

MEDIA RELEASE:

Music without Borders Connects with Global Climate Change Movement

February 2, 2010 - The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) is proud to announce ***Breaking New Ground***, the 19th annual New Music Festival (NMF), sponsored by Imris, from February 6-12, 2010, with a pre-festival “Happening” on February 5 at the Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG).

This year’s NMF embraces the timely issues of our changing planet, namely climate change and global warming, and with the University of Manitoba’s Centre for Earth Observation Science (CEOS), the WSO will be presenting for the first time in the history of New Music Festivals in North America: **a partnership between science and art; research and music; words of powerful conviction fused with sounds of emotional intensity.**

The WSO New Music Festival has become one of the best in the world, known for its strength of character in programming and for presenting Pulitzer Prize winning composers along with breakthrough performers. “For the 2010 edition, we will hear composers hailing from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK, the US, Ukraine and Venezuela. But more than that, there are composers whose roots go back to the Inuit people, Greece, Russia, Brazil and beyond. There are composers whose lives spring from classical music, folk music, jazz, rock, and electronica. **This is music without borders. But it is not music without connections, satisfying resonances, conversations going on between one music and another,**” said Steven Stucky, Pulitzer Prize winning composer who will be in attendance at NMF.

Joining Distinguished Guest Composer Steven Stucky (USA) at NMF will also be John Psathas (NZ), Tim Brady (CAN) and Derek Charke (CAN), whose various works will be World, Canadian or North American premieres at NMF. In addition, the WSO is proud to present the music of Distinguished Guest Artists Jenny Lin (pianist) and Tanya Tagaq (throat singer), and Distinguished Guest Ensemble Eighth Blackbird (2008 Grammy winner). A full listing of concerts can be found at www.newmusicfestival.ca.

The music this year will reflect our connection with nature, and will present the World Premiere of WSO Composer-in-Residence Vincent Ho’s ***Arctic Symphony*** on Opening Night on February 6. “In the summer of 2008, I was provided with the opportunity to visit the Arctic region as part of an ‘Artist on Board’ program through the Circumpolar Flaw Lead System (CFL) Study conducted by researchers at the University of Manitoba,” explains Vincent Ho. “I was taken on board a state-of-the-art research vessel, the CCGS Amundsen, where I was introduced to studies conducted by many of the world’s leading arctic research scientists. I was in a vast open area; I was constantly being subjected to the environmental conditions of the region; and I was continually surrounded by nature’s angelic beauty. It was there I felt the music needed to express this spiritual connection that had formed.”

Also new this year is a joint collaboration with the Winnipeg Art Gallery who will be hosting a Pre-NMF “Happening” on Friday, February 5 at the WAG. The evening will kick-off NMF and feature a tour through the galleries specially curated for this evening, along with the unveiling of a newly invented electronic instrument called WALLBALLS, along with a special performance by the Nunavut Sivuniksavut Performers who will present traditional throat songs.

“The WSO and its audience have embraced a special role in the development of Canadian orchestral works. New Music Festival programming is premier placement for new Canadian works to maximize their potential for presentation to an enthusiastic and knowledgeable audience. It is a celebration of creativity, and the NMF is our proudest achievement,” said Trudy Schroeder, Executive Director for the WSO.

Highlights of New Music Festival:

Pre-Festival “Happening”

Co-presented with GroundSwell, XIE and the Winnipeg Art Gallery

Friday, February 5

8:00 pm at the WAG

Opening Night – International Polar Year Concert Gala

Special Presentation by Dr. David Barber (On Thin Ice: Global Warming and the Arctic); World premiere of works by John Tavener (*Popule Meus*), Derek Charke (*Falling from Cloudless Skies*) and Vincent Ho (*Arctic Symphony*); and Pulitzer Prize winning work by Steven Stucky (*Second Concerto for Orchestra*)

Saturday, February 6

7:30 pm sharp at the Centennial Concert Hall

10:00 pm - Post Concert Reception (RSVP mandatory)

Choral Evening featuring Prairie Voices Choir, The University of Manitoba Women’s Choir and the Winnipeg Singers

Sunday, February 7

7:30 pm at Westminster Church

Jenny Lin (pianist) & My 20th Century (multimedia production)

Monday, February 8

7:30 pm at the Centennial Concert Hall

Wind Evening featuring the WSO Winds, Brass & Percussion, University of Manitoba Wind Ensemble and The Winnipeg Winds

Tuesday, February 9

7:30 pm at the Centennial Concert Hall

The Guess Who Symphony & Bending Hendrix (World premiere)

Wednesday, February 10

7:30 pm at the Centennial Concert Hall

Double Feature: Tanya Tagaq (throat singer) & ***Eighth Blackbird*** (2008 Grammy Award Winner)

Thursday, February 11

7:30 pm at the Centennial Concert Hall

Closing Night:

With composer Tim Brady and an ensemble of 20 electric guitarists; also featuring North American premiere of composer John Psathas’ *View from Olympus* (double concerto for piano, percussion and orchestra)

Friday, February 12

8:00 pm at the Centennial Concert Hall

Special Invited Guest Composers and Guest Artists in attendance (interviews available):

- Dr. David Barber (Distinguished Guest Scientist) – February 6
- Steven Stucky (Distinguished Guest Composer) – February 6, 9, 12
- Derek Charke (Distinguished Guest Composer) – February 6, 11
- Tim Brady (Distinguished Guest Composer) – February 8, 10, 12 (note: Tim is bilingual)
- John Psathas (Distinguished Guest Composer) – February 9, 11, 12
- Tanya Tagaq (Distinguished Guest Artist, throat singer) - February 7, 11
- Jenny Lin (Distinguished Guest Artist, pianist) – February 8, 10, 12
- Eighth Blackbird (Distinguished Guest Ensemble; 2008 Grammy Winner) – February 11

Tickets for the 2010 New Music Festival are: Passes: \$99.00 (regular), \$89.00 (seniors) and \$49.00 (students). Single ticket prices are \$18.00 (regular) and \$10.00 (students). Single ticket prices do not include the Opening Night concert (regular Masterworks pricing applies) and the Closing Night concert (regular Musically Speaking pricing applies). New Music Festival program books are available at the concerts.

Tickets available at the WSO Box Office at 949-3999, www.wso.ca, Ticketmaster at 780-3333 or www.ticketmaster.ca. For more information, please go to www.newmusicfestival.ca

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For additional information or to schedule interviews, please contact:

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