

THE NEW YORK POPS

SKITCH HENDERSON FOUNDER AND MUSIC DIRECTOR

Notes on the Program

by Skitch Henderson

Friday, March 4, 8:00PM, Carnegie Hall

Dance! Dance! Dance!

When I began my music life in Hollywood, one of my duties was to play piano with an orchestra formed by a young man from Chicago by the name of David Rose. We did a broadcast on Saturday nights, 9:00-10:00, for a couple of years. During that time, he wrote such hits as *Holiday for Strings*, *Our Waltz*, and *The Stripper*. The orchestra was very small considering the repertoire we played. We used to listen to broadcasts of a symphony orchestra from New York belonging to radio station WOR. The conductor was Morton Gould and in the 1930's the principal chairs in the orchestra were always occupied by the prima players in New York. That was our competition.

When I came to New York after World War II, I sought companionship, advice, and general music knowledge from Morton Gould. I seldom work with my orchestra that I don't refer back to those early days. During my tenure as music director at NBC we tried to corral the prima players of the 1950's and 60's. In fact, I used to balance my schedule so we could share those players for recording and/or film dates, etc.

Morton's outreach was unbelievable. The composition we're doing tonight was written for his friend, Danny Daniels, and we're happy to put this action together once again with tap shoes, traps, and full orchestra. Because of the time factors, the piece is thoroughly modern, even though the tonality is of the 40's. I still miss Morton very much and as we perform tonight I can see his scowling face suggesting, in a not-too-subtle manner, that strings rarely keep time. If you're a quiet hooper, this is a master class.

