

The Renaissance

2008-09: volume 13

American Originals
November 1, 2008
8:00 PM

Original: (o-rig-i-nal) (adj.)
existing first, from the beginning,
or before other people or things;
completely new and not copied or
derived from something else.

American Originals

Special Guest Artist:
Kevin Cole

The Program:

Overture to *Of Thee I Sing*
Belle of the Ball
Blue Tango
Embraceable You
The Syncopated Clock
Arietta
Concerto in C Major
Overture to *Of Thee I Sing*
I Never Know When
Love is Here to Stay
Jazz Pizzacato
Forgotten Dreams
The Typewriter
Rhapsody in Blue



MANSFIELD
SYMPHONY

Robert Franz
Music Director

From Music Director Robert Franz:

“I first worked with Kevin Cole about five years ago in a performance of Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue*, which you will hear on this concert. Now, I thought I “knew” the *Rhapsody* and I certainly had heard it played many times, but when Kevin and I started working through the score I realized that I was in for something really special. Kevin has an unbelievable connection to the music of our American masters. In his capable hands the *Rhapsody* and the lesser-known, but every much as exciting, Leroy Anderson concerto, will transport you to another era. 2008 celebrates the 100th anniversary of Leroy Anderson’s birth (composer of *Sleigh Ride*, among others) and I can’t think of a better way to celebrate than a party like this concert!”

Read about Kevin Cole

America's pianist and Steinway Artist Kevin Cole has delighted audiences with a repertoire that includes the best of 20th Century American Music. Kevin Cole's performances, especially his interpretation of Gershwin, have prompted accolades from some of the foremost critics in America. "When Cole sits down at the piano, you would swear Gershwin himself was at work...Cole stands as the best Gershwin pianist in America today," wrote Howard Reich, arts critic for the Chicago Tribune.



Engagements for Mr. Cole include: sold-out performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl; San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra (London); Boston Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony; BBC Concert Orchestra (Covent Garden Festival); Cincinnati Pops (Erich Kunzel conducting); Interlochen Center for the Arts (Michigan) and the Ravinia Festival (Chicago, IL). Cole has been a featured soloist at the Irving S. Gilmore International Keyboard Festival and the Chicago Humanities Festival. He has shared the concert stage with notables from opera greats William Warfield and

Sylvia McNair to Broadway legend Barbara Cook. His solo debut at Chicago's Orchestra Hall was a concert of his own compositions. A step in a new direction featured Cole as a singer/pianist in Gershwin's *LADY, BE GOOD!* at the Teatro Nacional Sao Carlos, Lisbon, Portugal. Honoring the 100th anniversary of songwriter Harold Arlen's birth he performed a sold-out solo concert of Arlen for the Chicago Humanities Festival. In March 2005, Kevin gave the first professional performance with the Albany Symphony (NY) of the *Concerto in Three Rhythms* by Dana Suesse (The Girl Gershwin) since its debut in 1932.

Kevin Cole is an award winning musical director, arranger, composer, vocalist and archivist who has garnered the praises of Irving Berlin, Harold Arlen, E.Y. Harburg, Hugh Martin, Burton Lane, Stephen Sondheim and members of the Jerome Kern and Gershwin families.

Kevin Cole's awards as music director and archivist include Joseph Jefferson Award, *Forever Plaid*, (Chicago, 1995); Bay Area Critics' Award, *Oh, Kay!* (San Francisco, 1994) and *The Boys From Syracuse* (San Francisco 1995) for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. Additionally, Kevin was music director and arranger for Sweet, Smart, Rodgers & Hart, Pasadena Playhouse and two original revues (with writer/director Leeds Bird) R.S.V.P Jerome Kern and The Gershwin Years. He collaborated with Broadway choreographer Randy Skinner (*42nd Street*) to create sparkling new dance music arrangements for the smash hit revival of *Babes in Arms* for Goodspeed Opera House. As artistic director for Ravinia Festival's new Steans Institute Musical Theatre Initiative, Cole presented staged readings of his new Deitz / Schwartz musical, *A Shine On Your Shoes*. He also participated in a Harold Arlen Symposium with noted musical scholar, Robert Kimball at the Spertus Institute. Kevin's latest work as performer/archivist is a DVD project for Warner Bros., which includes the re-release of the Fred Astaire / Ginger Rogers film musicals.

His discography includes critically acclaimed *Lady Be Good: First Recordings of the Unknown George Gershwin* (Pro Arte) and Gramophone Musical Album of the Year, 1995, Gershwin's *Oh, Kay!* with soprano Dawn Upshaw (Elektra/Nonesuch). He also recorded four discs for Yamaha's Disklavier Pianos.

His new CD *A Cole Christmas* was released in December. Kevin currently has two CDs: *The Song Is You* with the Carolyn Mawby Chorale and his solo piano disc *Cole Plays Gershwin*, which is available at today's performance.

To follow Kevin on his musical adventures go to his website: www.kevincoletonline.com

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