

Guest Conductor **Walt Straiton** brings a blended career combining professional performance, education, business, and commercial entertainment to this evening's performance. In addition to multiple previous collaborations with Michael Cavanaugh, Walt has produced and conducted numerous concert events featuring a variety of contemporary pop/jazz artists, including appearances with Chris Botti, Bob James, Burt Bacharach, David Benoit, Maynard Ferguson, Chuck Mangione, Buddy Rich, Lionel Hampton, Phil Woods, The Captain and Tennille, The Spinners, Patti Austin, Neil Sedaka, Franki Valli, and the Empire Brass Quintet. Additional professional guest conducting appearances include the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, The New World Symphony Orchestra (Miami Beach, FL), the United States Air Force Symphony Orchestra, the Champaign-Urbana (IL) Symphony Orchestra, the Music At Penn's Woods Summer Festival Orchestra, and the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra (PA).

A recipient of a coveted John F. Kennedy Center Fellowship for Teachers in the Arts, Mr. Straiton was honored to be selected as a finalist for "Teacher of the Year" in the nationally-televised Walt Disney Corporation's "American Teacher Awards" during his tenure in the education sector. Staying true to his educational roots, Mr. Straiton remains active as a guest conductor and adjudicator for a variety of student festival orchestras, including appearances with All-State Orchestras in Florida, Vermont, Rhode Island, Virginia, and West Virginia. Published articles to his credit include such topics comprehensive orchestral program development, conducting, and music technology, and have appeared in the Jazz Education Journal, American String Teachers Journal, and the Technology Institute for Music Education.