



Friday, March 20, 2020, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

The Summit
The Manhattan Transfer Meets Take 6

The Manhattan Transfer

Janis Siegel
Alan Paul
Cheryl Bentyne
Trist Curless

Take 6

Claude McKnight
Alvin Chea
David Thomas
Mark Kibble
Joel Kibble
Khristian Dentley

Yaron Gershovsky, *music director*

The Summit will be performed without intermission and last approximately 90 minutes.

Cal Performances' 2019–20 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

The Manhattan Transfer continues to rank as one of the great vocal groups of our time, famed for its unforgettable renditions of pop and jazz hits and a legacy of excellence that the group has sustained since its first recording 45 years ago. The legendary quartet has received 10 Grammy Awards (out of 20 nominations) and has been inducted into the Vocal Group Hall of Fame. Trist Curless has now become an official member of the ensemble, joining Janis Siegel, Alan Paul, and Cheryl Bentyne, all of whom are conscious of maintaining the integrity and artistry left by founding member Tim Hauser, who passed away in 2014.

The Manhattan Transfer was formed when Tim Hauser was working to pay his bills by driving a New York City cab, all the while aspiring to form a harmony vocal quartet that could authentically embrace varied musical styles and still create something wholly unique in the field of American popular song. While driving that taxi, he met the next members of the legendary group—Laurel Massé and Janis Siegel. After Alan Paul, who was appearing in the Broadway cast of *Grease* at the time, was recommended as the additional male voice, the singers formed the Manhattan Transfer on October 1, 1972. Cheryl Bentyne joined the group in 1979, replacing Massé.

In 1974, the group began performing regularly throughout New York City at cabaret venues including Trude Heller's, Mercer Arts Center, Max's Kansas City, and Club 82. By the end of the year, they were the top live attraction in town. Soon signed to Atlantic Records, the group released its self-titled debut album in 1975. The second single, a remake of the gospel classic "Operator," gave the Manhattan Transfer its first national hit.

Extensions (1979) earned the group another smash hit with "Twilight Zone/Twilight Tone." The vocal remake of the classic "Birdland" became recognized as the singers' anthem and earned them their first two Grammy Awards. In 1981, the Transfer became the first group ever to win Grammy Awards in both pop and jazz categories during the same year—Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal for "Boy From New York City" and Best Jazz Performance Duo or Group for "Until I Met You (Corner Pocket)."

The 12 Grammy nominations they received for *Vocalese* in 1985 made the recording second to Michael Jackson's *Thriller* as the most-nominated album in a single year, ever.

The Manhattan Transfer is responsible for 19 singles and 29 albums over its stellar career. The group's music has been featured in major films and television shows, and the singers have also recorded with an impressive roster of artists that includes Tony Bennett, Bette Midler, Smokey Robinson, Laura Nyro, Phil Collins, B.B. King, Chaka Khan, James Taylor, and Frankie Valli.

With sold-out international tours and worldwide record sales in the millions, the Manhattan Transfer continues to bring unique and extraordinary melodic and jazz-infused vocals to new and established audiences of all generations.

Heralded by Quincy Jones as the "baddest vocal cats on the planet!," **Take 6** is the quintessential *a cappella* group and a model of vocal genius.

With 10 Grammy Awards, 10 Dove Awards, a Soul Train Award, and induction into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, this musical phenomenon is comprised of six virtuosic voices united in crystal clear harmony, against a backdrop of syncopated rhythms, innovative arrangements, and funky grooves that bubble into an intoxicating brew of gospel, jazz, R&B, and pop. With praise from such luminaries as Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, Brian Wilson, Ella Fitzgerald, and Whitney Houston, the multi-platinum-selling sextet has toured the globe and collaborated across genres, and is recognized as one of the world's pre-eminent *a cappella* ensembles.

With its recent *Iconic* recording, **Take 6** hit seven *Billboard* charts simultaneously and has seen its music played all over the country. And in light of the recent popularity of televised vocal competitions such as the *Sing Off* and singing-driven comedy-dramas like *Glee* and *Smash*, **Take 6** can count itself among the original torchbearers for this popular style of music. Major public and corporate events include appearing with stars such as Celine Dion, Lionel Richie, Justin Timberlake, Stevie Nicks, and Ne-Yo at Walmart's 50th anniversary celebration; and a sold-out audience and



John Abbott

standing ovation at the Songwriters Hall of Fame Awards, where the group captivated the audience with its rendition of “Stand By Me,” performing with and honoring legendary singer-songwriter Ben E. King. As a group that knows no musical bounds, Take 6 then brought down the house with its tribute to folk icon Woody Guthrie with a performance of “This Land Is Your Land.”

The singers have come a long way from their days at Oakwood College in Huntsville (AL), where Claude McKnight formed the group as the Gentleman’s Estate Quartet in 1980. They eventually became known as Alliance but after signing

with Reprise Records in 1987, they found that there was another group with the same name, so they soon became Take 6. Their self-titled debut CD won over jazz and pop critics and they’ve never slowed down since.

What gives the music and the group such staying power? The answers are direct and simple: faith, friendship, respect, and love of music. From their exceptional Christmas concerts, to their innovative shows with symphony orchestras, these qualities are at the heart of the Take 6 phenomenon.