



# ELGIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

News Release

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

## ESO “American Icons” concert showcases the sound of America

The Elgin Symphony Orchestra (ESO) brings to life classic American icons with scores that encompass our country’s sweeping grandeur when Stephen Squires conducts “American Icons” on Saturday and Sunday, November 5 and 6. Specific performance times are Saturday, November 5, 8 p.m. and Sunday, November 6, 3:30 p.m. Both concerts take place at the Hemmens Cultural Center in Elgin. “Musically Speaking,” the ESO’s pre-concert discussion available to ticket holders at no additional charge, begins at 2:30 p.m.

The program features Michael Daugherty’s symphonic homage to the mother road with his composition entitled *Route 66*. Grofe’s *Grand Canyon Suite* casts a musical ear on one of our greatest national treasures. The program also includes Gershwin’s Piano Concerto in F and the much-loved *Adagio for Strings* by Barber.

Featured soloist is Kevin Cole, a pianist widely regarded as today’s top interpreter of Gershwin. Cole has delighted audiences with a repertoire that includes the best of 20<sup>th</sup> century American music. Cole’s performances have prompted accolades from some of the foremost critics in America. “When Cole sits down at the piano, you would swear Gershwin himself was at work... Cole stands as the best Gershwin pianist in America today,” wrote Howard Reich, arts critic for the *Chicago Tribune*. Critic Andrew Patner wrote: “A piano genius...he reveals an understanding of harmony, rhythmic complexity and pure show-biz virtuosity that would have had Vladimir Horowitz smiling with envy.” Cole has performed with major symphony orchestras throughout the U. S. and internationally.

Resident conductor Stephen Squires has entered his 21st season with the ESO. Known for his dynamic and engaging style on the podium, Squires is an active conductor in orchestral, wind, operatic and ballet music; an accomplished recital accompanist; and a freelance trumpeter.

Stephen Squires is principal conductor, professor of conducting and chair of the orchestral instruments department in the music conservatory at the Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University. Prior to this appointment he served as professor of music at the Northern Illinois University School of Music. In addition to his duties with the Elgin Symphony Orchestra, he is the music director of the Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra (Rockford), principal guest conductor of the Millar Brass, and conductor of the Salt Creek Ballet Orchestra.

Tickets to all ESO concerts are on sale. The ESO box office is located at 20 DuPage Court in downtown Elgin near Al's Cafe & Creamery and the Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce. ESO box office hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. To purchase tickets, please call the box office at 847-888-4000 or order online at [www.elginsymphony.org](http://www.elginsymphony.org). The Hemmens Cultural Center is located at 45 Symphony Way, just south of Kimball Street and adjacent to The Centre of Elgin.

The Elgin Symphony Orchestra is especially grateful to IHC Construction Companies, LLC for their role as sponsor of the 2011-2012 performance season.

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