

**coverstory**  
BY JAY BOBBIN

Laura Osnes is among the performers featured on "A Capitol Fourth 2021" Sunday on PBS



# Laura Osnes helps mark 'A Capitol Fourth' again on PBS

As familiar as she is with singing in "A Capitol Fourth," Laura Osnes knows that this year's event will be different.

Twice a veteran of the holiday concert, the Broadway star makes it three times by appearing again in the PBS special's 41st annual edition Sunday, July 4 (check local listings). As with last year's show, the traditional gathering on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol is out because of the coronavirus pandemic – but other locations in and around Washington, D.C., are being used for pre-taped performances introduced by returning host Vanessa Williams.

"There's a segment honoring the Gershwin brothers, so I'll be doing a very famous song of theirs with The Rickey Minor Band," the lively and pleasant Osnes reports, "and I'll be outside on the rooftop of a famous building. This time has caused a lot of people to think outside the box and get creative with content."

Also on the scheduled talent roster for "A Capitol Fourth 2021" are music icons Jimmy Buffett and Gladys Knight, opera legend Renee Fleming, Tony Award winners Cynthia Erivo and Ali Stroker, actress-singer Auli'i Cravalho, the music groups Pentatonix and Train, and country stars Alan Jackson, Mickey Guyton, Jennifer Nettles and Jimmie Allen. Jack Everly will conduct the National Symphony Orchestra.

Osnes admits that she misses not being together with the other cast members, "that camaraderie and community, but the content gets to be really rehearsed and shot one or two times, so you can get it perfect. That's like my also doing the Kennedy Center Honors recently; we got to use the roof of the Center for it, and we've never been in that space before. I'm excited to showcase the city of Washington and not just the Capitol.

"I relish any opportunity to honor our country," adds Osnes, who also reflected patriotic themes in "A Homecoming for the Holidays" ... one of the several Hallmark Channel movies she has starred in. "This was an easy 'yes' for me," she says of accepting the request to return to "A Capitol Fourth."

Osnes notes she feels "very, very grateful" for the professional activities she's had when much of the entertainment industry has been closed or substantially scaled back – including Broadway, where venues that cater to live performances are slated to reopen in September.

"I don't have a show that I'm jumping back into, but I'm very excited for my friends," says Osnes, who has starred in such New York productions as "Grease," "South Pacific" and "Bandstand," and will tour this fall with a newly rebranded "Disney Princesses" show that she co-created. "I'm glad that theaters will again bring joy to people, as well as the much-needed artistic outlet that everybody has been craving."

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