

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**WESTCHESTER PHILHARMONIC’S “YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS”
TO WELCOME 2,000 AREA SCHOOL CHILDREN**

*Award-winning composer Gregory Smith to narrate “Mr. Smith’s Bowl of Notes”
With the Westchester Philharmonic conducted by New Rochelle’s Mark Mandarano*

(Purchase, New York) — The Westchester Philharmonic will present two interactive young people’s concerts at the Performing Arts Center at Purchase College on April 2, 2009 at 10 AM and 11:30 AM. Area school children will be simultaneously entertained and educated by *Mr. Smith’s Bowl of Notes*, narrated by the award-winning creator of children’s educational programming Gregory Smith and led by guest conductor Mark Mandarano, a Westchester native who is currently Principal Guest Conductor of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra. For many of the children, this will be their first experience with live classical music in a real concert hall.

Premised on the fact that the musical scale consists merely of the same 12 notes which have been used by composers throughout the ages, Mr. Smith will lead an enchanting romp through centuries of music. The program will open the ears of new concertgoers as they discover the ever-evolving musical styles of the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and 20th century periods.

Elementary schools across the county were given the opportunity to participate in this season’s program, focused on students in grades 3-6. Participating classroom teachers receive a curriculum guide in advance of the concert; it provides educators with a unique way of preparing students for the concert by using music as a springboard for learning in other academic subjects.

“The Westchester Philharmonic’s award-winning education programs have offered children across Westchester County the opportunity to hear, see, and enjoy live music in a real concert hall for more than 20 years,” said Executive Director Joshua Worby. “Even before a note is played, just observing the children’s eyes widen as they enter the magnificent Concert Hall at the Purchase Performing Arts Center is a true affirmation of the importance of these programs. We are particularly proud this year to work with Greg Smith, one of the most creative and entertaining music educators in the country.”

Mr. Smith's career spans the entire range of the musical world from serious chamber music to Broadway to movie scores. His educational concert works have received over 700 performances by more than 160 orchestras, often with Mr. Smith narrating. Recently, his programs have found an international audience with numerous performances in the U.K., China, South Korea, Germany, and New Zealand.

Mr. Smith's Bowl of Notes will be performed by Mr. Smith with the Westchester Philharmonic orchestra and led by guest conductor Mark Mandarano, who is currently Principal Guest Conductor of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Mandarano has conducted the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and served as Resident Conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra, among others. Mr. Mandarano is a Westchester native and graduate of New Rochelle High School, who, in the spring of 1998, conducted the Westchester Philharmonic in the world premiere performances of Melinda Wagner's *Concerto for Flute, Strings and Percussion*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1999.

Event Information

The concerts will be held at the Performing Arts Center at Purchase College at 735 Anderson Hill Road in Purchase on April 2, 2009 at 10 AM and 11:30 AM. **The concert is not open to the public but is open to the press with advance notice.** For more information about this concert and the Education Program of the Westchester Philharmonic, please call (914) 682-3707 ext. 10.

About Composer Gregory Smith

The music of composer **Gregory Smith** covers a wide range of the musical world and has been referred to as "engaging, emotional and theatrical." His music entertains thousands every day and night at Disney theme parks while reaching millions on television networks throughout the world.

Mr. Smith's symphonic family/educational concert works are among the most performed in the genre. In fact, they have received over 700 performances by more than 160 orchestras, often with Mr. Smith narrating. Orchestras such as the Atlanta, Baltimore, Bonn, Boston, Cincinnati, Minnesota, and Toronto orchestras and the Rochester and Hong Kong philharmonics have embraced Mr. Smith's unique approach to family/educational concerts. More recently, these works have found an international audience with numerous performances in the U.K., China, South Korea, Germany, and New Zealand.

His latest work, *The Melodic Life*, was written for and premiered by Baltimore Symphony music director Marin Alsop at the Cabrillo Music Festival in August 2006. Mr. Smith's collaboration with Ms. Alsop spans more than two decades and has produced many memorable premieres and performances.

Mr. Smith enjoys a long association with the Walt Disney Co. and has served as composer and arranger for numerous productions at its five worldwide theme parks. He composed and conducted the music for the highly acclaimed nighttime spectacular, *Wishes*, at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom. Mr. Smith also composed and arranged the music for the award-winning 50th anniversary celebration, *Remember, Dreams Come True*, currently showing nightly at Disneyland. In addition, his music accompanies the fireworks displays at Euro Disney and the recently opened Hong Kong Disneyland. Mr. Smith's original Disney songs have been performed and recorded by artists including Peabo Bryson, Kimberley Locke, Jennifer Holliday, and Jody Benson. His current Disney projects

include a new summer fireworks spectacular for Disneyland and a revised version of the classic Electrical Parade, both slated for June 2009 premieres.

Mr. Smith's ESPN/ABC college football theme is entering its 15th season of usage. He recently composed the frequently-aired CBS television logo. Also for CBS, he conducted and produced the re-recording of the original *Star Trek* theme for the show's remastered 40th anniversary release. Additional television and film credits range from composing themes for MSNBC, The Discovery Channel, TNT, and Headline News; scoring and orchestration for the various Star Trek TV dramas; orchestration for *The Mighty Ducks* (II and III), *Con Air*, and *Now and Then*; and arranging and conducting the songs for the Disney animated features *Pooh's Grand Adventure* and *Pochontas II*; to composing and orchestrating animation music for Warner Bros. cartoons.

In 2002, Mr. Smith was honored to compose the music for the Salt Lake City Paralympics. The score, performed by a large symphony orchestra and chorus, featured the centerpiece song, *Inspire the Spirit*, written with lyricist Sarah Weeks and sung by Donny Osmond. The Emmy Award-winning event aired around the world on ABC.

As a conductor, Mr. Smith has recorded with orchestras in London, San Francisco, and Seattle as well as numerous studio orchestras in New York, Los Angeles, and Prague.

About Conductor Mark Mandarano

A gifted communicator, conductor **Mark Mandarano** is a charismatic leader with an engaging stage presence. Last season, he continued his tenure as Principal Guest Conductor of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, leading a concert of works by J.S. Bach in the historic hall of the Moscow Conservatory. In 2007, he performed a gala concert with the orchestra in Carnegie Hall featuring soloists from the Bolshoi and Kirov opera houses. In the spring of 2005, as a participant in the National Conductor Institute with Leonard Slatkin, he conducted the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. He is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Sinfonietta of Riverdale, which performs its inaugural concerts in New York in the winter of 2009.

Mr. Mandarano has held staff conducting positions with several orchestras, including the Pacific Symphony Orchestra in Orange County, CA where, over four years, he conducted more than 100 performances seen by more than 100,000 adults, families, and schoolchildren. From 1994-1999, he served as Resident Conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra, which he conducted at Lincoln Center. At Carnegie Hall, Mr. Mandarano has performed with both the American Composers Orchestra and the American Russian Young Artists Orchestra. He has also led critically acclaimed tours throughout the U.S. and Russia. In recent seasons, he has appeared as guest conductor in Russia with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, the Ural Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Ulianovsk State Symphony.

At home, Mr. Mandarano has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Houston Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Long Beach Symphony (CA), Rochester Philharmonic (NY), South Dakota Symphony (SD), the Westchester Philharmonic (NY), and the Bard Festival Orchestra (NY). He has worked with and/or prepared orchestras for such conductors as Esa-Pekka Salonen, Christoph von Dohnanyi, Mstislav Rostropovich, Sir Roger Norrington, Neeme Jarvi, Carl St. Clair, Leon Botstein, and Valery Gergiev.

In the spring of 1998, Mr. Mandarano conducted the Westchester Philharmonic in the world premiere performances of the work that won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1999: Melinda Wagner's *Concerto for Flute, Strings and Percussion*. In the 1998-99 season, Mr. Mandarano returned to Carnegie Hall to perform the same work with the American Composers Orchestra. A recording released by Bridge Records has garnered significant praise ("Soloist, conductor and orchestra do a splendid job," *Strictly Classical*; "The performance is exemplary," *Fanfare*).

In addition to his performing career, Mr. Mandarano maintains an active interest in the musical education of young people and in reaching out to all audiences. His article on Brahms' Eight Piano Pieces, Op. 76 has been published in *The Compleat Brahms* (Norton). A National Merit Scholar and a Presidential Scholar Finalist, Mr. Mandarano holds degrees from the Peabody Conservatory and Cornell University as well as a diploma with honors from the Fontainebleau Conservatory in France. He has studied conducting, orchestration, and composition with Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Karel Husa, and continued conducting studies with Frederik Prausnitz and Harold Farberman. In 1998, he was invited by the New York Philharmonic to participate in a master class with Kurt Masur and performed in a workshop with Zdenek Macal. In 2005, he traveled to Germany to study with the renowned Finnish conducting teacher Jorma Panula, and won a concert performance with the Nuremberg Symphony during its first annual competition. In 1995, he was selected by the American Symphony Orchestra League to participate in its first National Conductor Preview.

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, New York. 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 at 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; it 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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