



For Immediate Release

Broadway Star Santino Fontana and the Award-Winning *Sesame Street* Muppets™ Join Mormon Tabernacle Choir for Annual Christmas Concert

Back by popular demand after charming audiences at this summer's Pioneer Day concert, Broadway star Santino Fontana will join the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square for their annual Christmas concerts on 11, 12 and 13 December in the Conference Center in Salt Lake City. Taking the stage with Santino, and in a first for the Choir, the beloved *Sesame Street* Muppets™ will join in bringing the holiday spirit to audiences young and old. The guest artists will also appear with the Choir and Orchestra on the weekly *Music and the Spoken Word* broadcast and a mini-concert the following Sunday, 14 December.

“This year’s concert is going to be unlike any other,” said Ron Jarrett, president of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. “Joining Santino’s talents with the residents of Sesame Street will bring the childlike wonder of Christmas into our hearts and remind us of the true meaning of the season.”

Today’s carefully guarded announcement was made by Elmo himself, but exactly which of his friends will be joining him and the Choir will be revealed weekly on www.mormontabernaclechoir.org. “Everyone has their favorite *Sesame Street* character,” said Jarrett. “And many of them will be participating in the concert. We recognize that the impact *Sesame Street* has had on many of our lives as young children is incalculable.”

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit educational organization behind *Sesame Street*, which reaches 156 million children across more than 150 countries with lessons that help them grow smarter, stronger and kinder. *Sesame Street* launched its 45th anniversary season this year on [PBS KIDS](#) and has been nominated for 28 Primetime Emmys and has won eight. *Sesame Street* also holds the record for most Daytime Emmy Awards, with 159, as well as a Lifetime Achievement Award in its 40th year.

“Music has been a part of the fabric of *Sesame Street* since the very beginning,” said Carol-Lynn Parente, SVP of content and executive producer of *Sesame Street*. “We are thrilled to be a part of this annual PBS holiday tradition and excited to sing with the world-renowned choir.”

Santino Fontana is known by many for his recent roles playing Prince Hans in Disney's hit movie *Frozen* and his Broadway performance as Prince Topher in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella*, which garnered him a Tony Award nomination. He also received the 2010 Drama Desk Award for his role in *Brighton Beach Memoirs* and received accolades for originating the role of Tony in the Broadway production of *Billy Elliot*.

Fontana said, "I'm thrilled to get to sing with the amazing Mack Wilberg and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir again, and to share the stage with my childhood heroes."

The *Salt Lake Tribune* hailed his Pioneer Day concert performance, calling him "a first-rate singer, with impeccable phrasing and rock-solid technique. He also has abundant charm, effortlessly playing to the back row of the cavernous LDS Conference Center while simultaneously looking natural in close-up shots on the venue's giant screens."

The free Christmas concert performances are arguably the hottest tickets in town, and because *Sesame Street* is joining the show, seating this year is available for those *five* years of age or older. "We are always delighted by the response of the community to these concerts," said music director Mack Wilberg. "It's the reason why we make this extraordinary event available year after year."

Complimentary tickets (limit of four per household) are required and will be distributed through a random selection process. Patrons may register online at lds.org/events from Saturday, 18 October, at 12:01 a.m., through Monday, 27 October, at 11:59 p.m.

Those without Internet access can register over the phone at 801-570-0080 or 1-866-LDS-TIKS Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

All registrations received during those 10 days will have an equal chance at receiving tickets in the random selection process. Not all registrations will be selected to receive tickets, and only one registration per household can be accepted. Patrons will be notified by email about the results of the random selection process. Tickets will be mailed to those selected shortly after the registration process closes.

The Grammy Award-winning, all-volunteer Mormon Tabernacle Choir is made up of 360 men and women who join their talents to create their trademark, instantly recognizable sound. They are accompanied by the Orchestra at Temple Square, a 150-member symphony that is likewise all-volunteer. Their world-famous sound is under the direction of music director Mack Wilberg and associate music director Ryan Murphy. The Choir has appeared at 13 world's fairs and expositions, performed at six U.S. presidential inaugurations, and sung for numerous worldwide telecasts and special events — all this while broadcasting [*Music and the Spoken Word*](#), the oldest continuing radio network broadcast, a weekly tradition now in its 86th year.

###

Kim Farah, Choir Publicist
(801) 240-1977, kfarah@mormontabernaclechoir.org

