

Punta Gorda Symphony returns with *Symphony on the Lawn*



Punta Gorda Symphony's "Symphony on the Lawn" concert will be filled with an endless supply of delightful and familiar love tunes.

PUNTA GORDA — After two successful Holiday Pops Outdoors concerts in December, Punta Gorda Symphony returns outdoors on Feb. 6 to perform a concert inspired by romance, offering the music of well-known composers from Hollywood and Broadway that tells stories of love.

From Georges Bizet's romantic opera "Carmen" that captures the intense flush of a first love to the tear-jerking love themes of "West Side Story," "Symphony on the Lawn" will be filled with an endless supply of delightful and familiar love tunes. An arrangement of music from the dramatic film Ben Hur will contrast in style from the rest of the program and features PG Symphony's Concertmaster Ming Gao as the violin soloist on the love theme "Judah Meets Esther." The program will also include musical and Pops medleys from "Guys and Dolls," "Carousel" and "The Sound of Music."

"There's no substitute for live performance," declares Maestro Raffaele Ponti. With musicians and audiences alike yearning for in person cultural experiences, Punta Gorda Symphony is thrilled to continue presenting outdoor concerts on Feb. 6, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., again in partnership with Florida SouthWestern State College Charlotte Campus.

"We're thrilled to be able to perform live music for our community," says Executive Director Craig Badinger, "After the success and rave reviews from our patrons at Holiday Pops Outdoors, we're confident audiences will continue to feel safe and will encourage their friends to come enjoy the music."

Held in an outdoor amphitheater, concerts will be limited to socially distanced audiences of 250, and will follow standard COVID-related health and safety guidelines. Patron seating on the lawn will be filled in order of arrival, guided by staff and volunteers to the next available space — a process familiar to those who visit theme parks in Orlando. Parties of two to four patrons will be provided chairs within their own 6-foot grid on the lawn, face masks will be required, hand sanitizing stations will be available and direct person-to-person contact will be kept at a minimum. One enthusiastic and new symphony patron praised the Dec. 19 concert and COVID-19 protocols:

"As newcomers to the area, this was the first time my husband and I attended a Punta Gorda Symphony event, and it will not be the last time. Your commitment to social distancing was outstanding. The location was great. The performance itself was wonderful and listening to the music transported me back to so many wonderful memories."