



OMAHA
SYMPHONY

Ankush Kumar Bahl, Music Director

program notes

2024/25 SEASON

Disco Divas

November 2, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.

Holland Performing Arts Center

Ernest Richardson, conductor | Shayna Steele, vocals

Crystal Monee Hall, vocals | Kelly LeVesque, vocals | Eric Metzgar, drums

A FIFTH OF BEETHOVEN, by Ludwig von Beethoven & Walter Murphy
As Recorded by Walter Murphy and The Big Apple Band

BAD GIRLS, by Joseph Patrick Esposito, Edward Peter Hokenson, Bruce Sudano &
Donna Summer
As Recorded by Donna Summer

ROCK THE BOAT, by Waldo T. Holmes
As Recorded by The Hues Corporation

DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY, by Kenneth Gamble, Leon Huff & Cary Gilbert
As Recorded by Thelma Houston

SHE WORKS HARD FOR THE MONEY, by Donna Summer & Michael Omartian
As Recorded by Donna Summer

STAYIN' ALIVE, by Barry Gibb, Robin Gibb & Maurice Gibb
As Recorded by The Bee Gees

YOU SHOULD BE DANCING, by Barry Gibb, Robin Gibb & Maurice Gibb
As Recorded by The Bee Gees

I FEEL LOVE, by Peter Bellotte, Giorgio G. Moroder & Donna Summer
As Recorded by Donna Summer

LAST DANCE, by Paul Jabara
As Recorded by Donna Summer

AIN'T NO STOPPIN' US NOW, by Jerry Cohen, Gene McFadden & John Whitehead
As Recorded by McFadden & Whitehead

INTERMISSION

THE HUSTLE, by Van McCoy
As Recorded by Van McCoy & The Soul City Symphony

BOOGIE WONDERLAND, by Allee Willis & Jon Lind
As Recorded by Earth, Wind & Fire

GOOD TIMES, by Bernard Edwards & Nile Rodgers
As Recorded by Chic

THAT'S THE WAY (I LIKE IT), by Harry Wayne Casey & Richard Finch
As Recorded by KC and the Sunshine Band

HOT STUFF, by Peter Bellotte, Harold Faltermeyer & Keith Forsey
As Recorded by Donna Summer

NIGHT FEVER, by Barry Gibb, Robin Gibb & Maurice Gibb
As Recorded by The Bee Gees

LADY MARMALADE, by Bobe Crewe & Kenny Nolan
As Recorded by Patti LaBelle

I WILL SURVIVE, by Freddie Perren & Dino Fekaris
As Recorded by Gloria Gaynor

I'M COMING OUT, by Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers
As Recorded by Diana Ross

WE ARE FAMILY, by Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers
As Recorded by Sister Sledge

This printed program is a condensed version.

For more info about the orchestra, guest artists,
and the full program notes, download the
Omaha Symphony app or scan this QR code
with your mobile device.

*program subject to change





Ernest Richardson, conductor

Ernest Richardson is in high demand as conductor, composer, arranger, organizational leader and inspirational speaker. His versatility finds him within one season conducting Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* or Broadway artists in the works of Leonard Bernstein, a live-to-movie production of *Harry Potter*, facilitating strategic decision-making for leading arts organizations, or training young musicians for the passionate, persistent pursuit of perfection.

He has been at the forefront of symphonic video/live music productions, conducting live-to-movie scores of the *Harry Potter* series with CineConcerts, *Indiana Jones*, *Jurassic Park*, *Back to the Future*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Casablanca*, *Ratatouille*, *Star Trek* (2009), the Charlie Chaplin silent film *The Gold Rush*, and *Star Wars*.

In addition to his post in Omaha, Richardson holds the position of music director and principal conductor of the Steamboat Symphony Orchestra in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. During his tenure, the organization has grown from a community orchestra to a resident professional orchestra, attracting the finest musicians from the Front Range of Colorado. He is also the founding artistic director and CEO of the Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory.



Shayna Steel, vocals

This dynamic vocalist puts new meaning to diversity and grass-roots talent. Her natural ability to traverse musical genres, be it in the studio, on the stage, or the screen, has kept her on the A list of in-demand singers in the industry. Shayna's effortless execution of both soul and jazz has grabbed the attention of audiences globally, be it the Monterey Jazz Festival in September, North Sea Jazz Festival with Snarky Puppy, or the hundreds of symphony orchestras throughout North America. She released her fourth studio album, *Gold Dust*, in 2023 on Ropeadope Records. Shayna's creative abilities explode in multiple genres and her original signature sound.

Her mature song-writing abilities are dynamically evident as heard through her infusion of soul, jazz and blues. Produced by David Cook (Billboard #1 Jazz album, Spectrum by Shoshana Bean) *Gold Dust* embodies a sound that has taken Shayna 20 years to perfect. The album features a fresh new cover of Cole Porter's "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To" featuring GRAMMY-nominated saxophonist Donny McCaslin. The album also highlights brand new original material such as the inspiring anthem "The Bloodline" celebrating her ancestors and the sultry, yet intimate "Behind Closed Doors" with jazz crooner Sachal Vasandani, but it's her new arrangement of Stevie Nick's "Gold Dust Woman" that will leave every listener in awe of her explosive vocals on her rendition of the classic hit.

"At this point in my life, I have more clarity about my identity and sound as an artist than ever before. *Gold Dust* is a reflection of my growth and demonstrates my full potential as a vocalist, a writer, and an arranger." - Shayna Steele



Kelly LeVesque, vocals

Kelly LeVesque is a singer-songwriter from New York who began her career in the studio at the age of three with her musician father recording her first notes. Kelly has performed as a soloist on leading international stages such as Royal Albert Hall, The Sydney Opera House, The Kennedy Center, Budokan, Staples Center, The White House, and Madison Square Garden. Kelly has also shared the stage with such esteemed artists as Sting, Jamie Foxx, Andrea Bocelli, David Foster, Josh Groban, Michael Bolton, Smokey Robinson, John Legend, Patti LaBelle, and many more.

Kelly's soaring vocal range, beautiful tone, and stunning stage presence have provided her with an international recording and performing career since she signed her first major recording deal with Reprise/Warner Brothers Records. Kelly has had two top-five Billboard Classical Crossover Albums, one with her group Three Graces and the second with Diane Warren's duet group Due Voci.

Kelly has been honored to perform for International Royalty, four U.S. Presidents and His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI.

Kelly believes in creating "Music With Meaning" as part of the philanthropic initiative with her music. Kelly wrote a song called "Never Forever" to raise awareness and money for Domestic Violence victims. It was released with the support of the Miss America Organization and Safe Horizon with their #PuttheNailinit campaign. "I Won't Let You Down" is a song Kelly wrote and gifted to the KNOWAutism Foundation to benefit children and families who are affected by Autism.



Crystal Monee Hall, vocals

Crystal Monee Hall is a singer/songwriter, composer/lyricist and vocal arranger based in NYC. Credits include *Sesame Street*, Ayodele Casel's *Chasing Magic*, *Walker* (CW network), *A Beautiful Noise* (gospel arrangement, Biden/Harris campaign), Kristen Chenoweth, Renée Elise Goldsberry, Brandon Victor Dixon, Ben Platt, PBS Kids (*Donkey Hodie*, *Nature Cat*, *Alma's Way*), *Fearless* by Mandy Gonzalez, *Black Ink Crew* (VH1), Broadway Inspirational Voices, HBO's *High Maintenance*, Broadway's *Rent*, Craig David, Cynthia Erivo, *After the Storm* (Ahrens and Flaherty), Thomas Rhett, John Legend, Patti Austin, Oleta Adams, Mariah Carey, Elton John, Kesha, Roy Ayers, Jason Mraz, Ledisi, Kanye West, and the rock band The Last Internationale. crystalmoneehall.com, [@crystalmonee](https://twitter.com/crystalmonee).