broadway.

Mr. Kitsopoulos is in his second season as music director of the Queens Symphony Orchestra and continues as general director of Chatham Opera, which he founded in 2005. Recently Mr. Kitsopoulos returned to the Baltimore, Detroit, Hartford and Milwaukee symphonies and made his debuts with the Mobile, Princeton and Virginia symphonies.

This past season, Mr. Kitsopoulos made his debuts with the Blossom Festival Orchestra, Hartford Symphony, Santa Barbara Symphony and the National Arts Centre Orchestra. Orchestral highlights of previous seasons include conducting appearances

with the Annapolis Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Lubbock Symphony, Madison Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, New York Virtuosi Chamber Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Brooklyn Philharmonic, and a complete performance of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* with members of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Mr. Kitsopoulos has also continued to show his ability and interest in performing new works and conducting a wide variety of genres. In 2005, he conducted the Red Bull Artsehcro, an orchestra consisting of students from the top conservatories and university music programs in the country, in a concert at Carnegie Hall featuring a program of world premieres by Raul Yanez and Laura Karpman.

In the 2006-2007 season, Mr. Kitsopoulos conducted Dicapò Opera Theatre's production of "The Merry Widow" and the Chatham Opera's debut production of Menotti's "Amahl and the Night

Constantine Kitsopoulos, continued

Visitors." Previous seasons' operatic highlights include the Dicapo Opera Theatre's production of Gounod's *Faust* and all three versions of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, the Hong Kong Municipal Opera production of *Carmen* in both Hong Kong and Beijing, and Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* at Alice Tully Hall. Mr. Kitsopoulos also served as Music Director of the world premiere production of Ed Dixon's *Fanny Hill* at the Goodspeed Opera House in Connecticut, where he created the production's orchestrations as well.

In addition to his orchestral and classical commitments, Mr. Kitsopoulos is much in demand as a theatre conductor, both on Broadway and nationwide. In 2006-2007, Mr. Kitsopoulos conducted the Tony-nominated Broadway musical "Coram Boy" and the American Conservatory Theatre's production of Kurt Weill's "Happy End," for which he recorded the cast album at Skywalker Ranch. He was Conductor and Musical Director for The Old Globe's (San Diego) production of "A Catered Affair" and continued in that role as the show moved to Broadway in spring 2008. Other musical theater highlights include serving as Music Director and Principal Conductor of Baz Luhrmann's highly acclaimed production of Puccini's *La Bohème*, conducting the new musical "Mambo Kings" in San Francisco in 2005, serving as Music Director of Frank Wildhorn's *Dracula* and *Les Misérables* in 2001-2002 and conducting Matthew Bourne's Broadway production of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*.

Constantine Kitsopoulos studied conducting with Vincent La Selva, as well as Gustav Meier, Sergiu Commissiona, and Semyon Bychkov. He studied piano with Marienka Michna, Chandler Gregg, Ed Edson, and Sophia Rosoff.

His first recording – Baz Luhrmann's production of *La Bohème* – was released by Dreamworks in 2002. His recording of "Happy End" was released in 2007 by Ghostlight.



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