

Michael Feinstein Joins Men Alive for 5th Anniversary Show

BY PAUL FINDLAY

Men Alive—The Orange County Gay Men's Chorus was conceived in the summer of 2001 by Rich Cook, who became the artistic director for the group. Orange County's premiere gay men's chorus was born with only 13 singers at its first rehearsal that fall. But from those humble beginnings, the chorus has quickly grown, with more than 100 singers and supporters performing for thousands of people every year. The group has now firmly become a noted influence throughout Orange County in both the arts and GLBT communities.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FEINSTEIN PRODUCTIONS



Michael Feinstein

"Five years ago, I saw an amazing concert of the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles," Cook said, noting the show was the inspiration behind Men Alive. "I thought to myself this is wonderful, powerful. This needs to happen in Orange County, too. I feel truly blessed by how the Chorus has grown, and how it's been embraced by the community."

inee with more than 20 albums and a long list of awards to his name. "Michael Feinstein has created a niche for himself by singing love songs and ballads from an earlier day, including many Broadway favorites," Cook said.

Having become a household name for his one-man Broadway show in 1988, he's well-known for capturing the essence and richness of the American popular song like no other contemporary artist. "We saw him as a natural with whom to collaborate to make our first Broadway spectacular not only unique, but authentic. We are so pleased to have him," Cook said.

The show itself will feature a mix of songs from Broadway classics like *South*

Pacific, *The Sound of Music* and *My Fair Lady*, to current blockbusters, including *The Producers*, *Aida* and *Wicked*. Feinstein will join Men Alive on stage in some joint numbers, as well as perform solo pieces.

According to Cook, this is the first show filled with all Broadway songs for Men Alive. "For our 5th anniversary show, we knew the time was right for a Broadway show," Cook explained. "The music of Broadway has become America's music, expressing our moods, emotions and needs. We thought, what better gift could we give our audience for this special occasion?"

"Curtain Up! Light the Lights!" will have two performances the day of the concert. It is important to purchase tickets now as performances of the group tend to sell out early. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit the Men Alive Web site.

menalivechorus.org

To celebrate the five-year milestone, Men Alive is planning its most ambitious show yet. "Curtain Up! Light The Lights!" a salute to Broadway, will take place Saturday, July 15 at the Irvine Barclay Theatre (4242 Campus Drive, Irvine). The show will feature special guest and celebrated Broadway crooner Michael Feinstein.

Dubbed "America's Ambassador of Song," Feinstein is a four-time Grammy award nom-