



Press Contact:
Maria Glymph
713.447.8317
mariaglymph@sbcglobal.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

River Oaks Chamber Orchestra Performs Second Concert without a Conductor

Brian Lewis Leads as Concertmaster

Houston, January 8, 2008 – In a true display of musical collaboration, the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (ROCO) will perform its second concert without a conductor on Saturday, February 2. Brian Lewis, ROCO's principal violinist and concertmaster, will lead the orchestra in a program comprised of Enescu, Haydn, and Prokofiev. The concert will be held at 5 p.m. at St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, and will be repeated on Sunday, February 3 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Philip Presbyterian Church.

"This will be chamber music in its finest sense," said Brian Lewis. "A conductorless ensemble encourages the players to interact with each other, allowing the flow of music to be generated by the musicians themselves, and the concertmaster 'leads' by giving cues and staying connected with the other sections of the orchestra."

One of the most versatile violinists on the current scene, Brian Lewis is an exceptionally gifted and charismatic artist. His acclaimed performances include concerto debuts in both New York's Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher Hall, as well as performances with the Berlin (Germany), Louisiana, Kansas City, Syracuse, Odense (Denmark), Wichita, Hartford, Eugene, Spokane, and American Symphony orchestras, among others. His extensive solo recitals include performances on five continents in such countries as Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, the French West Indies, Taiwan, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Japan, as well as cities across the United States.

An advocate for music education in the schools, Mr. Lewis frequently presents concerts, workshops, and master classes for Young Audiences of Houston. Named National Artist of the Year in 1998 by Young Audiences, Inc., he was also presented the 2003 Fredell Lack Award by YAH for having performed for more than 165,000 young people in the Houston area over the past eight years. Mr. Lewis is on faculty at the University of Texas at Austin School of Music where he is the David and Mary Winton Green Chair Fellow in String Performance and Pedagogy. In 2005-06, Mr. Lewis received both the Texas Exes Teaching Award and the School of Music Teaching Excellence Award. He is also the Artistic Director of the Starling-DeLay Symposium on Violin Studies at The Juilliard School in New York City, and concertmaster of the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra in Houston. At UT, Mr. Lewis is also the Artistic Director of the Starling Distinguished Violinist Series. He has recorded six CDs, most recently for Delos as soloist with the London Symphony Orchestra of music by Leonard Bernstein and Hollywood composer Michael McLean.

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Concert specifics are:

- Saturday, February 2, 2008 – 5 p.m., St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, Houston
- Sunday, February 3, 2008 – 6:30 p.m., St. Philip Presbyterian Church, Houston
- Conductorless
- The program: Enescu, *Wind Decet*; Haydn, *Sinfonia Concertante*; Prokofiev, *Classical Symphony*
- Tickets are \$25 per concert. Student tickets are \$10.
- Tickets are available at www.rocohouston.org or by contacting (713) 665-2700.
- ROCO-rooters childcare cost is \$20 for the first child and \$15 per additional child. Advanced reservations with payment are required as spaces fill up quickly. ROCO-rooters is only available at St. John the Divine.

About the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra

Now in its third season, the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (ROCO) personalizes the orchestral experience by inviting the audience into the musician's world. Forty national and international professional musicians perform interactive concerts of exciting music, old and new. ROCO finds its strength in the unique contributions of each musician and takes a collaborative approach to musical programming. ROCO concerts include musical surprises, and the orchestra raffles four seats for one musical piece so that audience members can sit among the performers. Opening the experience to all, ROCO also offers a fun-to-read, magazine-style programs and the ROCO-rooters music education/childcare program for kids 10 and under that runs in tandem with and after each concert.

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