

For Immediate Release Please

Lower Manhattan Gets Its Own Orchestra!

THE KNICKERBOCKER CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Debuts January 17

Free in the World Financial Center

World Premiere of *An Inaugural Fanfare* by Gary S. Fagin

Featuring Elizabeth Pitcairn Playing the Red Violin

NEW YORK - Lower Manhattan will get its own classical music ensemble when the **Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra**, conducted by Music Director Gary S. Fagin, makes its world debut Saturday, January 17, at 7:00pm in the largest performance venue in downtown Manhattan, the glass-enclosed World Financial Center Winter Garden, 220 Vesey Street.

The Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra's inaugural concert is free.

Featured on the debut program is Gary S. Fagin's site-specific, antiphonal brass fanfare written specifically to announce the birth of the Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra.

The featured performer of the Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra's inaugural concert is violin virtuoso Elizabeth Pitcairn, who will play a 1720 Stradivarius.

Ms. Pitcairn will play John Corigliano's *Suite from The Red Violin* and Pablo Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Aires)*. Also on the inaugural program are J.S. Bach's *Orchestral Overture No. 1 in C*, and *On the Beautiful Blue Danube* by Johann Strauss, Jr.

"It is thrilling that the inaugural concert of the Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra is taking place in the soaring space of the World Financial Center Winter Garden. Like a modern cathedral with its facing balconies, the Winter Garden offers musicians a splendid opportunity to perform antiphonal music," said Mr. Fagin, who is the first person to receive a Doctorate in Conducting from Yale. (Antiphonal music, which originated in Renaissance cathedrals, refers to music sung or played in alternate choruses by groups facing each other.)

"For over two decades, we've presented exceptional music, art, theater and film in the World Financial Center Winter Garden, making it the center of the arts downtown," said Debra Simon, Artistic Director of Arts World Financial Center. "But to host the inaugural concert of a new orchestra, whose home will be Lower Manhattan, is truly an honor. The comparison of the Winter Garden to a cathedral is particularly apt, as cathedrals were the center of the arts in the Renaissance and we have been long committed to be the center of the arts downtown."

The mission of the Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra is to reintroduce people to their musical heritage by performing baroque, classical and romantic masterpieces in distinctive downtown venues and by offering educational outreach, particularly to young people. In association with orchestra's debut, Elizabeth Pitcairn is visiting several Lower Manhattan schools to play the Red Violin for students and talk with them about its history.

Why do people need classical music at this time in this locale?

"In this time of turmoil and uncertainty, connecting with something that gives deep, spiritual sustenance, like classical music, can bring great comfort to people," said Mr. Fagin. "Lower Manhattan is undergoing a cultural renaissance, but missing from the rich mix is classical music."

Besides forming an orchestra for Lower Manhattan, Mr. Fagin is music director of the Bucks County Symphony in Pennsylvania; conductor of the New Jersey Ballet's Nutcracker; and former music director of the Yale Repertory Theatre and the American Repertory Theatre. As a composer and an arranger, his work has been commissioned or performed by Garrison Keillor, the Boston Pops, the San Francisco Symphony, the Smithsonian Jazz Anthology and presented in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw. An experienced teacher and educator, he is founder and director of The New York Conducting Studio.

As the Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra's inaugural concert is also the kickoff for the Knickerbocker Chamber Orchestra's inaugural season, downtown music lovers can look forward to two more concerts this year: the Bach Cantata Concert on March 15 at 5pm in the John Street United Methodist Church, 44 John Street, will include Handel's Concerto grosso in C, (Alexander's Feast); Gary S. Fagin's Hungarian Suite for Cello and Strings; and J. S. Bach's Cantata No. 4, *Christ lag in Todesbanden*. Seraphim, a professional chamber choir based downtown, will perform at the March 15 concert.

That concert will be followed by A Mozart Evening on May 15 at 8pm in Pace University's Michael Schimmel Center for the Arts, 3 Spruce Street. Featuring renowned Spanish clarinetist Jose Franch-Ballester, the evening will include Frederick II's (The Great) Symphony in G; Mozart's Clarinet Concerto in A; and Mozart's Symphony No. 21 in A.

For nearly 20 years, Arts World Financial Center has presented thousands of free cultural events in one of the world's grandest public spaces, the World Financial Center Winter Garden, and its nearby Courtyard Gallery.

Arts World Financial Center is sponsored by American Express, Battery Park City Authority, Brookfield Properties and Merrill Lynch.

Admission is free for all events. For information, call (212) 945-0505 or click www.worldfinancialcenter.com.

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