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Ginny and Dick Simmons (photo by Todd Barnett)

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Honors the Generosity of Richard P. Simmons by Naming Heinz Hall's Stage the Simmons Family Stage

PITTSBURGH, PA — Tonight, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (PSO) honored Richard “Dick” P. Simmons and his family, who have contributed over \$50 million to the orchestra, including the Symphony’s largest single donation to date of \$29.5 million in 2006, with the inaugural naming of Heinz Hall’s stage as the Simmons Family Stage.

The occasion was marked by presenting the Simmons Family with a commemorative plaque located on the stage of Heinz Hall, above the stage left (house right) door on June 4, 2025, during a sold-out concert featuring Music Director Manfred Honeck and cellist Yo-Yo Ma performing Dvořák's Cello Concerto with the orchestra. Wednesday’s performance with Yo-Yo Ma also included the world premiere of songs by television host, producer, author, and composer Fred Rogers arranged for cello choir.

Mr. Simmons has been a champion of the PSO for nearly four decades. He first joined the orchestra’s Board of Directors in 1988 and served as Chairman of the Board for his initial term from 1989 to 1997 and a second term from 2009 to 2015. Simmons has been a visionary leader, having led significant fundraising campaigns, lobbied for government support, chaired gala celebrations, and traveled with the PSO on international tours. He was named Life Director in 1997 by the PSO’s Board of Directors in recognition of his incredible advocacy and unmatched generosity. In 2002, Mr. Simmons was elected Chairman Emeritus of the PSO Board of Directors.

“Few names are as synonymous with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra as that of Richard P. “Dick” Simmons,” said **Melia Tourangeau, President & CEO, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra**. “He has not only been one of the PSO’s most generous supporters, but one of its greatest advocates and patrons. His deliberate, prescient leadership during his fourteen years as Board Chairman and his continuing counsel since have given the orchestra direction and vision in so many ways. I am honored to be part of the inauguration of Heinz Hall’s stage as the Simmons Family Stage alongside him and his family.”

“Wow! I’ve had the privilege of being associated with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra for close to 50 years, first as a patron, then as a board member and chair, and always as a benefactor,” said **Richard P. Simmons, Chair Emeritus and Life Director, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra**. “This orchestra is a jewel in our city, and I am humbled to have been a part of it. We are so fortunate to have this world-class symphony, and I always enjoy coming home to Heinz Hall.”

“The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra has long been in my memory bank when thinking of my mother and father,” said **Amy Sebastian, Richard P. Simmons' daughter and Vice Chair, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors**. “From the mid-1970s, religiously on Friday nights during the season, they would be at the symphony. Having attended concerts and Galas with them over the years, I fondly remember them competing in the Gala Waltz Contest to the sound of the orchestra. It was clear to me then, as it is now, that the PSO holds a special place for my Dad. He has always championed its excellence and its importance to our city and region. He has done so much for the PSO, and I am privileged to be part of the continuation of our family’s support.”

“In 2008 I began as Music Director of the Pittsburgh Symphony at the invitation of Dick Simmons as Chairman of the Board,” said **Manfred Honeck, Music Director, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra**. “Ever since, he has been a steadfast champion of our artistry, a constant advocate for Pittsburgh’s cultural excellence, and a very good friend. It is only fitting that the very stage on which we perform at our home, Heinz Hall, will now bear the Simmons family name.”

Mr. Simmons was a crucial part of the founding of the Allegheny County Regional Asset District (RAD), which provides vital support to arts organizations across the Pittsburgh region. The Simmons family has also contributed significantly to healthcare, education and culture in Pittsburgh through the Simmons Center for Interstitial Lung Disease at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), The Richard P. Simmons Auditorium and Professor of Finance endowed chair at Carnegie Mellon University Tepper School of Business, Chairman Emeritus for the Allegheny Conference, former Chairman of the United Way of Allegheny County, founding member and Director Emeritus for The Extra Mile Foundation, and generous supporter of his alma mater, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

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