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**NEWS RELEASE**

**“Costa Mesa U.S.A.” celebrates city’s musical heritage**

***Theme song commissioned for Orange County Classic Jazz Festival***

COSTA MESA, California, November 8, 2005 – What do New York, Chicago, San Francisco and a handful of other well-known cities have in common with The OC’s Costa Mesa? Like those other sophisticated metropolises, this *City of the Arts* now has its own theme song, too, “Costa Mesa U.S.A.”

Created in the toe-tapping classic jazz style, the lively song was commissioned by John Dieball and Connie and Larry Baker, directors of the annual Orange County Classic Jazz Festival (OCCJF), which is held each August at the Hilton Costa Mesa and the Holiday Inn Costa Mesa Orange County Airport. Plans call for the tune to become a theme song for the city and the festival.

The lyrics were penned by Floyd Levin of Studio City, who wrote them to a 1970s era melody composed by French clarinetist Claude Luter. Luter agreed to have his music used at no cost.

Considered by many to be the dean of classic jazz commentators, Levin was honored for his song-writing efforts with a proclamation presented by Mayor Allan Mansoor at a recent Costa Mesa City Council meeting.

The Costa Mesa Conference & Visitor Bureau, the festival’s presenting sponsor, has obtained the rights to a CD of "Costa Mesa USA" performed by “Nannette and Her Hotsy Totsy Boys,” a jazz group based in Riverside, Calif., which was played during the presentation, and has been featured at the festival.

The song was recorded in October at the Digital Brothers Studio in Costa Mesa, where it was mixed and mastered by the studio’s co-owner Bryan Shaw. Shaw also subbed for Nannette’s regular trumpeter, Tom Loeb, who was briefly hospitalized at the time of the recording. In addition to vocals by Nanette, the band’s namesake and songstress, others heard performing on the CD were Henry Allain, trombone; Bob Stack, clarinet; Ken Ebert, piano; Jim Jones, banjo; Terry Downs, tuba; and Bob Branscomb, drums.

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“We are delighted with the song and hope the jazz festival will be a fixture here in Costa Mesa, U.S.A. for many years to come,” said Tom Smalley, president of the bureau and general manager of the Avenue Of The Arts Costa Mesa.

Classic jazz covers the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and includes Ragtime, Dixieland, Society Café Orchestras, Big Bands, Swing and Boogie. All of the bands performing at the OCCJF play only classic jazz and are considered among the genre’s top bands nationally and internationally.

To hear the song and for details about next year’s festival visit [www.oc-classicjazz.org](http://www.oc-classicjazz.org).

### **About Floyd Levin**

Floyd Levin's award-winning articles about jazz have been published throughout the world for more than 40 years. A reader's poll in the August '99 issue of *Mississippi Rag*, one of the nation's top jazz newspapers, honored him as "Number 1 Jazz Journalist." He conducts oral history interviews for the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. and the Jazz Archive at Tulane University in New Orleans. He has written many liner notes for various record labels, produced numerous jazz albums, and composed lyrics for several tunes recorded by internationally known jazz artists. Levin founded The Southern California Hot Jazz Society (SCHJS) in 1949 (the second oldest jazz club in the U.S.). He directed the SCHJS's campaign to raise funds for a marker on Jelly Roll Morton's grave. He produced and emceed the first Los Angeles Jazz Festival in 1976 and several international concert tours that featured Barney Bigard, Trummy Young, Benny Carter, Ralph Sutton, Art Hodes, Joe Venuti, and other jazz greats. Levin created and supervised the international fund drive that resulted in the construction of the statue of Louis Armstrong that now stands in Armstrong Park on Rampart Street in New Orleans. To launch the Statue Fund, he wrote and produced "Hello Louis!," an all-star jazz extravaganza at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles that celebrated Louis Armstrong's 70th birthday. Levin has been published in many magazines, including *Down Beat*, *Jazz Journal International*, and *American Rag*. He has received several awards for his work, most recently the Leonard Feather Communicator Award, given annually by the Los Angeles Jazz Society. He is the author of *Classic Jazz: A Personal View of the Music and the Musicians*, a treasury of information on a rich segment of American popular music.

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