



PRESS RELEASE

1605 HOWARD STREET * OMAHA, NE 68102 * 402.342.3836 * OMAHASYMPHONY.ORG

CONTACT: Sarah Brownlee, Public Relations
402.342.3836 x140 cell: 402.639.6998

sbrownlee@omahasymphony.org

Omaha Symphony wins ASCAP's Leonard Bernstein Award for Educational Programming

Omaha, NE— The Omaha Symphony is thrilled to be the recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Award for Education Programming, given by the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP). Named after the celebrated late conductor, this national honor is awarded to an orchestra that integrates contemporary music into its educational programming, and whose offerings are “creative, relevant, and based on the best practices of music education.”

The official award announcement was made at the League of American Orchestras' National Conference in Atlanta on Friday, June 18. Jennifer Boomgaarden, Vice-President of Education and Community Partnerships, was on hand to accept a check for \$3,000 and a plaque recognizing the orchestra's outstanding achievement.

“It is a thrill to accept such a prestigious and special award from ASCAP. Celebrating contemporary music is not only vital to the future of our organization, but it is key to keeping our education efforts fresh and relevant,” said Boomgaarden.

In the 2009/10 season, the Omaha Symphony's award-winning education programming brought new music to the ears of both students and seasoned listeners. In February, the

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Concerts for Youth initiative, which introduces 4th-6th grade students to music's relationship to pop culture, featured a newly commissioned work by composer Katrina Wreede titled *Escapade for Orchestra and Candy Wrappers* and Mason Bates's *Warehouse Medicine* for orchestra and laptop computer. March's Communities LinkUP!, a collaboration with Carnegie Hall, included a piece commissioned by composer Thomas Cabaniss. Also in March, adult audiences experienced the world premiere of Michael Daugherty's *Trail of Tears* flute concerto.

Contemporary music also takes center stage through the Omaha Symphony's New Music and Conductor's Symposiums. Through the training and empowering of young composers and conductors, these education events work to ensure that quality new music will be recognized and available for years to come. The recent New Music Symposium culminated in a public concert that boasted five world premieres and the performance of master composer Joseph Schwantner's *Chasing Light*.

"Introducing audiences—young and old—to exciting music by today's most talented composers has always been a priority at the Omaha Symphony, and it's very humbling to see this focus be rewarded on a national level," said Boomgaarden.

The Omaha Symphony is a non-profit organization that presents more than 200 live orchestral performances from September through June. In addition to MasterWorks, Symphony Pops, Symphony Rocks, Chamber, Sights and Sounds, and Family series concerts, the orchestra tours both Nebraska and Iowa providing education and community engagement concerts and special events. For tickets or information regarding the Omaha Symphony, call 402.342.3560 or visit www.omahasymphony.org.

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