

THE NEW YORK POPS

SKITCH HENDERSON FOUNDER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE NEW YORK POPS AND CARNEGIE HALL CELEBRATE SKITCH HENDERSON IN A FREE TRIBUTE ON FEBRUARY 6 AT 4 PM

Rob Fisher conducts the orchestra. Marilyn Horne, Liz Smith, Mike Wallace and other friends gather to remember *Skitch Henderson: A Man and His Music*

NEW YORK – The New York Pops and Carnegie Hall will celebrate the life and music of **Skitch Henderson** on Monday, February 6, 4:00PM in Isaac Stern Auditorium. **Rob Fisher** will conduct **The New York Pops**, whose members are contributing their services in tribute to the late founder of the orchestra. Offering personal reminiscences will be **Marilyn Horne, Liz Smith, Mike Wallace**, and representatives of The New York Pops and Carnegie Hall. Skitch's wife of 47 years, **Ruth Henderson**, who is President of The New York Pops Board of Directors, will also speak.

Free tickets to *Skitch Henderson: A Man and His Music – A Celebration* will be available on a first come, first served basis at the Carnegie Hall Box Office, 154 West 57th Street, starting at 2:00PM on February 6.

Conductor Rob Fisher's most recent performance with The New York Pops was a Veterans' Day concert at Carnegie Hall that he took over on less than a week's notice after the death of Skitch Henderson. In recent seasons, he appeared as guest conductor of The New York Pops in programs featuring the music of Jerome Kern and Frank Loesser. A guest conductor of symphony orchestras across the country, he was the music director and conductor of *Encores!* at New York City Center from its inception in 1994 until 2005.



Skitch Henderson
Photo: Steve J. Sherman

Speakers at *Skitch Henderson: A Man and His Music – A Celebration* include famed mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne, syndicated columnist Liz Smith, and television journalist Mike Wallace. Speakers from The New York Pops include Board of Directors Chairman **John A. Griner III**, Executive Director **James M. Johnson**, Principal Clarinet **John J. Moses**, and **Obiefuna Nwaedozie**, a viola student in the orchestra's Salute to Music program and a winner of the orchestra's 2005 Martin Ormandy Scholarships. Speakers from Carnegie Hall include Executive and Artist Director **Clive Gillinson**, Program Planning and Operations Director **Anna Weber**, and Artist Liaison **Debby King**.

MORE → → →

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Page 2 of 2

Skitch Henderson was a one-man celebration of twentieth-century American music. Born in 1918 in Birmingham, England, with the name Lyle Russell Cedric Henderson, Skitch went on to successfully transform himself into a popular American icon and, in doing so, managed to be at the center of every phenomenon in American popular music and culture. Live performances, movies, television, radio – Skitch did it all, and all his work shone with his own special brand of joyful enthusiasm.

In 1983 Skitch founded The New York Pops to share his passion for music by bringing the more accessible symphonic pops fare to a broader audience. The New York Pops is now the largest independent symphonic pops orchestra in the United States, and its subscription season is one of the most successful at its home at New York City's Carnegie Hall.

Skitch's partner in these activities and more was his wife Ruth, whom he married on February 7, 1958. Since 1972 the couple owned and operated The Silo, Inc., which comprises a store, an art gallery, and a cooking school in New Milford, Connecticut. In 2003 Ruth and Skitch co-founded the Hunt Hill Farm Trust, an effort to preserve their farm's land and buildings and to celebrate Americana in music, art and literature through the creation of a living museum.

Skitch died on November 1, 2005 at his home in New Milford at the age of 87. He is survived by Ruth Henderson as well as his children, Heidi Maria and Hans Christian, and four grandchildren.

Donations in Skitch Henderson's memory may be made to The New York Pops at www.newyorkpops.org or by calling 212-765-7677. Donations may also be made to the Hunt Hill Farm Trust by visiting www.hunthillfarmtrust.org or by calling 860-354-2926.

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