

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **WESTCHESTER PHILHARMONIC RATIFIES FIRST COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT**

### **After 26 years, an organizational landmark**

(Purchase, New York) — The Westchester Philharmonic announced the ratification of the organization’s first collective bargaining agreement with its musicians, members of the Associated Musicians of Greater New York, Local 802, of the American Federation of Musicians. At separate meetings in November and December, the orchestra’s Board of Directors and the unionized musicians voted to ratify the agreement, which covers everything from wages and benefits to musician tenure and recording provisions. The agreement is retroactive to July 1, 2008 and runs through June 30, 2010.

Negotiations between Philharmonic management and the musicians’ union first began in the Fall of 2007. For all of its previous 25 years, the Westchester Philharmonic hired its musicians on a single engagement basis, essentially concert-by-concert contracts for each of its five main stage concert weekends at the Performing Arts Center at Purchase College as well as pops and other performances elsewhere.

The orchestra, now led by the renowned Itzhak Perlman, consists of sixty-five core members, many of whom have played with the orchestra since its founding in 1983. Over a period of nearly twelve months, union leaders and the musicians’ representative committee met with Philharmonic management, negotiating the agreement in an environment notable for its absence of adversarial rancor.

“This agreement has more to do with a simple codification of previous practices and less to do with any material changes in wages or working conditions,” noted Philharmonic Executive Director Joshua Worby. “With the notable exception of conferring tenured status for the core ensemble of musicians, a value we shared with them, hardly anything else changes. I liken it to a couple that’s been living together for 25 years waking up one morning and saying to each other, ‘honey, it’s time we got married.’ In a similar vein, the real meaning here resides in what the

agreement represents: a palpable commitment by both parties to each other. In so doing, the greater good of the organization's future is well-served."

Other points reached in the agreement include defined opportunities for using audio and video recordings, participation in a health care shortfall fund for musicians whose coverage is at risk, and the empowerment of the orchestra committee to make on-the-spot decisions with management in rehearsal or performance settings when real-time issues may arise.

"I have participated in collective bargaining negotiations with many other orchestras and I am very happy to report that in the case of this agreement, although we started out across the table from one another, the table disappeared and we stand as one to face the challenges of the future," commented committee member and principal cellist Eugene Moye. "It is a tribute to the care and vision shared by everyone involved with this marvelous institution."

### **About the Westchester Philharmonic**

The Westchester Philharmonic orchestra, which is led by world-renowned Artistic Director Itzhak Perlman, 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, the Philharmonic performs a main stage Concert Series at the Performing Arts Center Purchase College and partners with local agencies to present free and low-cost concerts for all County residents. 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 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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Westchester  Philharmonic

**2009 Spring Season At-a-Glance**  
**Itzhak Perlman, Artistic Director**

**A Modern Spring**

Saturday, April 18, 2009 at 8 pm and 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

**Pre-concert: Tuning Up**

**Saturday, April 18 at 6:45 pm and Sunday, April 19 at 1:45 pm**

A discussion of new music with pianist Michael Boriskin, composer Laura Kaminsky and conductor Manahan.

**Season Finale**

Saturday, May 16, 2009 at 8 pm and 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.

**Single Tickets: \$75-\$25    Call for tickets: (914) 682-3707**