For immediate release: October 2, 2025
Digital Assets



Photos by George Lange and Joshua Franzos

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Extends Byron Stripling's Contract as Principal Pops Conductor Through 28/29 Season

PITTSBURGH, PA – The **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** (PSO) announced today that it has extended the contract of **Byron Stripling** as **Principal Pops Conductor** through the 28/29 season. A charismatic trumpeter, conductor and vocalist, Stripling has led the PSO's PNC Pops series as Principal Pops Conductor since 2020, holding the Henry and Elsie Hillman Principal Pops Conductor Chair, bringing energy, joy, and artistry to Heinz Hall.

"Byron has an extraordinary gift for connecting with audiences of all ages," said **Melia Tourangeau, President & CEO** of the PSO. "His impact goes far beyond the PNC Pops series. Whether he's leading Fiddlesticks, a Pops concert, or inspiring students at rehearsals and in local classrooms, Byron embodies the PSO's mission to share music as a transformative force. I am thrilled to continue this partnership with him."

Under the contract extension, Stripling will continue to conduct three subscription weeks of the PNC Pops each season and remain an integral part of the Symphony's artistic and community life. Beyond his Pops leadership, Stripling has also conducted special concerts, led PSO's Fiddlesticks Family Concerts, and visited Pittsburgh schools, engaging young audiences with his warmth and passion for music.

"I am deeply honored to extend my time as Principal Pops Conductor with this incredible orchestra," said **Byron Stripling**. "The musicians of the Pittsburgh Symphony are second to

none, and together we've been able to create concerts that uplift, celebrate, and bring people together. I can't wait to make even more joyful music with this community."

The PSO's 25/26 PNC Pops season launches this weekend with **Come Swing with Me**, a high-energy tribute to the hits of the 1950s led by Stripling and featuring vocalist Paul Loren. In February, Stripling leads **America the Beautiful**, an original program tracing the evolution of American music in honor of the nation's 250th anniversary. The season also brings the return of **Bugs Bunny at the Symphony** in celebration of the cartoon icon's 85th anniversary, December's beloved **Highmark Holiday Pops**, and a special collaboration with Pittsburgh CLO for **Rodgers & Hammerstein's *South Pacific* in Concert**. The season closes out with **Tropical Rock** in April and **Disco Divas** in June conducted by Stripling.

With Gratitude

PNC Pops concerts are made possible by title sponsorship support from PNC. The 2025-2026 season marks PNC's 25th consecutive year as title sponsor of the series.

Highmark Holiday Pops concerts are made possible by title sponsorship support from Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, now in its 18th year as title sponsor of the series.

Media Contact

Keene Carter, Communications Manager
kcarter@pittsburghsymphony.org
(434) 987-7921

###