

High-resolution downloadable images of George Benson, Ricky Skaggs & Bruce Hornsby, Abigail Washburn & The Sparrow Quartet, The Temptations, The Four Tops, and *Rent* are available on Wolf Trap's Web site:

http://www.wolftrap.org/Media_and_Newsroom/Photos_for_Publication.aspx

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June Finishes Strong at Wolf Trap With Legendary R&B, Bluegrass, Roots Rock, and Tony-Award Winning Musical *RENT* Starring a Pair of "Idol" Contestants

Vienna, VA—Closing out the month is a week filled with classic hits and a Broadway sensation. This week's show schedule at **Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts** comprises six consecutive performances ranging from smooth soul to Broadway's finest. Wolf Trap audiences welcome **George Benson** back to the Filene Center stage for a stop on his current tour, *An Unforgettable Tribute to Nate King Cole* on June 24, followed by **Ricky Skaggs** and **Bruce Hornsby** performing selections from their self-titled album; along with appearances from **Abigail Washburn & The Sparrow Quartet** featuring accomplished banjo player **Béla Fleck** on June 25. Legendary R&B groups, **The Temptations** and **The Four Tops** arrive on June 26, preceded by five performances of the Tony-Award winning Broadway musical *Rent*, from June 27-29.

George Benson
An Unforgettable Tribute to Nate King Cole
Tuesday, June 24, 2008 at 8:00 p.m.
\$42 in-house; \$22 lawn

This legendary guitarist and vocalist is currently touring worldwide with a stop at Wolf Trap to perform *An Unforgettable Tribute to Nat King Cole*. With ten Grammys highlighting a 40 plus year career, Benson diversifies his live appearances with performances at larger venues like the Filene Center, counterbalanced by club dates in Manhattan. Though more publicly known for his career as an R&B and pop singer; punctuated by the mainstream commercial success of the triple Grammy Award-winning 1976 album, *Breezin'*, Benson's early recordings drew massive influence from jazz greats Nat King Cole, Charlie Christian, Wes Montgomery, and Charlie Parker. Benson made his home with Warner Brothers, releasing an unprecedented six straight platinum albums. His most recent recording, *Givin' It Up*, was released in 2006 and is a collaborative effort with longtime friend Al Jarreau. Wolf Trap audiences will recognize such hits

such as "Give Me The Night," "Lady Love Me (One More Time)," "Turn Your Love Around," "In Your Eyes," and "This Masquerade," among others.

Ricky Skaggs & Bruce Hornsby w/ Kentucky Thunder
Special Guest: Abigail Washburn & The Sparrow Quartet w/ Béla Fleck
Wednesday, June 25, 2008 at 8:00 p.m.
\$40 in-house; \$22 lawn

Wolf Trap welcomes the eclectic duo of Ricky Skaggs and Bruce Hornsby in their Wolf Trap debut as a pair. Skaggs and Hornsby arrive in support of their 2007 collaborative release, *Ricky Skaggs & Bruce Hornsby*. Eight years ago in 2000 during a Skaggs/Hornsby collaboration on the track "Darlin' Cory" for *Big Mon*, a Bill Monroe bluegrass tribute album, the two decided to team up and record a full length LP. Backed by Skaggs's band Kentucky Thunder, the duo emerged with 11 tracks and released their debut album *Ricky Skaggs & Bruce Hornsby* in March 2007.

On this tour, fans are able to hear the combination of Hornsby's humor with a tinge of jazzy piano and Skaggs's traditional country with bluegrass roots. The pair reinvent Hornsby's hit "Mandolin Rain" as a minor key acoustic ballad adding an aggressive spin to his cautionary backwoods tale. In a pleasantly unexpected tribute to the late Rick James, the album concludes with a bluegrass arrangement of the funk artist's smash hit "Super Freak", which has been known to make recent set lists. Additionally, Wolf Trap audiences will hear such favorites as "Across the Rocky Mountain" and "Hills of Mexico," and new compositions highlighted by the opening track, "The Dreaded Spoon."

Abigail Washburn & The Sparrow Quartet w/ Béla Fleck

Recently touring in support of their May 20 self-titled album release, Abigail Washburn & the Sparrow Quartet will debut on the Filene Center stage as Skaggs & Hornsby's special guest. Formed in 2005, the Sparrow Quartet is an American acoustic group featuring Abigail Washburn on vocals and banjo, and world renowned banjo virtuoso, Béla Fleck, best known as the front man for Béla Fleck and the Flecktones. Accompanying Washburn in The Sparrow Quartet is violinist Casey Driessen, and cello player Ben Sollee.

The Temptations & The Four Tops

Thursday, June 26, 2008 at 8:00 p.m.

\$38 in-house; \$22 lawn

The Temptations return to the Filene Center stage in a classic pairing with fellow R&B godfathers, The Four Tops. The group continues to tour behind their 2007 release, *Back to Front*, which debuted among the Top R&B albums and broke into The Billboard 200. Starting their career under the Motown Record label in 1964, the group produced their premier album, *Meet the Temptations*, which reached the Top 100 pop albums that year. A career boosting decision followed with the addition of David Ruffin as tenor while also bringing on Smokey Robinson as the groups writer/producer. Throughout the next two decades the group exploded with the release of 37 Top 10 hits, including the pop gem No. 1s, “My Girl,” “Can’t Get Next to You,” “Just My Imagination,” and “Papa Was a Rolling Stone.” The Temptations’ Wolf Trap date will offer an eclectic mix of performances numbers, spanning their four decade career.

The Four Tops

With over 20 performances at Wolf Trap, these Rock ‘n’ Roll Hall of Fame members are responsible for some of the first tunes in R&B history. Successfully starting off with Motown Records’ Holland-Dozier-Holland composer team in the early 1960s, the Four Tops released a number of hits, including “Baby I Need Your Loving,” “I Can’t Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch),” and “Reach Out, I’ll Be There,” which topped the pop charts.

After a brief lull throughout the late 60’s and early 70’s, the Four Tops shifted to a new record label with ABC-Dunhill, and recruited the production talents of Frank Wilson. This launched a successful comeback with new billboard topping songs such as “Keeper of the Castle,” which became the Four Tops’ first Top 10 pop hit in seven years. Their follow up single, “Ain’t No Woman” did even better, cracking the Top five pop hits. In 1981, the group returned with a No. 1 single in R&B, “When She Was My Girl.” Two years later, the Four Tops rejoined Motown Records and began touring with the Temptations, followed by the massive career milestone - a 1990 induction into the Rock ‘n’ Roll Hall of Fame.

RENT

*Friday, June 27 – Sunday, June 29 @ 8:00 p.m. with matinee
2:00 p.m. performances on Sat. & Sun.
Tickets range from \$80 to \$25*

This Tony Award-winning rock musical returns to the Wolf Trap stage starring “Idol” contestants Anwar Robinson and Heinz Winckler. A modern day version of Giacomo Puccini's opera *La bohème*, attendees will experience this passionate story of impoverished young artists and musician’s struggle of living, loving, and dying in New York's Lower East Side in the thriving days of the Bohemian East Village, under the shadow of AIDS. With his portrayal of Tom Collins, Wolf Trap audiences will remember Robinson as the music teacher who made the Top-10 of Season 4 of “American Idol,” and was touted by judge Paula Abdul as “technically the best singer of the competition.” Featuring not one, but two idols, in the role of Roger, Heinz Winckler is remembered as the world’s first South African Idol.

Featuring an unusually ethnically diverse cast, the *Rent* storyline has succeeded in bringing controversial topics to a traditionally conservative medium. With more than 4,300 performances, it is the seventh-longest-running Broadway show, becoming the second-longest-running musical currently on Broadway behind *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Rent* score fuses dance, pop, salsa, R&B, and rock 'n' roll with favorite hits such as "Light My Candle" and "Seasons of Love."

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Tickets can be purchased by calling 1 (877) WOLFTRAP; or online at www.wolftrap.org. For more information, call Wolf Trap at (703) 255-1868.

Wolf Trap is metro accessible! Our environmentally friendly shuttle travels from the West Falls Church metro stop every 20 minutes two hours prior to show time. For more information, please visit, [http://www.wolftrap.org/Plan Your Visit/Access by Metro.aspx](http://www.wolftrap.org/Plan_Your_Visit/Access_by_Metro.aspx)