

June 12, 2008

For Immediate Release

Contact: Russell Jones
Interim Vice President of Communications
League of American Orchestras
646-822-4075

**LEAGUE OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS AND MEET THE COMPOSER
ANNOUNCE THE SECOND ROUND OF
FORD MADE IN AMERICA,
THE LARGEST ORCHESTRAL CO-COMMISSIONING PROGRAM IN U.S.
HISTORY, FEATURING A CONSORTIUM
OF 58 AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS**

**FORD MOTOR COMPANY FUND SUPPORTS
FORD MADE IN AMERICA,
WHICH BRINGS NEW MUSIC TO
58 COMMUNITIES IN ALL 50 STATES**

**Joseph Schwantner is the Composer for
Round Two of Ford Made in America;
World Premiere of His New Work *Chasing Light...* is Scheduled for
September 20 and 21 by the Reno Chamber Orchestra (Nevada),
Followed by Performances in Communities Nationwide Throughout the
2008-2009 and 2009-2010 Seasons**

New York, NY, June 12, 2008 - The League of American Orchestras and Meet The Composer are proud to announce the second round of the **Ford Made in America** commissioning project, made possible by a generous grant from Ford Motor Company Fund, the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company.

Fifty-eight orchestras, including at least one in each of the 50 United States, have jointly commissioned a new work by Pulitzer Prize-winning American

NEWS

composer Joseph Schwantner. The composer's new work, *Chasing Light...*, will be given its world premiere performances by the Reno Chamber Orchestra (Nevada) on September 20 and 21, 2008. *Chasing Light...* will then be heard by audiences nationwide when orchestras in all 50 states perform the work during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 concert seasons. The **Ford Made in America** program offers an unparalleled opportunity for ensembles in smaller communities to premiere a new work by an established American composer of national repute, and brings music by a living composer to audiences nationwide. Major support for the program is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional funding from The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts, and The Amphion Foundation.

Launched in 2005, **Ford Made in America** is the largest orchestral commissioning consortium in the country's history. The program's inaugural composition, Joan Tower's *Made in America*, received rave reviews from critics and was performed over 80 times throughout the 50 states during the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 seasons. Widely acclaimed, *Made in America* went on to win three prestigious Grammy Awards: the piece was recognized as Best Classical Composition, and the Nashville Symphony won Grammy Awards for its recording of *Made in America*, led by Music Advisor Leonard Slatkin, in the categories of Best Classical Album and Best Orchestral Performance.

The Consortium

For orchestras with smaller budgets, commissioning and presenting a major new work by a nationally recognized composer can be difficult, due to budget constraints and limited staff resources. The collaborative nature of **Ford Made in America** provides the participating orchestras the opportunity to pool resources in a vital national network, to achieve together what no one of them could afford to do individually in their own community.

The initial idea for **Ford Made in America** was conceived in 2001 by a steering committee of smaller-budget orchestra leaders: Robert Rosoff, executive director, Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra (New York); Anthony LaGruth, music director, Garden State Philharmonic (New Jersey); and Ryan



Fleur, former executive director, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra (Massachusetts) (now executive director of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra).

The Partnership

As the grassroots project grew, the League of American Orchestras and Meet The Composer became involved to provide infrastructure and administrative support.

League of American Orchestras President and CEO **Henry Fogel** stated, “The success of Ford Made in America validates what the orchestral field and its many supporters have long believed – orchestras are an integral and invaluable part of each and every community. By forming this consortium, the participating orchestras have connected not only the people in their own cities and towns, but in 58 communities across the country. Through the extraordinary support of Ford Motor Company Fund, the National Endowment of the Arts and many other supporters, Ford Made in America has demonstrated the power orchestras have to bring people together and transform lives through the creativity vested in composers like Joseph Schwantner.”

Meet The Composer President **Ed Harsh** added, “Ford Made in America brilliantly demonstrates one of Meet The Composer’s core beliefs: that the presence of a living composer can galvanize an audience’s experience of new music. We are sincerely grateful to the Ford Motor Company Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, and other funders for making it possible to engage Joseph Schwantner’s powerful music with audiences across the country. We are confident that this experience will energize the participating orchestras and communities to forge ever deeper connections with the creators in their midst.”

“Ford Motor Company Fund is proud to continue our partnership with orchestras across the country through Ford Made in America,” said **Jim Vella**, President of Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services. “This project will further Ford’s commitment to bringing diverse audiences

together as participants in all 50 states listen to Joseph Schwantner's composition."

The Composer

Born in Chicago in 1943, Joseph Schwantner received his musical and academic training at the Chicago Conservatory and Northwestern University. He also served on the faculties of The Juilliard School, Eastman School of Music, and the Yale School of Music.

Schwantner's compositional career has been marked by numerous distinctions and awards. His early accolades include three BMI Student Composer Awards, the Bearn Prize, a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, and many other awards, grants and fellowships. In 1979 his orchestral composition *Aftertones of Infinity* won the Pulitzer Prize. In 1985 his life and music were the focus of a television documentary entitled *Soundings*, produced by WGBH in Boston for national broadcast. That same year his work, *Magabunda "Four Poems of Agueda Pizarro,"* recorded on Nonesuch Records by the St. Louis Symphony, was nominated for a 1985 Grammy Award in the category "Best New Classical Composition," and his *A Sudden Rainbow*, also recorded on Nonesuch by the St. Louis Symphony, received a 1987 Grammy nomination for "Best Classical Composition." Schwantner is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Schwantner's *Percussion Concerto*, among the most often performed of contemporary concert works, was commissioned for the 150th anniversary season of the New York Philharmonic. He has also been commissioned by numerous other leading orchestras and organizations including the National Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, among many others.

His *Percussion Concerto* has garnered over one hundred performances since its 1995 premiere and is one of the most performed concert works of the past decade. His music is noted for its deft implementation of luminous color and fluctuating rhythms in a dramatic and unique style, heard in such signature works as the *Percussion Concerto*, *New Morning for the World*, and *Magabunda*, among others. Schwantner's recent work, *Morning's Embrace*,

was commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra and premiered at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC on February 23, 2006.

Other recent projects for the composer include the world premiere by Eighth Blackbird in October 2006 of *Rhiannon's Blackbirds*, which the group commissioned and included on their nine-month United States tour during the 2006-2007 season. Schwantner composed a new flute quartet for the 25th anniversary season of Flute Force in 2007, and, further on, he will write a new concerto for three percussionists and orchestra as well as a concerto for oboe, flute, bassoon, and string orchestra.

Criteria for the new name included several imperatives: that the new name be simple and quickly understood; that it further the mission of the organization and its strategic plan; that it reinforce basic attributes of the League's function, breadth, and national scope; that it connote more of a leadership role (as opposed to a "trade organization"); that it help avoid confusion with similarly-named orchestras; and that it have immediate relevancy to the orchestra field.

The Work

Chasing Light... is based on and inspired by a poem written by Joseph Schwantner. Explaining his sources, Schwantner comments:

"Chasing Light... draws its spirit, energy and inspiration from the celebration of vibrant colors and light that penetrate the morning mist as it wafts through the trees in the high New England hills. Like a delicate dance, those images intersected with a brief original poem that helped fire my musical imagination".

The Performances

The world premiere of *Chasing Light...* will be performed by the Reno Chamber Orchestra with Theodore Kuchar, music director, on September 20, 2008 at 8:00 pm and September 21, 2008 at 2:00 pm at the Nightingale Concert Hall in Reno, Nevada.



The subsequent performances will take place throughout the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 concert seasons. (A complete list of participating orchestras is attached.)

Tool Kit and Website

Ford Made in America is more than just a performance of one piece. Each participating orchestra is also equipped with a collection of resources and multimedia tools—a “tool kit”—which provides them with information and strategies for successful education and community engagement, promotion, and performance-related activities. For example, the education section, which is aligned with national music education standards, centers around two units of study: “Build Your Own Instrument,” which will involve identifying found and recycled materials to construct homemade musical instruments, and “Using Poetry as Inspiration,” which uses Joseph Schwantner’s poem as a platform for learners to create music specifically tied to the four movements of *Chasing Light*...

In addition, the program features a highly interactive website, www.fordmadeinamerica.org, which offers an overview of the program and other comprehensive resources and information designed so that the general public can understand and engage with the program.

League of American Orchestras

Founded in 1942, and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League of American Orchestras leads, encourages, and supports America’s orchestras while communicating to the public the value and importance of orchestras and the music they perform. Its vision is to be a transformative and unifying force for the orchestra field — a catalyst for understanding and innovation, a place for conversations that matter, and a champion for orchestras. The League provides a wealth of services, meaningful information, learning and leadership opportunities, and grass-roots advocacy to its diverse membership, which encompasses nearly 1,000 member symphony, chamber, youth, and collegiate orchestras of all sizes, and links a national network of thousands of instrumentalists, conductors, managers, board members, volunteers, staff members, and business partners. Visit www.americanorchestras.org to learn more.

Meet The Composer

Meet The Composer, founded in 1974, is a national organization serving composers of every kind of music. Its mission is to increase opportunities for composers by fostering the creation, performance, dissemination and appreciation of their music. Support from Meet The Composer has resulted in the creation of more than 1,400 new works, representing the full spectrum of contemporary American culture. Through a range of commissioning, residency, education, and audience interaction programs, Meet The Composer has revolutionized the environment for composers in this country, bringing live audiences totaling over 45 million individuals more closely in contact with the creators in their midst. Find out more at www.meetthecomposer.org.

Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services

Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services is committed to creating opportunities that promote corporate citizenship, philanthropy, volunteerism and cultural diversity for those who live in the communities where Ford does business. Established in 1949 and made possible by Ford Motor Company, Ford Motor Company Fund supports initiatives and institutions that foster innovative education, auto-related safety, and American heritage and legacy. National programs include Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies, which provides high school students with academically rigorous 21st century learning experiences, and Driving Skills for Life, a teen-focused auto safety initiative. The Ford Volunteer Corps, established in 2005, continues Ford's legacy of caring worldwide. Through the Volunteer Corps, salaried employees, union members, retirees and their families participate in a wide range of volunteer projects in their communities. For more information on programs made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services, visit www.ford.com.

###

Ford Made in America

Ford Made in America, a partnership program of the League of American Orchestras and Meet The Composer, is the largest-ever orchestral consortium commission program. It involves nearly 60 orchestras—at least one from each of the 50 states. Joseph Schwantner, the consortium's second composer, has written *Chasing Light...*, which will receive its world premiere on September 20-21, 2008, with the Reno Chamber Orchestra, Theodore Kuchar, music director. Subsequent consortium performances occur throughout the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 seasons.

Originally conceived by a group of small-budget orchestra leaders, the program grew out of a desire to leverage their combined resources to commission a new work by a nationally renowned composer. Consortium members will offer a range of education and community engagement activities in connection with their performances of *Chasing Light...*, fulfilling one of Ford Motor Company Fund's missions of reaching school children.

Participating Orchestras

Augusta Symphony Orchestra (GA)
Baton Rouge Symphony (LA)
Bay-Atlantic Symphony (NJ)
Santa Barbara Symphony Orchestra (CA)
Billings Symphony Orchestra (MT)
Black Hills Symphony Orchestra (SD)
Brown University Orchestra (RI)
Carmel Symphony Orchestra (IN)
Central Ohio Symphony (OH)
Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra (WI)
Civic Orchestra of Tucson (AZ)
Clinton Symphony Orchestra (IA)
Coeur d'Alene Symphony Orchestra (ID)

League of American Orchestras

Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra (MN)
Evanston Symphony Orchestra (IL)
Fairbanks Symphony (AK)
Florence Symphony Orchestra (SC)
Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra (NY)
Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra (CO)
Greater Grand Forks Symphony Orchestra (ND)
Greenwich Village Orchestra (NY)
Huntington Symphony Orchestra (WV)
Huntsville Symphony Orchestra (AL)
Irving Symphony (TX)
Juneau Symphony (AK)
Honolulu Symphony Orchestra (HI)
Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra (NM)
Louisville Youth Orchestra (KY)
McLean Orchestra (VA)
Miami Symphony Orchestra (FL)
Nashua Symphony Orchestra (NH)
New Britain Symphony Orchestra (CT)
New Philharmonia Orchestra (MA)
Oklahoma Youth Orchestra (OK)
Omaha Area Youth Orchestras (NE)
Orchestra Nashville (TN)
Paducah Symphony Orchestra (KY)
Peabody Institute (MD)
Pine Bluff Symphony Orchestra (AR)
Plymouth Symphony Orchestra (MI)
Portland State University (OR)
Portland Symphony Orchestra (ME)
Reno Chamber Orchestra (NV)
Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra (CA)
Saint Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra (MO)
Salisbury Symphony Orchestra (NC)
San Angelo Symphony (TX)
Southwest Symphony Orchestra (UT)
Stow Symphony Orchestra (OH)

League of American Orchestras

Tupelo Symphony Orchestra (MS)
University of Delaware Symphony Orchestra (DE)
University of Wyoming Symphony Orchestra (WY)
Vermont Symphony Orchestra (VT)
Waukesha Symphony Orchestra (WI)
Whatcom Symphony Orchestra (WA)
Williamsport Symphony Orchestra (PA)
York Symphony Orchestra (PA)
Youth Symphony of Kansas City (KS)

Ford Made in America is made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund,
the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company.

Major support is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts,
with additional funding from
The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts,
and The Amphion Foundation.