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PBS PRESENTS "L.A. HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2007,"
PREMIERING DECEMBER 10 AT 10:00 P.M. ET

— Sheryl Lee Ralph (*Broadway's Dreamgirls*) Hosts —

L.A. HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2007 is a one-hour special highlighting the largest multi-cultural holiday show in the country, performed before an audience of 9,000 plus in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion of the Music Center in downtown Los Angeles. The music and dance special reflects the remarkably varied cultural mosaic of Los Angeles rarely experienced on national television. From rhythm and blues East L.A. style to Cambodian court dance, a cappella singing from the Republic of Georgia to bilingual Christmas carols, mariachi violins to a dance interpretation of a Persian fable, the celebration offers a fascinating kaleidoscope of seasonal joy.

L.A. HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2007 airs on PBS December 10, 2007, 10:00 p.m. ET (check local listings). For the first time the program will be available for broadcast in high definition and letterbox format.

The show features a special guest appearance by the Klezmatics as well as two of L.A.'s most celebrated choral organizations, the Los Angeles Master Chorale and the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles, and the first mariachis to be nominated for a Grammy, Mariachi Sol de Mexico.

Actress Sheryl Lee Ralph, an acclaimed veteran of film, television and the Broadway stage, is this year's host. She originated the role of Deena Jones on Broadway in the landmark musical *Dreamgirls*; her television credits include *Designing Women*, *Barbershop* and *ER*.

Performances include:

- Little Willie G, arguably the best vocalist to come out of East L.A., who has drawn comparisons with Jackie Wilson and Frank Sinatra, does his personal take on Chuck Berry's "Run, Rudolf, Run" backed by his unplugged R&B group called Los Tamareros.
- The all-female chorus, Vox Femina, lets loose with "Go Where I Send Thee," a Gospel style arrangement of an African-American spiritual.

- The beloved carol *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* is interpreted by the ARC Handbell Choir, an amazing group comprised of developmentally disabled children and adults.
- The apsaras or heavenly dancers who grace the walls of Cambodia's national treasure, Angkor Wat, come to life as the Khmer Arts Academy artists, dressed in elaborate gold headdresses and luminous silks, portray the apsara Mera, and her handmaidens.
- *Ready, Set, Christmas* receives a sparkling performance from the engaging Salvation Army Tabernacle Children's Choir
- Djanbazian Dance Company is a whirl of graceful movement and floating fabric in *Love Dance*, inspired by the old Persian story that you can turn any evil to good if you repeat the word "love" three times.
- The voice of Mariachi Sol de Mexico director Jose Hernandez lends a full measure of soulful resonance to the mariachi standard "El Pastor" (The Shepherd).
- JazzAntiqua Dance and Music Ensemble's *Tis the Season*, a jazz ballet work created especially for L.A. Holiday Celebration and set to a version of "Carol of the Bells" by the O'Jays, bubbles with Broadway flair and pizzazz.
- The Los Angeles Master Chorale, known for its mastery of an extraordinary range of music, is led by director Grant Gershon in the Kenyan folk song, "Wana Baraka."
- The achingly beautiful mother-daughter duet, *In the Body of Our Mother*, is a West Coast dance-choral collaboration of L.A.'s TRIP Dance Theatre with San Francisco's a cappella group, KITKA, which sings a haunting Georgian song dating from the 12th century.
- The harmonizing vocals of Los Pinguos, a band formed in Buenos Aires and transplanted to L.A., combine with Spanish guitars, a Cuban Tres and the Peruvian cajón (box-drum) in their original holiday song, "Noche Buena."
- The Harmonic Bronze Handbell Ensemble of the Acton-Agua Dulce School District heralds the season with *Winter Bells*.
- The classical Indian dance style Bharata Natyam mingles with jazz-influences in Angahara Dance Ensemble's "Jwala" (Flame), a duet reflecting the immigrant's journey, the merging of the culture of the homeland with the experience of the new land.
- The Klezmatics brings their high energy, clarinet-driven klezmer sounds and intense vocals to *Happy Joyous Hanuka*.
- The Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles captures the drama of "Little Drummer Boy" and the serenity of "Peace on Earth."
- A bilingual medley of "Rudolf the Rednose Reindeer," "Frosty the Snowman" and "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" played and sung by the powerhouse Mariachi Divas, who augment traditional mariachi instrumentation to reflect their multi-cultural makeup.

A PBS web site for the program offers video mini-documentaries on the artists and features their favorite L.A. places and pursuits.

L.A. HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2007 is directed by Kenneth R. Shapiro. Sheryl Lee Ralph hosts.

The L.A. County Holiday Celebration is a decades-old tradition, beloved by Angelenos for nearly half a century. The show, which is admission-free, is a gift from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to the community at large.

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