

Dear Pops Enthusiasts,

One of my favorite parts of being Artistic Director is programming the concerts – that is, choosing the music that will be performed. Doing an entire concert of one show, such as *My Fair Lady*, of course, obviates this necessity. But, for *Home for the Holidays* and *PianoMen*, this month has been about choosing repertory.

Many factors, both artistic and practical, go into this process which is one of the reasons I enjoy it as much as I do. It's a balancing act between artistic sensibilities and practical considerations. Size of the orchestra, timing and rehearsal constraints and audience preferences are a few of the practical considerations. But once past these, I am able to let my imagination take wing. I enjoy reading through new scores and revisiting old favorites in my never-ending quest to bring you quality entertainment.

So, *PianoMen*, to take an example, necessitates each of the six soloists having about 15 or 20 minutes of solo time with the multi-player and duo instrument pieces filling the transitions. What to choose? Well, you know how I like to surprise you. Come to our concerts and see how I've worked it all out.