



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: April 16, 2010

Contact: Susan Bardack
or Jim Sector
(518) 867-7940 or 465-4755 x 31
susan@izoca.com

Albany Symphony Presents Innovative American Music Festival in a Weekend Filled With Adventurous Concert Programming

Orchestra to Offer Six World Premiere performances

(ALBANY, NY) – From Friday, May 21 through Sunday, May 23, the Albany Symphony hosts its innovative American Music Festival, turning the Capital Region into a hub for new music. The weekend-long event is filled with a variety of performances and concert formats to allow audiences to experience the best of music being created today. The entire festival will take place at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) and is expected to draw from beyond the Capital Region's boundaries.

The American Music Festival is a unique multi-day celebration of new music and living composers, featuring several nationally-acclaimed composers, sensational guest artists, and six world-premiere performances. Anchored around the last subscription concert of the year as the capstone of the season, the festival represents a destination for many new music-oriented activities, and an event aimed at getting the local community involved in an exciting and memorable cultural experience. "We invite the entire community to live this magnificent musical journey with us." Music Director David Alan Miler says, "Each and every concert during the festival will be a fun, entertaining, and unique experience." One of the most unique musical selections to be performed on the festival is a piece for music robots, written especially for the popular *Dogs of Desire* ensemble: a "rock meets classical" group made up of musicians from the Albany Symphony.

One of the central events of the American Music Festival is a special orchestra performance on **May 22 at 8:00pm**. This concert features major works by the Albany Symphony's Resident Composers, John Harbison and Stacy Garrop, a world premiere by Philadelphia composer James Primosch and a newly written percussion concerto for renowned soloist Colin Currie by Finland's leading composer, Einojuhani Rautavaara. Primosch's new work, "*Luminescence*," was inspired by "Luminist" paintings of the Hudson River School, while Stacy Garrop contributes another world premiere with two new movements for her

Mythology Symphony; building on what was performed in November with her riveting “Becoming Medusa.” Finally, John Harbison’s “Great Gatsby Suite,” an orchestral tour-de-force built primarily from the orchestral interludes of his MET commissioned opera, will be performed and then be recorded by the orchestra for future release.

On Friday, **May 21 at 8:00pm**, the Albany Symphony’s one-of-a-kind 18 member new music ensemble, the ***Dogs of Desire***, will showcase a number of exciting works and premieres. Among the new commissions are collaborations between composer Patrick Burke and videographer Kamen Bonev. Composer Todd Reynolds will be incorporating robotic instruments into his piece through working with LEMUR: the League of Electronic Musical Urban Robots. Other pieces on the program include new works by David Mallamud and Ted Hearne, along with previously commissioned pieces for the *Dogs of Desire*.

The *Dogs of Desire* performs all-new music, written especially for the ensemble, from some of America’s most creative up-and-coming living composers. Since 1994, the Dogs have commissioned over 100 new works from emerging American composers, gaining a national reputation among young composers as a proving ground for emerging talent. The group provides a unique medium for vocalists and a wide variety of amplified instruments to create a contemporary and energetic melding of orchestral chamber music, combining the power and punch of a rock band with the precision and clarity of a chamber ensemble.

The orchestra’s first-ever **Reading Session** – free and open to the public, held on **Saturday May 22 at 2:00pm** – is the culmination of a national call-for-scores competition among young and emerging composers. The community is invited to be there as these up-and-coming talents hear their pieces read by a professional orchestra for the first time and receive constructive feedback from David Alan Miller, ASO musicians, resident composers John Harbison and Stacy Garrop, and the audience. The event represents a unique glimpse into the creation of a piece of music, and to the composers represents an ideal opportunity for personal development: to be read by a major symphony orchestra, as well as a chance to be mentored by some of the best and most-established composers in the field.

Additionally, guest percussionist Colin Currie, a masterful percussionist and guest artist on the Albany Symphony Saturday night concert will be holding a special recital alongside Empire State Youth Orchestra percussionists on Sunday, May 23 at 4:00pm. It is expected to be a major attraction for area percussion students and to those interested in seeing the art of percussion practiced at its highest form.

Pre-performance talks with guest artists, composers and conductor David Alan Miller will take place on Thursday May 20, 12:00pm at the Albany Public Library (161 Washington Ave., Albany, NY), and Saturday, May 22 from the EMPAC stage at 6:30 PM. More information about the performances and its featured artists can be found at the Albany Symphony's website at www.AlbanySymphony.com, or by calling (518) 465-4755.

The Albany Symphony Orchestra presents: 2010 American Music Festival

Dogs of Desire Performance

When: Friday, May 21, 2010: 8PM

Where: EMPAC, RPI, Troy

Tickets for the performance can be purchased at the EMPAC Box Office, by calling (518) 276-3921, or by visiting www.albanysymphony.com. \$25, general admission.

Festival Reading Session

When: Saturday, May 22, 2010: 2PM

Where: EMPAC, RPI, Troy

Tickets for the performance can be purchased at the EMPAC Box Office, by calling (518) 276-3921, or by visiting www.albanysymphony.com. Free, general admission.

Festival Orchestra Concert

When: Saturday, May 22, 2010: 8PM

Where: EMPAC, RPI, Troy

Tickets for the performance can be purchased at the EMPAC Box Office, by calling (518) 276-3921, or by visiting www.albanysymphony.com. \$25-\$49, \$15 Students.

Colin Currie Recital

When: Sunday, May 23, 2010: 4PM

Where: EMPAC, RPI, Troy

Tickets for the performance can be purchased at the EMPAC Box Office, by calling (518) 276-3921, or by visiting www.albanysymphony.com. \$8, general admission.

About the ASO

The Albany Symphony is one of this region's most revered music and cultural institutions, having won numerous national awards for its adventurous concert programming, recording projects, composer residencies, and innovative educational efforts involving area schools throughout the region. As the only professional symphony orchestra based within the Capital Region, the Albany Symphony enriches a broad and diverse regional community, engaging over 150,000 people each year across an extended geographical area. After reviewing the Albany Symphony's recent 2009 recording of music by resident composer George Tsontakis, American Record Guide proclaimed: "The Albany Symphony is now one of the country's great orchestras."

###