


Westchester Philharmonic
Itzhak Perlman, Artistic Director

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**WESTCHESTER PHILHARMONIC USHERS IN A “MODERN SPRING”
WITH GUEST CONDUCTOR GEORGE MANAHAN**

*Musicians of the Westchester Philharmonic featured in exultant works of
Ravel, Adams, Barber, and Stravinsky*

(Purchase, New York) — The spring brings modern music and a festive flair to the Westchester 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 been recognized repeatedly for his commitment to 20th century music by the American Society of Composers and Publishers (ASCAP).

With a fresh palette of tonalities and new takes on traditional forms, the music on this program brings together three composing giants of the 20th century and one of the 21st :

- Samuel Barber’s *Capricorn Concerto* will show off the Westchester Philharmonic’s virtuoso musicians with solo turns by principal oboist Melanie Feld, principal flutist Laura Conwesser, and principal trumpet Lowell Hershey;
- In *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, Maurice Ravel pays homage to his fallen friends in World War I, while breathing fresh life into the form of the Baroque suite;
- John Adams’ pulsating *Shaker Loops* juxtaposes the ritual dance of the Shakers with live musicians emulating “tape loop” musical technology to astonishing effect; and
- Igor Stravinsky’s ballet score *Pulcinella Suite*.

When Sergei Diaghilev requested of the composer a simple re-arrangement of an 18th century work by Pergolesi for his Ballet Russes, he did not anticipate what Stravinsky would ultimately deliver: A complete reinvention of the work that catapulted it into the modern era, rivaling the newness of the ballet’s set designs by Pablo Picasso.

Audiences can deepen their concert experience with a free pre-concert event featuring pianist Michael Boriskin, composer Laura Kaminsky, and Mr. Manahan as they discuss new

music. The pre-concert event begins at 6:45 PM on April 18 and 1:45 PM on April 19. All events for the opening weekend will be held in The Concert Hall at The Performing Arts Center at Purchase College.

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. He has also served as Music Director of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra in Virginia. Under his leadership, the orchestra recorded the music of Ginastera and Castelnuovo-Tedesco and was honored four times by the American Society of Composers and Publishers for its commitment to 20th century music.

High resolution photos and artist biographies may be downloaded from the Westchester Philharmonic's Web site: www.westchesterphil.org/pressphotos0809.asp

Concert Tickets

All performances will take place in The Concert Hall at The Performing Arts Center at Purchase College, 735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, N.Y. Single tickets range from \$75-\$25.

Student/child/group discounts are available.

To purchase tickets and to obtain 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.

Open Rehearsal

The orchestra will hold a free open rehearsal prior to *A Modern Spring* on Saturday, April 19, 2009 at 10 AM. The open rehearsal will be held in The Concert Hall at the Purchase College Performing Arts Center. The rehearsal is free and open to the public; it lasts approximately two hours. Please note that the orchestra may not rehearse entire works or entire programs at a given rehearsal. Rehearsals are subject to change.

About Conductor George Manahan

In his 11th season as Music Director of the New York City Opera (NYCO), the wide-ranging and versatile **George Manahan** has had an esteemed career embracing everything from opera to the concert stage, the traditional to the contemporary. He has been hailed for his leadership at City Opera, where he "gets from his players the kind of heartfelt involvement unthinkable in the City Opera orchestra pit 20 years ago...these musicians operate with such consistent energy and involvement" (*The New York Times*).

Mr. Manahan has distinguished himself throughout the world as one of the foremost conductors of our time, and is especially known in the opera world for his musical guidance of diverse productions, including *La Fanciulla del West*, *Daphne*, *Ermione*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *Cendrillon*, and *Die Tote Stadt*. He has also toured Japan with NYCO's production of *Little Women*.

Mr. Manahan's guest appearances include the symphonies of Atlanta, San Francisco, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Charlotte, and New Jersey, where he served as acting Music Director for four seasons, as well as the National Symphony and the Juilliard and Manhattan Schools of Music, the Warsaw Philharmonic, the Music Academy of the West, and the Aspen Music Festival. He is a regular guest with the opera companies of Santa Fe, Portland, and Glimmerglass Opera, and has also appeared with the opera companies of Seattle, Chicago, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Opera National du Paris, Teatro de Comunale de Bologna, the Bergen Festival (Norway), the Casals Festival (Puerto Rico), and the Minnesota Opera, where he was principal conductor. As music director of the Richmond Symphony (VA) from 1987-1998, where – in addition to conducting, he also appeared as piano soloist – he was honored four times by the American Society of Composers and Publishers (ASCAP) for his commitment to 20th century music.

That passion for the music of our time was ignited when, in one season, Mr. Manahan was chosen as the Exxon Arts Endowment Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony and he made his mark on the opera world debuting with the Santa Fe Opera and conducting the American premiere of Arnold Schoenberg's opera *Von Heute Auf Morgen*. That enthusiasm continues today; he has conducted numerous world premieres, including Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*, and many others.

Mr. Manahan's many appearances on television include productions of *La Boheme*, *Lizzie Borden*, and *Tosca* on PBS. Live from Lincoln Center's telecast of NYCO's production of *Madame Butterfly* under his direction won a 2007 Emmy Award. Mr. Manahan's discography includes the Grammy Award-nominated recording of Edward Thomas' *Desire Under The Elms* with the London Symphony, and Steve Reich's *Tehillim* on the EMI-Warner Brothers label, as well as two albums of 20th century concertos for clarinet featuring Richard Stolzmann. He also appears on the Elan, New Albion, and Naxos labels.

His recent Carnegie Hall performance of Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* was hailed by audiences and critics alike. "What a difference it makes to hear the piece performed by an opera conductor who palpably believes in it," said *The New York Times*. "The fervent and sensitive performance that Mr. Manahan presided over made the best case for this opera that I have encountered."

In just the last few months, Mr. Manahan has conducted the world premiere of *Ask Your Mama* at Carnegie Hall, a collaboration between Emmy Award-winning composer Laura Karpman and soprano Jessye Norman based on the text of Langston Hughes, in which Mr. Manahan led the orchestra of St. Luke's and soloists Jessye Norman, Lizz Wright, and The Roots; the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie's Zankel Hall; and the Omaha Symphony; as well as a New York City Opera concert version of *Antony and Cleopatra* at Carnegie Hall, and performance with the City Opera orchestra at Alice Tully Hall.

His upcoming engagements include the West Coast premiere of *Ask Your Mama* at the Hollywood Bowl, a concert performance of Gluck's *Alceste* featuring Deborah Voigt and the Collegiate Chorale, and performances of Thomas' *Mignon* at the Music Academy of the West and *La Boheme* at the Aspen Music Festival.

Mr. Manahan received his formal musical training at the Manhattan School of Music, studying conducting with Anton Coppola and George Schick, and was appointed to the faculty of the school upon his graduation, at which time the Juilliard School awarded him a fellowship as Assistant Conductor with the American Opera Center.

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 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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