



Press Contact:
Maria Glymph
713.447.8317
mariaglymph@sbcglobal.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**River Oaks Chamber Orchestra Opens Season with
Internationally-Renown Guest Conductor Lavard Skou Larsen**

Houston, October 15, 2007 – River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (ROCO) is pleased to present world-renown conductor Lavard Skou Larsen for its 2007-2008 season opening concert on Saturday, November 10 at 5 p.m. at St. John the Divine Episcopal Church. The program features Kristin Wolfe Jensen, ROCO's principal bassoonist playing her favorite, the Vivaldi Concert for Bassoon, while Skou Larsen will bring his Brazilian background and his Salzburg experiences to Mozart's Paris Symphony. The program also includes Villa Lobos' Bacchiana Number 9 and a few unannounced pieces.

"At ROCO, we always invite the conductor and soloist to bring forward the music for which they are most passionate," said Alecia Lawyer, ROCO founder and principal oboist. "Our audience will be delighted as our opening concert highlights the contrast between Lavard's Brazilian heritage and his Austrian expertise and reveals Kristin's enthusiasm for Vivaldi."

Lavard Skou Larsen was born in Brazil and received his first violin lessons at the age of four. He was admitted to the Academy of Music and Performing Arts, Mozarteum, in Salzburg at age 14. He has won prizes both as a soloist and as a chamber musician, and he has been invited to perform with leading symphony and chamber orchestras around the globe. Skou Larsen has taught violin at the Mozarteum/Salzburg since 1991, the same year he founded the Salzburg Chamber Soloists. Since 2004, he has conducted the Deutsche Kammerakademie Neuss am Rhein.

Kristin Wolfe Jensen, ROCO's principal bassoonist, will perform Vivaldi's Bassoon Concerto, parts of which have been printed only through her work to play them with string orchestra. Jensen has been the bassoon professor at the University of Texas at Austin since 1995, and is also on the faculty of the International Festival Institute at Round Top and the Eastern Music Festival, where she is Principal Bassoonist of the Eastern Philharmonic.

Jeff and Sarah McParland have recently underwritten Jensen's chair for the season in honor of Angeleen Marie McParland.

The 40-member orchestra of ROCO, now in its third season, has quickly gained a reputation for broadening the musical experience of its audiences. At each concert, four orchestra chairs are raffled to audience members desiring to sit among the musicians for one piece to experience the music and concert from the musician's perspective. During and after each performance, ROCO musicians and conductors interact with audience, discussing the music, the composers' lives and history, and the instruments. They also share personal musical moments and experiences that ROCO refers to as Field Notes.

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ROCO-rooters, a music education and childcare program for kids from two months to 10 years, is also available during the 5 p.m. concert and extends afterward until 9:30 p.m. with pizza and movies, allowing parents an evening out.

Concert specifics are:

- Saturday, November 10, 2007 – 5 p.m., St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, Houston
- Lavard Skou Larsen, conductor
- Kristin Wolfe Jensen, Bassoon soloist
- The program: Vivaldi's Concert for Bassoon, Villa Lobos' Bacchiana Number 9, and Mozart's Paris Symphony
- Tickets are \$25 per concert and \$75 for subscriptions to the three-concert season. 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.

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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