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Choral Music Svengalis Bring "Heavenly" Hot Trend to Carnegie Hall

As a Musical Mania Sweeps the Country, New Yorkers are Treated to Two Tastes of the Trend

(MAY 7, 2010, NEW YORK) Move over karaoke, watch out *American Idol*... there's a new musical trend in town.

Choral music mania is currently exploding around the world and in the US, and has now become the most popular form of participation in the performing arts. With **over 40 million Americans regularly singing in choruses today, 270,000 choir groups nationwide, and an estimated one quarter of all U.S. households reporting one or more family members currently participating in a chorus***, choral music has never been hotter.

At the heart of this trend are producer-impresario team Jonathan Griffith and Iris Derke of Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY), who have brought major stars and breakthrough artists of the newly revived choral genre into innovative settings and heart-stopping performances at prestigious venues around the world.

This June, the DCINY team will present two major choral events at Carnegie Hall, "Sing for the Cure™/Heartsongs" a benefit concert for the Susan G. Komen for the Cure® cancer foundation, and "Paradise Lost: Shadows and Wings" a groundbreaking choral performance created and conducted by star composer Eric Whitacre featuring over 400 singers.

What is it about choral music that has triggered such an explosion of popularity these days?

"In many ways, choral music is like the musical version of Facebook," says Mr. Griffith, "I think people these days are seeking togetherness, and choral music, both for the singers and the listeners, is an incredibly powerful, almost adventurous, experience of community. You are literally all swept away together, as many voices become one."

This sense of being swept away is repeatedly echoed in the rave reviews of the choral work of Whitacre. A critically acclaimed and prizewinning artist, Whitacre has attracted a massive and passionate fan base, with sheet music sales topping 1,000,000 copies worldwide. Whitacre is seen in the musical world as almost a Pied Piper figure, luring high school choir singers as well as world famous opera stars into the spell of his complex vocal arrays. Legendary among choir singers are his "Whitacre chords" which are said to sweep singers into almost trancelike ecstatic states and evoke tears and gasps of joy in audiences.

"From its earliest identified beginnings in Ancient Greece, through mass popularity during the eras of masters like Bach and Handel, and through cross-pollinations including church gospel and global music influences, the choral music we're hearing in the 21st Century has never been more rich, innovative, or

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more thrilling," says Ms. Derke. "The kind of artists we're working with, the sort of revolutionary and yet very human pieces our composers are bringing forth, clearly defines a renaissance of this heavenly artform...one that takes the human voice and makes a moment of magic."

The DCINY "Paradise Lost" concert will feature a solo cello, a DJ, Japanese "taiko" drums, seven vocal soloists, and a radically diverse chorus of over 400 singers, ranging from small-town teenage phenoms to community choir groups to international star soprano Hila Plitmann, all assembling in New York to perform together for the first time.

"Sing for the Cure" is a musical journey that takes its listeners through the myriad of emotions experienced by breast cancer victims and their loved ones. Also to be performed that night is the World Premiere of Joseph Martin's "Heartsongs", based on the inspirational works of American child-poet Mattie Stepanek (1990-2004). Mr. Griffith's initial concept of placing the young poet's words into a choral setting, he says, has been transformed by the composer into "A gorgeous musical experience that truly captures Mattie's universally inspirational and life-affirming message."

DCINY presents "Heartsongs" and the 10th Anniversary performance of Sing for the Cure, a joint project of the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the Turtle Creek Chorale, at Isaac Stern Auditorium in Carnegie Hall on Sunday, June 6, 2010, at 8:30 pm.

DCINY presents Eric Whitacre's "Paradise Lost: Shadows and Wings" in concert at Carnegie Hall on Tuesday, June 15, 2010, at 8:00 pm.

For more information, please visit: www.dcinyc.org

For tickets to Carnegie Hall performances: www.carnegiehall.org

For information about Susan G. Komen for the Cure® in New York: www.komennyc.org

ABOUT KOMEN GREATER NYC

The Greater New York City Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure® is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Founded in 1990, Komen Greater NYC has raised over \$50 million to date. The organization is dedicated to the greater New York City metropolitan area, disbursing up to seventy-five percent of its net income to local programs offering breast health education, screening and treatment in the five boroughs of New York City, on Long Island and in Westchester and Rockland Counties. 25% of its revenues fund national peer-reviewed research programs. In 2010, Komen Greater NYC is awarding close to \$4.3 million in grants — \$3.1 million supports 37 community-based organizations and three hospitals that provide breast health programs to underserved women and more than \$1.2 million underwrites peer-reviewed research projects at the national level. For more information, please visit www.komennyc.org, or call 212-293-CURE.

ABOUT DISTINGUISHED CONCERTS INTERNATIONAL - NEW YORK (DCINY)

Founded by Iris Derke (General Director) and Jonathan Griffith (Artistic Director and Principal Conductor) Distinguished Concerts International is driven by passion, innovative vision, a total belief in its artists, and unwavering commitment to bringing forth unforgettable audience experiences. With over 20 combined years of experience, DCINY is a creative producing entity with unmatched integrity that is a talent incubator, a star-maker, and a presenter of broadly accessible, world-class musical entertainment. For more information about Distinguished Concerts International in New York and upcoming DCINY musical events around the world, please visit: www.dcinyc.org, or call toll free: 1-877-MYDCINY.

* *CHORAL MUSIC POPULARITY STATISTICS: CHORUS AMERICA, STUDY*