



For Immediate Release

Acclaimed Tenor and Entertainer Rolando Villazón Joins Mormon Tabernacle Choir for Annual Christmas Concert

SALT LAKE CITY – One of the world’s leading tenors and most beloved entertainers, Rolando Villazón, will be the featured guest artist at this year’s Christmas concerts by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Orchestra at Temple Square, and Bells on Temple Square on December 8, 9 and 10 in the Conference Center. Villazón will also join the Choir, Orchestra, and Bells for the Sunday broadcast of *Music and the Spoken Word* on December 11, which will not be ticketed.

"Rolando Villazón is one of the great singers of our time," said music director Mack Wilberg. "Pairing his talent with that of the Choir and Orchestra will result in yet another majestic collaboration just as it did in our recent recording of *Messiah*"

Villazón was one of four featured soloists on the Choir and Orchestra’s landmark recording of Handel’s *Messiah* which was released earlier this year.

“Rolando Villazón not only has extraordinary musical talent but will charm audiences with his onstage performance,” said Ron Jarrett, president of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. “We are playing to his strengths as an artist which means we will also use his talents as the narrator for this year’s concert.”

Today’s carefully guarded announcement was eagerly anticipated by thousands in the community who have attended the traditional Christmas concerts for over a decade. The free performances are arguably the hottest tickets in town during the Christmas season, and this year will be no exception. “In keeping with tradition, audiences can expect some wonderful surprises at this year’s concert that will delight people of all ages, as only music can” Jarrett said. Rolando Villazón is renowned for his uniquely compelling performances with leading opera houses and orchestras around the world. Heralded as “the most charming of today’s divos” (*The Times*) and “a great singer and brilliant entertainer, at once extremely funny and deeply profound” (*Crescendo*), Rolando Villazón is among the most versatile artists alive today, maintaining successful careers as a stage director, novelist, and TV personality next to his on-stage career. An exclusive recording artist with Deutsche Grammophon, Rolando Villazón has recorded over 20 CDs and DVDs which have received numerous prizes.

Instead of the random selection distribution of tickets used in prior years, tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Patrons will be able to see which nights are available and will know at the end of their selection which night they have received.

On, Saturday, October 15 at 10 a.m. MT, tickets will become available at lds.org/events. Patrons will be able to request 4 tickets online, however, tickets will not be available through phone or in person.

The Grammy Award-winning, multiple Emmy 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 200-member symphony, and the Bells on Temple Square, a 32-member handbell choir that are both 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 88th year. The Choir has its own recording label and has just released the CD and DVD versions of last year's Christmas concerts with the Broadway star Laura Osnes, famed British actor Martin Jarvis, and 4 Metropolitan Opera soloists, entitled *Hallelujah!* Earlier this year the Choir and Orchestra released landmark new recordings of Handel's *Messiah*, in Complete Oratorio and Highlights versions.

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