



**Friday, May 13, 2022, 7:30 PM | Saturday, May 14, 2022, 7:30 PM**  
**Holland Performing Arts Center, Kiewit Concert Hall**

**Ernest Richardson, conductor**

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## Ernest Richardson, Principal Pops Conductor

Ernest Richardson is presently the principal pops conductor and resident conductor of the Omaha Symphony. Since 1993, he has laid the groundwork for and led in the development of the Omaha Symphony's vaunted education and community engagement programs. In addition to his artistic leadership in the creation of the annual top-selling Christmas Celebration production and internationally performed "Only in Omaha" productions, he leads the successful Symphony Pops, Symphony Rocks, and Movies Series. The highly successful Family Series was created under his artistic leadership, and he is one of the visionary forces behind the innovative Symphony Joslyn Series. A chief architect of the Omaha Symphony's education and community engagement programs, Richardson has been at the forefront of crafting the vision for the programs and their impact on the community. The pivotal point in his leadership can be traced to the first education report written in the beginning of his tenure with the Omaha Symphony. This report paved the way for the structure, function and programming of the education department leading to innovations in all programming including the creation of Choral Collaborative, Celebrate Creativity, Music Alive!, the Family Series, and Mission: Imagination.

Richardson holds the position of music director and principal conductor of the Steamboat Symphony Orchestra in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Under his leadership the organization has grown from a community orchestra to a resident professional orchestra. As one of the up and coming orchestras in the Front Range of Colorado, the Steamboat Springs Symphony attracts the area's finest musicians.

A recipient of the 2016 Nebraska Governor's Arts Award for Excellence in Arts Education, Richardson has encouraged and supported countless young musicians. As the founding artistic director and CEO of the innovative Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory, the program is based on four foundational principles that catapulted the program to national attention: the passionate, persistent pursuit of perfection can reveal the extraordinary within us; vision-directed leadership; the musician as athlete; and in all things - balance. Since 1997, this concept has attracted the finest faculty and leading young musicians from around the world. Graduates from the program are teaching, performing, and leading arts organizations throughout the country. From 2012 through 2015, Richardson held the position of music director and principal conductor for the Santa Barbara Music and Arts Conservatory. He also enjoys engaging with and training students in the Omaha Conservatory of Music Summer Institute.

An accomplished composer and arranger, Richardson composed the symphonic work *Three Scenes for Chamber Orchestra*, which was debuted by the Omaha Symphony in 2011. His works are featured largely in the annual Christmas production and on many education and outreach programs. His compositions and arrangements for orchestra have been performed by the Neue Philharmonie Westfalen in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, by the Phoenix Chamber Players, Phoenix Symphony, Steamboat Symphony Orchestra, the orchestras of Omaha Conservatory of Music and elsewhere throughout the United States.

Richardson began studying the violin at the age of three with his father, Dr. Vernal Richardson. He continued his string education at Indiana University with Tadeusz Wronski, later concentrating on the viola at the University of Michigan with Donald McInnes. He studied conducting with Samuel Krachmalnick and Gustav Meier. While attending the University of Michigan, Richardson also studied composition with William Albright and William Bolcom.

An avid fly fisherman, Richardson can be found on trout streams in Colorado and municipal lakes in Nebraska. He has also earned a black belt in tae kwon do. He has been known to help his sons build award-winning pinewood derby cars and craft his own batons. He lives in Omaha with his wife and children.