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MEDIA RELEASE

Media contact: Vickilyn Hussey / Public Relations / Arizona Musicfest / trendlab@cox.net / C 602.402.5713 / T 602.441.2682

A World Premiere Opening Night
Robert Moody & The Festival Orchestra
Ryan Anthony, Trumpet

Tuesday, February 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Pinnacle Presbyterian Church

25150 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale 85255

Tickets: \$40; Premium Seating \$55; Student (K- College) free

Call (480) 488-0806, toll free (866) 488-0806 or visit www.azmusicfest.org for tickets.

Complimentary valet parking is available.

Following tonight's concert, the audience is cordially invited to greet Maestro Moody, Mr. Anthony, Mr. Bates and the Festival Orchestra musicians at nearby Troon Country Club. Maps will be available at the end of the concert.

Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Concerto for Trumpet in A Flat Major

Alexander Arutunian
(Born 1920)

Ryan Anthony

Intermission

Desert Transport

Dengler's Hangar

Skyranch

Sedona

Montezuma's Castle

Mason Bates
(Born 1977)

World Premiere

Symphony No. 2 in E Minor

Largo – Allegro moderato

Allegro molto

Adagio

Allegro vivace

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

The ***Overture*** to **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's** much-loved opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*, is an orchestral romp that sparkles with merriment. It is the *Overture's* spirit and tempo, rather than its thematic content that ushers us into the romantic comedy that is *Figaro*. The *Overture* is deservedly one of Mozart's most popular and familiar works.

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Armenian composer **Alexander Arutunian** (born 1920) wrote his *Concerto for Trumpet in A Flat Major* in 1950. The work quickly became a mainstay of modern trumpet repertoire and is often used as a required performance piece for auditions and competitions. While the *Concerto's* stylistic properties do fit within the cultural attitudes of his time, Arutunian goes far beyond the ordinary “mechanical” content that prevailed in the Russian music written during the Stalinist era. The *Concerto* reflects *ashughner* (folk minstrel) and Eastern European influences – neither one encouraged by the Soviets – while providing extraordinary materials to showcase the trumpet’s timbre and technical capabilities.

The work is in one movement with decidedly contrasting sections. The sinuous opening phrases do not prepare us for the boisterous, bright sounds of the major theme that is heard throughout the entire work. The music bounces along, then slows for wistful, leisurely-paced melodic passages for clarinet, and for muted trumpet played *legato* (one note leading smoothly to the next). All the while, deep, lush color is heard in the orchestra. Next, more flashy trumpet work, accompanied by outbursts of syncopated, angular statements by the brass and orchestra. The moods continue to vary: wisps of haunting melody, quite Impressionistic in style, alternate with vague, peaceful *arioso* (songlike) wanderings for the soloist, followed by yet more repetitions of the imposing first theme. At length, the soloist plays a virtuosic cadenza, filled with inflections drawn from the mysterious “Eastern European sound,” the leisurely melodies, and the ebullient musical ideas that comprise the piece. The delightful *Concerto* ends with a smashing orchestral finish.

The music of **Mason Bates** (born 1977) fuses innovative orchestral writing, the rhythms of electronica and techno, and imaginative narrative forms brought to life by cutting-edge sound design. An advocate for bringing new music to new spaces, he is known as an artist who moves fluidly between them: performing on electronic drumpad and laptop with the Los Angeles Philharmonic or integrating members of the San Francisco Symphony into an evening of DJ-ing at the San Francisco club Mezzanine. He is currently Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony.

In 2010, Bates was Composer-in-Residence at *Arizona Musicfest*, during which he joined the Festival Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Moody, in performances of three major orchestral works. He also spent time becoming acquainted with the distinctive sights and sounds of Arizona, an experience that he called up when composing *Desert Transport* in honor the Festival’s 20th Anniversary. Tonight, you will hear the world premiere of this eagerly-awaited work by one of America’s most interesting and melodically-gifted young composers.

The composer has provided a few tantalizing hints about the work: “[*Desert Transport*] considers the dynamic desert landscape from the perspective of a fast-moving helicopter. The journey begins in the hubbub of an airport hangar but ultimately takes us to the colorful expanses of Sedona and the mystic heights of an Indian cliff dwelling. There is a field recording of the Pima Indians near the end, but other than that it is entirely acoustic.”

It took the young Russian composer **Sergei Rachmaninoff** (1873-1943) several years to recover from the debacle that was the premiere of his *First Symphony* in 1897. The performance was led by a vodka-sated conductor -- composer Alexander Glazunov -- and was damned with NO praise! Thanks to psychiatry and hypnosis, Rachmaninoff came back from the ensuing despair and severe depression. Even more: he triumphed over this early failure. Forced to leave Russia in 1906 because of political tumult, he settled in Germany. While there, he composed many of his most famous works, including *The Isle of the Dead*, *Piano Concerto No. 2* and the work we hear this evening, his *Symphony No. 2*. Rachmaninoff did return to Russia, but left again after the Revolution. A brilliant pianist, he concertized widely, and lived in Switzerland and the United States.

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The long, brooding introduction to the First Movement is hauntingly played by the cellos and basses. This is, most assuredly, music from deep within the Russian soul. The thematic materials of the movement, written in sonata form, are first heard here, then played by solo instruments as the exposition unfolds. The first theme, edgy and nervous, is assigned to the oboe. We will hear this melody repeated and transformed throughout the *Symphony*. The lyrical second theme is stated by the clarinet. The development is a stormy review and expansion of the first theme. The movement finishes in a lighter vein, with a short coda that makes a quick exit.

In keeping with the style of Russian Romanticism, the Second Movement is a scherzo (ABACABA). The horns play the first spirited theme over an exciting rhythmic pattern for the violins. The beautiful second theme is related to material from the First Movement. The brass then presents a favorite Rachmaninoff motif: the *dies irae* ("day of wrath") plainchant from the Requiem Mass that haunts so much of his work. This martial Russian brass chorale will return in the final movement.

The Third Movement is quintessential Romantic Rachmaninoff, its melody also derived from musical ideas found in the *Symphony's* beginning. This emotional music is quite simply breathtaking and should be experienced without too much explanation or interpretation. The poignant clarinet solo, the English horn passages, the strings' exquisite singing of the theme, the harmonic warmth and lush orchestration: all combine to make this is one of the truly great movements in all of Russian music, perhaps in all of symphonic literature. Sit back and let the music sweep over you!

(A brief interruption: The 1973 song, *Never Gonna Fall in Love Again* by singer Eric Carmen is based on the theme from this movement. Other popular songs are also based on Rachmaninoff's melodies. Can you name any others?)

The Final Movement is a vital summation of all that has gone before. The first subject surges forward, march-like, formed out of the First Movement's climatic ending. Wait for the woodwinds and the response from the basses! Does the second theme seem like a string passage by Tchaikovsky? Finally, everything from the previous movements is gathered up and swept along rapturously in the development section as it proceeds to the final reprise. Once again, the exultant chorale in Russian Orthodox style is inserted into the mix. But wait: this is not the end! The last, triumphant sounds we hear are swirls of orchestral color in a final sweep, using the very first thematic material, as they bring to a close the profound Romantic outpouring that is the Rachmaninoff *Second Symphony*. What a glorious piece! And what a tremendous gift for our 20th Anniversary from our all-star Festival Orchestra and Maestro Moody!

Notes by Fran Rosenthal

About Tonight's Guest Artist

From being selected as a 1987 Presidential Scholar to winning both the John P. Paynter and Bank of America National Achievement Awards to his inclusion in *Who's Who in America*, the career of Guest Artist-in-Residence, trumpeter **Ryan Anthony**, has developed from that of teen phenom to an artist at the forefront of today's classical crossover market.

He has received national acclaim for his varied career, most notably his contribution as a member of Canadian Brass from 2000-2004. After departing the world-renowned brass ensemble, Anthony quickly became one of the most sought-after trumpet players in America. He worked as an orchestral player on the US tours of the New York Philharmonic and Israel Philharmonic, and at Carnegie Hall with the Cleveland Orchestra and the Dallas Symphony.

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As guest soloist, he appeared with numerous ensembles, among them, the IRIS Chamber Orchestra, Springfield Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony, Richmond Symphony, Pensacola Symphony, Bozeman Symphony, San Juan Symphony, New Hampshire Summer Festival, and Portland Symphony Orchestra. He also maintains an active recital schedule with organist Gary Beard, with whom he has appeared throughout the United States, Canada and in Russia (Moscow).

Anthony grew up in San Diego, California, and received both his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and was awarded its Distinguished Alumni Award in 2001. This is his first appearance at *Arizona Musicfest*.

*This magnificent concert is partially sponsored by
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