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For Immediate Release

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**HARTFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA RETURNS TO THE WARNER THEATRE
WITH MOZART'S CLARINET CONCERTO AND OVERTURE TO "THE MAGIC
FLUTE" IN JUNE!**

TORRINGTON, Conn. 68 Main St. -- The Warner Theatre will host the **Hartford Symphony Orchestra's** return to Litchfield County for a special one night only concert featuring Mozart's **Overture to "The Magic Flute"** and Mozart's famed **Clarinet Concerto**. The Orchestra will also perform Mozart's **Symphony No. 38, "Prague."** The concert will take place on **Friday, June 1 at 8:00PM.**

Conducted by Hartford Symphony Orchestra's Music Director **Edward Cumming** and featuring clarinetist Curt Blood, the concert will mark the third year the Warner Theatre has hosted the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, which is regarded as one of America's leading regional orchestras. The concert is part of the Theatre's 2006-2007 Classical series which included the April performance of Puccini's **MADAME BUTTERFLY.**

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra believes passionately in the performance of live symphonic music and its value in the community. To that end, the mission of the HSO is to perform live orchestral music of the highest quality for ever-expanding audiences, and to increase through its educational programs the understanding and enjoyment of that music but residents in Connecticut.

Tickets are **\$39.50, \$29.50, and \$19.50.** Special **Bring-A-Kid** Tickets are **\$10.00** with purchase of an adult ticket. In an effort to expand the theatre experience, the Warner offers a pre-show **Cocktail Hour.** The event allows patrons access to the Theatre's lobby an hour early to enjoy selected drink promotions!

For information, please call or visit the Warner Theatre Box Office at (860) 489-7180 or purchase tickets online at warnertheatre.org

This event is proudly sponsored by Litchfield Bancorp with additional support from the Ensworth Charitable Foundation.

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ABOUT THE MUSIC

Notes on the Program by DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

Overture to *Die Zauberflöte* (“*The Magic Flute*”), K. 620

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(Born January 27, 1756 in Salzburg;
died December 5, 1791 in Vienna)

Early in 1791, Mozart was deeply in debt, troubled by the disinclination of the Viennese public to embrace his recent music and concert appearances, and suffering seriously from the kidney failure that would take his life before the year was out, so when Emanuel Schikaneder, a slightly shady actor and theater entrepreneur, suggested in May that they collaborate on a new opera that was sure to be a hit, the composer jumped at the chance. The Viennese public was especially fond at that time of comic pieces with Oriental or fantastic settings, and Schikaneder had achieved a fine success soon after he had arrived in town in 1789 with the “magic opera” *Oberon* by composer Paul Wranitzky and librettist Carl Ludwig Giesecke. For a sequel he proposed to write the libretto for a *Singspiel* called *Die Zauberflöte* — *The Magic Flute* — a comic musical with spoken dialogue based on Liebeskind’s story *Lulu* from Wieland’s 1786 collection of Oriental fairy-tales called *Dschinnistan*, for which Mozart would provide the music.

Mozart threw himself into composing the music for *The Magic Flute* in May and June. Most of the score was completed by July, when he received two more commissions — one for an *opera seria* on Metastasio’s old text, *La Clemenza di Tito*, to commemorate the coronation in Prague of the new Emperor, Leopold II, as King of Bohemia; the other, a mysterious order for a Requiem Mass, the work that was to cast such an ominous pall over Mozart’s last months. As *Tito* was needed for performance on September 6th, he had to begin the music immediately, and was still composing the score when he and Constanze left for Prague in mid-August, only three weeks after she had given birth to Franz Xaver. When they returned to Vienna a month later, Mozart began the final preparations for the premiere of *The Magic Flute*, which included composing the Overture, always the last part of his operas to be written. The full score was finished on September 28th, and the premiere given successfully on September 30th.

The Overture to *The Magic Flute* is one of the supreme orchestral works of the 18th century. Rich in sonority, concise in construction, profligate in melodic invention and masterful in harmonic surety, it balances the seemingly polar opposites of the opera — profundity and comedy — with surpassing ease and conviction. The slow introduction opens with the triple chords associated with the solemn ceremonies of the priests, the Overture’s only thematic borrowing from the opera. The *Allegro* is built on a tune of *opera buffa* jocularly treated, most remarkably, as a fugue. The complementary theme, initiated by the flute, is characterized by its sensuous ascending chromatic scales. The balance of the Overture follows the traditional sonata form, with the triple chords of the priests reiterated to mark the beginning of the development section.

Clarinet Concerto in A major, K. 622 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart harbored a special fondness for the graceful agility, liquid tone and ensemble amiability of the clarinet from the time that he first heard the instrument as a young boy during his tours, and he later wrote for it whenever it was available. During his years in Vienna, he was especially impressed by the technical accomplishment and expressive playing of the clarinetist in the imperial court orchestra, Anton Stadler. Stadler was a Freemason, and, when Mozart joined the fraternity, the two musicians became close friends. Those last years of Mozart's life were ones of stifling poverty, ill health and family problems that often forced him to go begging for loans from others, especially another fellow Mason, Michael Puchberg, who earned many laudatory footnotes in the closing pages of the composer's biography for his generosity. It says much about Mozart's kindness and sensitivity that he, in turn, loaned Stadler money when he could, and even once gave him two gold watches to pawn when there was no cash at hand. The final accounting of Mozart's estate after his death showed that Stadler owed him some 500 florins — several thousand dollars at today's rate. Stadler also came out of the friendship with far more than just some of Mozart's silver. In addition to the flawless Clarinet Concerto, Mozart wrote for him the Clarinet Quintet (K. 581), the Trio for Piano, Clarinet and Viola (K. 498), the clarinet and basset horn parts in the vocal trios, and the clarinet solos in the opera *La Clemenza di Tito*. The Clarinet Concerto started as another piece apparently intended for Stadler — a work for basset horn (alto clarinet), strings, two flutes and two horns that was sketched as early as 1789. When Stadler conferred with Mozart about the solos in *Tito*, it seems that he encouraged him to revise the sketch into a full concerto for his instrument.

The Clarinet Concerto was the next-to-last work that Mozart completed, followed before his untimely death in December 1791 by only the *Masonic Cantata* (K. 623) and the unfinished *Requiem*. The Concerto's beauty, grace and deep emotion mark it as one of his supreme masterpieces. Only the greatest creator could have balanced music of such limpid, effortless formal perfection with the incipient Romantic sensibility pulsing beneath the work's surface, a quality that the noted German musicologist Friedrich Blume wrote imparts "the impression of consummate equipoise and proportion." The first movement is an exquisitely sculpted sonata-concerto form throughout which the dark, sensuous sound of the clarinet is carefully integrated into the orchestral texture. The simplicity of the theme and structure of the following *Adagio* belie the emotional depth of its music. The rondo-finale not only maintains the spirit of gaiety associated with that form, but also brings to it an entire world of feelings, by turns cheerful and somber, effusive and introverted. This wonderful Concerto embodies the words of the renowned pianist and Mozart specialist Lili Kraus, who stated in a *New York Times* interview of several years ago: "There is no feeling — human or cosmic — no depth, no height the human spirit can reach that is not contained in Mozart's music."

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About Edward Cumming, Music Director

Edward Cumming celebrates his fifth season as the ninth Music Director of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra in 2006-2007. His appointment was announced in 2001, culminating a two-year search process involving nearly 300 applicants from around the world.

Mr. Cumming was appointed Resident Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 1997. In that role, he worked closely with Music Director Mariss Jansons, accompanying the orchestra on tour and collaborating on its syndicated radio broadcasts. He conducted the PSO in its highly regarded concerts for young people at Heinz Hall and in outreach concerts throughout Western Pennsylvania, and also performed on the Orchestra's Pops series.

As Resident Conductor of the Florida Orchestra from 1989 to 1993, he garnered audience and critical acclaim for his "Champagne" and "Coffee" concerts, two series of light classics for young adults and senior citizens. In 1991, he conducted the Florida Orchestra in Stephen Montague's "From the White Edge of Phrygia" and performed with such notable guest artists as Sylvia McNair, Christopher Parkening, Gary Graffman, Robert McDuffie, and the late Malcolm Frager. In 1991, Mr. Cumming conducted a recording of the "Star Spangled Banner" with Whitney Houston and the Florida Orchestra for Super Bowl XXV. In 1996, he was appointed Artistic Director of the Flagstaff Festival of the Arts, and in 1997, he was appointed Music Director of the nationally acclaimed Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra, one of five orchestras invited to the National Youth Orchestra Festival in 1998. He returned with the PYSO to perform at this biennial event in 2002.

As founding Music Director (1993-96) of the Pacific Symphony Institute, Mr. Cumming gave world premieres of Hector Armienta's "Caras del Sol" and Khoa Van Le's "Symphonic Ode to Vietnam, 1975". In November 1999, he conducted the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra in the world premiere performance of Tamar Diesendruck's "Every Which Wave". During his Pittsburgh tenure he also conducted regional premieres of Elliott Carter's Symphony of Three Orchestras and Hans Werner Henze's "Undine". Premieres with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra include the October 2004 New England premiere of Roberto Sierra's Concerto for Saxophones, the January 2005-HSO commissioned world premiere of Valerie Coleman's "The Painted Lady", the March 2005 world premiere of Richard Cumming's "Aspects of Hippolytus" and the November 2005 HSO-commissioned world premiere of Michael Gatonska's "Wandering the Moon Nursery". Mr. Cumming was the recipient of the 2003 ASCAP award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music.

As a guest conductor, Mr. Cumming has led many prominent orchestras across the United States, among them the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Rochester Philharmonic, Oregon Symphony, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, Maryland Symphony, San Antonio Symphony, and Memphis Symphony Orchestra. His credits abroad include La Orquesta Ciudad de Granada (Spain), the South Bohemian State Orchestra in the Czech Republic, the Ulster Orchestra in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where he made his United Kingdom debut in 2000, and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Cumming received Master of Musical Arts and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in orchestral conducting from Yale University, where he was a student of Otto-Werner Mueller. He studied with Michael Tilson Thomas at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute, and has performed in master classes directed by Riccardo Muti, Pierre Boulez, and the late Maurice Abravanel. As an undergraduate at the University of California at Berkeley, he was awarded the prestigious Eisner Prize for Creative Achievement in the Arts.

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About the Warner Theatre

Built by Warner Brothers Studios and opened in 1931 as a movie palace, the Warner Theatre was described then as "Connecticut's Most Beautiful Theatre." Damaged extensively in a flood, the Warner was slated for demolition in the early 1980s until the non-profit Northwest Connecticut Association for the Arts (NCAA) was founded and purchased the theatre. The Warner reopened as a performing arts center in 1983, and restoration of the lobbies and auditorium was completed in November 2002. Today, the Warner is in operation year-round with more than 140 performances and some 92,000 patrons passing through its doors each season. NCAA's mission is to preserve the Warner Theatre as an historic landmark, enhance its reputation as a center of artistic excellence and a focal point of community involvement, and satisfy the diverse cultural needs of the region. To learn more about the Warner Theatre, visit our website: www.warnertheatre.org.

