



ELGIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

News Release

Thursday, November 17, 2011

ESO creates holiday memories with “’Tis the Season” Dec. 10-11

The Elgin Symphony Orchestra gets to the heart of the holidays with “’Tis the Season,” a traditional concert filled with talented guest artists and beloved carols on Saturday and Sunday, December 10 and 11, 2011. Featured soloists are Rich Ridenour, much-loved pianist and previous guest artist with the ESO, and Elizabeth Norman, the Chicago-based soprano who has wowed ESO audiences. The Choral-Aires Chorus, internationally recognized as one of the world’s top 10 Sweet Adeline choruses, makes a special appearance at both of the Saturday performances. The Elgin Children’s Chorus, a local favorite, joins the ESO for all performances of “’Tis the Season.”

Specific performance dates are Saturday, December 10 at 3:30 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sunday, December 11 at 3:30 p.m. All performances are held at the Hemmens Cultural Center in Elgin. The previously-scheduled performance for December 9 has been cancelled due to conflicting artist schedules.

Ridenour has built a formidable career performing concerts of great piano favorites ranging from classical masterworks to American ragtime, jazz and rock ‘n roll. Recent orchestral engagements include cities such as Jacksonville, Grand Rapids, Tucson, Charleston, Elgin and Owensboro as well as the Bravissimo Festival of Guatemala City. Each season Ridenour serves as pops conductor for the Dearborn Symphony Orchestra. He has instructed piano at Aquinas College, Grand Valley State University, Calvin College and Western Michigan University. A native of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Rich received a bachelor’s degree in music from the University of Michigan and a master’s degree from the Juilliard School of Music. His teachers include Louis Nagel, Josef Raieff, and Ruth Hemmes. Rich Ridenour is an international Steinway Artist.

Norman was enthusiastically received by ESO audiences in August 2011 when she performed with the ESO in the concert benefitting Feeding Greater Elgin. She has gained a reputation as an accomplished interpreter of contemporary composers. As a winner of The Metropolitan Opera National Finals, The Lynn Harvey and Bel Canto competitions, the American Opera Society and the Union League Civic and Arts foundation awards, she appears annually with symphonies in Chicago and around the country. Her active career includes full stage productions in theater, concert work, operas, solo recitals, chamber music performances, master classes, and recordings for television and radio. Formerly a music consultant for Chicago Public Schools, she is currently a voice professor at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University.

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.

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 at 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.

Prices for “’Tis the Season” are \$20, \$28, \$32, \$44 or \$66 per ticket. Tickets to all ESO concerts are now 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. The Hemmens Cultural Center is located at 45 Symphony Way, just south of Kimball Street and adjacent to The Centre of Elgin.

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