

Westchester Philharmonic

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 7, 2011

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WESTCHESTER PHILHARMONIC GALA TO BENEFIT ORCHESTRA

“The Power of Music” annual fundraising event focuses on orchestra’s service to community; will feature inspiring musical performance.

(Armonk, New York) — The Westchester Philharmonic is proud to announce *The Power of Music*, a fall gala dinner and celebration to be held on **Sunday, September 18, 2011** at 5 pm at Brynwood Country Club in Armonk. The event will include cocktails, dinner, music and a special auction that will award one-year “naming rights” to the orchestra’s principal chairs. Gala attendees will be inspired by two special musical guests, **Arab-Israeli soprano Enas Massalha** and **South African pianist Jeanne-Minette Cilliers**, as they perform operatic and popular repertoire, from Puccini’s famed aria “O mio babbino caro” to Jerome Kern’s “All the Things You Are,” plus an unforgettable musical prayer.

The Westchester Philharmonic’s annual gala benefit, previously held in the Spring, is the organization’s biggest fundraising event of the year, driving critically-needed support for this treasured community resource. “Some have the impression that this event is just for an elite few, but everyone is emphatically invited, and we have adjusted our pricing accordingly” said Philharmonic Executive Director Joshua Worby. “Our theme this year is ‘The Power of Music’ and how it transforms lives, whether through the big concert hall experience or the intimacy of a third grade classroom. We’re particularly delighted to welcome Enas Massalha, who occupies an unusual place in both the musical and political worlds: A member of the tiny minority of Israeli Muslims, her singing has the power to bridge gaps and promote greater understanding.”

In addition to purchasing tickets to the gala, attendees will have a special opportunity to bid on naming rights for the orchestra’s sixteen principal chairs as well as the conductor’s podium. All proceeds from *The Power of Music* support the Philharmonic’s many activities, in the concert hall, the community, and the classroom including main stage performances that bring world renowned musicians to Westchester County, free and low-cost community concerts and an award-winning education program that serves over 2,000 elementary school students annually.

High resolution photos are available upon request.

“The Power of Music” Benefit Tickets

Tickets to The Power of Music are \$175, \$500, \$1,000 and \$2,500 per person and include cocktails, dinner, and the performance. Tables of ten are \$5,000 and \$10,000. Tickets at the \$2,500 level and tables at \$10,000 include round-trip limo service for all guests provided by Leros Limos. All attendees receive special acknowledgement in the orchestra’s program book.

The event begins at 5 pm at Brynwood Golf and Country Club, 568 Bedford Road, Armonk, NY. For information and tickets call the Westchester Philharmonic Box Office at **(914) 682-3707 ext. 10**. Visit the Westchester Philharmonic’s website at **www.westchesterphil.org**.

About the Artists

Arab-Israeli soprano **Enas Massalha** was born in Deboriah, Israel and graduated from the Jerusalem Academy of Music. She has performed with members of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra and with Arab musicians in Carnegie Hall. She has been a member of the Opera Studio of the Israeli Opera, the studio opera of the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin and, in June 2009 she sang the lead role in a world premiere of the first Palestinian opera.

Among the most versatile musicians of her generation, award-winning South African pianist **Jeanne-Minette Cilliers** has been called “a pianistic poet,” garnering acclaim for her color-rich and imaginative performances. As a collaborator, Ms. Cilliers has performed world-wide and across North America, including the Irving S. Gilmore Keyboard Festival, the Ravinia Festival, Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. Currently, Ms. Cilliers is on the faculty at the Manhattan School of Music and music director for the Martina Arroyo Opera Foundation in New York City.

About the Westchester Philharmonic

The Westchester Philharmonic orchestra is the only fully-professional symphony orchestra devoted to serving the people of Westchester County. Founded in 1983 by Paul Lustig Dunkel, who was named Music Director Emeritus, and most recently led by the legendary violinist Itzhak Perlman, the Philharmonic fulfills its mission in the concert hall, in the community, and in the classroom. 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.

This season is made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

This season is also made possible, in part, by ArtsWestchester with funds from Westchester County Government. Generous underwriting provided by Entergy Nuclear and Westchester Magazine.

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