

Westchester  Philharmonic

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**WESTCHESTER PHILHARMONIC ANNOUNCES 2008-09 SEASON
WITH ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ITZHAK PERLMAN**

Guest Artists to include Leon Fleisher, Brian Stokes Mitchell and Alisa Weilerstein

(Purchase, New York) — The Westchester Philharmonic begins a new era under the baton of Itzhak Perlman with a season of unprecedented magnitude: legendary pianist Leon Fleisher performing Beethoven’s “Emperor” concerto, in an all-Beethoven program that includes Symphony No. 7; Bach’s Violin Concerto No. 2 performed by Maestro Perlman in a program including Mozart’s “Haffner” Symphony and Brahms’ Symphony No. 1; a winter pops program with Broadway icon Brian Stokes Mitchell and guest conductor Constantine Kitsopoulos; guest conductor George Manahan leading a modern program of Stravinsky, Ravel, Barber, and Adams; and a season finale with Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony, preceded by the young virtuosa cellist, Alisa Weilerstein performing the unforgettable Saint-Saëns concerto. All events take place at The Performing Arts Center at Purchase College.

The 2008-09 season opens **Saturday, October 11, 2008 at 8 pm and Sunday, October 12, 2008 at 3 pm** with piano legend and recent Kennedy enter honoree Leon Fleisher, in his first-ever appearance with the Phil, taking on Beethoven’s final, awe-inspiring Concerto No. 5 also known as “Emperor Concerto”. Music aficionados will know Leon Fleisher from his brilliant 15 year career in the 1950s and early 60s when he was hailed as “the pianistic find of the century.” In 1965, Mr. Fleisher was suddenly struck silent when two fingers of his right hand became immobile and he was forced to “retire” at only 37 years old. After many treatments that finally helped relieve the neurological affliction known as focal dystonia, his right hand became strong enough for him to confidently return to the stage and the repertoire for two hands. Opening weekend concludes with Maestro Perlman leading the Philharmonic in Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, which Beethoven himself called his “most excellent symphony.”

Saturday, November 8, 2008 at 8 pm and Sunday, November 9, 2008 at 3 pm Itzhak Perlman takes the stage not only as conductor, but as performer for Bach's Violin Concerto No. 2. Perlman's recording of the Bach is widely considered to be its quintessential interpretation. Then, the orchestra plays Mozart's majestic "Haffner" (Symphony No. 35), a spirited and enduring masterpiece written by the young composer in just a few weeks. The November concert ends with a symphony that took Brahms fourteen years to complete but is considered one of the finest symphonies by any composer of any time, Symphony No. 1.

Dubbed "the last leading man" by *The New York Times*, Brian Stokes Mitchell (*Man of La Mancha*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Ragtime*) has been enjoying a spectacular career that spans Tony Award winning performances on Broadway, and a multitude of television and film appearances. He will join the orchestra for a delightful winter program on **Sunday, December 20, 2008 at 3 pm**. Guest conductor Constantine Kitsopoulos (*Les Misérables*, *Dracula*, *La Bohème*) will lead this family-friendly event featuring Broadway and popular hits plus orchestral favorites.

The spring brings modern music to the Philharmonic's stage with guest conductor George Manahan on **Saturday, April 18, 2009 at 8 pm and Sunday, April 19, 2009 at 3 pm**. Known to area audiences as Music Director of the New York City Opera, Maestro Manahan has conducted the Santa Fe, Glimmerglass and Lyric Opera companies, and the San Francisco, Atlanta, Seattle, Minnesota, Jerusalem, and National Symphony orchestras, among others. Modern works on the program reinvent earlier musical forms with a fresh palette of tonalities particular to each composer: Samuel Barber's *Capricorn Concerto*; Maurice Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin*; John Adams' *Shaker Loops*; and Igor Stravinsky's ballet score, *Pulcinella Suite*.

Maestro Perlman returns to conduct the final program of his inaugural season on **Saturday, May 16, 2009 at 8 pm and Sunday, May 17, 2009 at 3 pm**. He will be joined by 25-year-old American cellist Alisa Weilerstein for the Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto. Ms. Weilerstein has already performed with dozens of major symphony orchestras around the world, enthralling audiences, critics, and fellow musicians with a level of virtuosity that combines rare technical prowess with pure musical passion. The season finale opens with the intriguing Mozart Symphony No. 27 and closes with Tchaikovsky's glorious Fifth Symphony.

High resolution photos are available and may be downloaded from:
www.westchesterphil.org/pressphotos0809.asp

Concert Tickets

All performances will take place in The Concert Hall at The Performing Arts Center Purchase College, 735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, New York. Five and four concert subscriptions are available and range from \$315-\$88. Single tickets range from \$75-\$25. Student/child/group discounts are available.

To purchase tickets and for additional information call the Westchester Philharmonic Box Office at (914) 682-3707 ext. 10. Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover Card accepted. Visit the Westchester Philharmonic's website at www.westchesterphil.org.

About the Westchester Philharmonic

The Westchester Philharmonic orchestra, which recently appointed Itzhak Perlman as Artistic Director beginning with the 2008-09 season, is the only fully-professional symphony orchestra devoted to serving the people of Westchester County. Founded in 1983, the Philharmonic fulfills its mission in the concert hall, in the community, and in the classroom. Currently under the direction of esteemed conductor Paul Lustig Dunkel, the Philharmonic performs a main stage Concert Series at the Performing Arts Center Purchase College. The Philharmonic also partners with local agencies to present free and low-cost concerts for all County residents, and its award-winning education program serves over 2,000 elementary school students.

The orchestra is comprised of the finest musicians from the greater New York area and has worked with the world's finest soloists, including Itzhak Perlman, Midori, Joshua Bell, and the late Isaac Stern. With a focus on presenting the best music of the past and present, the orchestra places particular emphasis on providing young musicians with an opportunity to perform with, or compose for, a professional symphony orchestra early in their careers. The Philharmonic has become a home for living American composers and has proudly commissioned many orchestral works such as Melinda Wagner's *Concerto for Flute, Strings and Percussion*, which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

The orchestra is dedicated to inviting and attracting people of diverse backgrounds to its concerts and continues to explore new partnerships with local schools, libraries, and community centers, so that all in the community have the opportunity to experience the joy of a live, classical music concert.

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with funds from Westchester County Government and with public funds from the
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2008-09 Season At-a-Glance
Itzhak Perlman, Artistic Director

Opening Weekend

Saturday, October 11, 2008 at 8 pm

Sunday, October 12, 2008 at 3 pm

Itzhak Perlman, Conductor

Leon Fleisher, Piano

Beethoven, Piano Concerto No. 5 ("Emperor")

Beethoven, Symphony No. 7

Perlman Plays

Saturday, November 8, 2008 at 8 pm

Sunday, November 9, 2008 at 3 pm

Itzhak Perlman, Conductor and Violin

Bach Violin Concerto No. 2 in E Major

Mozart Symphony No. 35 ("Haffner")

Brahms Symphony No. 1

Winter Pops

Saturday, December 20, 2008 at 3 PM

Starring Broadway Icon Brian Stokes Mitchell

Constantine Kitsopoulos, Guest Conductor

A Modern Spring

Saturday, April 18, 2009 at 8 pm

Sunday, April 19, 2009 at 3 pm

George Manahan, Guest Conductor

Ravel Le Tombeau de Couperin

Adams Shaker Loops

Barber Capricorn Concerto

Stravinsky Pulcinella Suite

Season Finale

Saturday, May 16, 2009 at 8 pm

Sunday, May 17, 2009 at 3 pm

Itzhak Perlman, Conductor

Alisa Weilerstein, Cello

Mozart Symphony No. 27

Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto No. 1

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5

Concerts are presented in The Concert Hall at the Performing Arts Center Purchase College
at 735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, NY.

Subscriptions: \$315-\$88

Single Tickets: \$75-\$25

Call for tickets: (914) 682-3707