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MEXICAN CONDUCTOR TO HIGHLIGHT PHILHARMONIC CONCERT
Annual Music Fest celebration at Kensico Dam expected to draw 10,000

A Latina maestro who has gained world-wide attention for her spellbinding performances will conduct the Westchester Philharmonic on **Thursday, July 3**, when the orchestra brings a program of rousing American patriotic music to the annual Music Fest celebration at **Kensico Dam Plaza**.

Alondra de la Parra is a critically acclaimed, 27-year-old Mexico City native who has gained a reputation as one of the most compelling conductors of her generation. At age 22, she became the first woman from Mexico to conduct in New York City and a year later she founded the New York-based Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas.

“We are so honored to be able to host in Westchester this fabulous conductor who has received such great reviews around the world. To have her sharing the stage with our own well-loved Philharmonic, based right here, will make this a night to long remember,” said County Executive Andy Spano. “This is a great opportunity for residents to experience a top-notch symphony performance while celebrating Independence Day.”

Maestra de la Parra’s recent highlights include concerts with the Russian National Orchestra collaborating with Joshua Bell and Sir James and Lady Jeanne Galway; conducting Venezuela’s Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra as well as being awarded that orchestra’s highest honor given to a musician; and being recognized by *Symphony* magazine as one of six “Young Artists on the Rise.”

Among orchestras that Alondra de la Parra has conducted to critical acclaim include the Russian National Orchestra, Venezuela’s Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra, Mexico’s Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional, the Buenos Aires Philharmonic, the Orquesta Sinfónica de Aguascalientes, Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco, Uruguay’s Montevideo Philharmonic, and the New York Pops Orchestra.

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The Music Fest program will feature patriotic favorites such as Sousa's *Stars & Stripes Forever* and the *Star Spangled Banner* as well as *Danzon No. 2*, a work by renowned Mexican composer Arturo Marquez and nicknamed the second national anthem of the Mexican people. The orchestra will also play selections from Argentinian composer Alberto Ginastera's *Dances from Estancia*, as well as the pulsating Latin rhythms of American composer Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story Medley*. German composer Antonin Dvorak's "New World Symphony," known best for its famed English horn solo heard in the movie *Clear and Present Danger*, and Aaron Copland's famous *Fanfare for the Common Man* are also on the bill.

Entertainment begins at 6 p.m. with the Stages band, performing music from the decades. The Philharmonic takes the stage at 8 p.m.; fireworks will follow the concert at approximately 9:15 p.m. Admission and parking are free.

The park opens at 5 p.m. for picnicking. Carpooling is suggested. Concert-goers should bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating.

The Westchester Philharmonic, which will begin its 26th season next fall, recently appointed famed violinist Itzhak Perlman as artistic director and conductor. 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 Philharmonic also partners with local agencies to present free and low-cost concerts and its award-winning education program serves over 2,000 elementary school students.

This marks the fifth consecutive year the orchestra has performed in celebration of Independence Day at Kensico Dam Plaza, consistently attracting audiences of over 10,000 adults and children

The Music Fest is presented by Westchester County Parks and sponsored by 100.7 WHUD and 107.1 the Peak Radio, the Westchester Arts Council and the Friends of Westchester County Parks Inc.

For more information call (914) 864-PARK or log on to www.westchestergov.com/parks.

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