

THOMAS WILKINS

Principal Guest Conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra

Thomas Wilkins was appointed as Music Director of the Omaha Symphony in 2005, and 2007/2008 marks his second season with the orchestra. The 2007/2008 season also marks his eighth season as Resident Conductor of the Detroit Symphony. Past positions have included Resident Conductor of the Florida Orchestra (Tampa Bay), and Associate Conductor of the Richmond (VA) Symphony. He served on the music faculties of North Park University (Chicago), the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga and Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

Committed to promoting a life-long enthusiasm for music, Thomas Wilkins brings energy and commitment to audiences of all ages. For his significant contribution to the children of Tampa Bay, the Pinellas County Music Educators Association named him 1998 Friend of the Arts and the Hillsborough County Elementary Music Educators recognized him as 1998 Music Educator of the Year. He seeks to cultivate a "vibrant creative imagination" in today's youth, noting, in a guest editorial in the *Richmond News-Leader*, "Successful education is not that which teaches our children how to get a job. Education is a success when we teach our children to love learning."

Thomas Wilkins has guest conducted orchestras throughout the United States, including the Cleveland Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra; the symphonies of Dallas, Baltimore, Houston, Grand Rapids, New Jersey, Indianapolis, San Antonio and Oregon; the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Louisville Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington, DC. As Resident Conductor of the Detroit Symphony, he leads the orchestra in a variety of programs, including Classical, Special Events, Pops, Young People's and educational concerts. In the 2007/2008 season, the DSO awarded Wilkins the Classical Roots Musical Achievement Award.

Wilkins actively participates in the life of the community as a frequent guest speaker and volunteer for local community organizations and schools. He has served on the board of directors of such organizations as the Center Against Spouse Abuse in Tampa Bay, and the Museum of Fine Arts and the Academy Preparatory Center for Education, both in St. Petersburg. Currently he serves as chairman of the board for the Raymond James Charitable Endowment Fund.

A native of Norfolk, VA, Thomas Wilkins earned his Bachelor of Music Education degree from the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music in 1978, where he now returns each summer to serve as Orchestral Conductor for that institution's summer performing arts camp. In 1982, he was awarded the Master of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

Thomas Wilkins and his wife, Sheri-Lee, have twin daughters, Nicole and Erica.

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