

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Masterworks Choral Ensemble Presents “Autumn: Celtic Connections” to Open 28th Season

Olympia – 09/12/2008 – Masterworks Choral Ensemble opens its 28th season with fiddles and flutes, dancing and drums. Masterworks’ colorful “Autumn: Celtic Connections” concert on October 11th begins at 7:30pm at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts. The choir presents a blend of traditional and modern Celtic music, with beautiful ballads and driving rhythms. The program includes two songs from *Riverdance*, “Home and the Heartland” and “Cloudsong,” plus a new arrangement of Enya’s “Orinoco Flow.” Celtic music lovers will enjoy familiar tunes like “Danny Boy,” “A Traditional Irish Blessing,” and “The Galway Piper.”

Masterworks welcomes special guests and soloists for this concert, featuring international award-winning Irish stepdancers, Kelly and Connor Nagan, and members of Olympia’s Comerford School of Irish Dance. Masterworks is also pleased to share the stage with Fiddlehead, one of the Northwest’s finest Celtic bands. Fiddlehead features Anthea Lawrence on fiddle and vocals, Audra Poor on uilleann pipes, flute and whistle, and Lawson Dumbeck on guitar, banjo and bodhran.

Evergreen professor and ethnomusicologist Dr. Sean Williams delivers a preconcert lecture at 7:00pm about the different ethnic styles encompassed by the genre that we call Celtic music. Dr. Williams is a musician and poet who teaches Gaelic and the art of traditional Irish singing known as “sean-nós.”

### Season to Season...Music Makes a Difference

Masterworks has chosen as its theme for 2008-09 “Season to Season...Music Makes a Difference.” Artistic director and conductor Gary Witley describes the theme as having several meanings: “First, from one concert season to the next, we gain strength in the variety of music we perform, and within each concert season the music helps to move us forward through the seasons of the year.” Secondly, for Masterworks “Music Makes a Difference” has significance as the group expands its connections with the community. In 2008-09 Masterworks is using music as a vehicle to support four non-profit organizations: Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County, Community Youth Services’ Haven House, Safeplace, and The Spotlight Foundation. Witley explains, “By shining a spotlight on these groups, Masterworks hopes to increase their visibility, enable them to receive donations at each concert, and share with them a percentage of profits generated by ticket sales. For these organizations and the people they serve, music will make a difference.”

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**Who:** Masterworks Choral Ensemble

**What:** Autumn: Celtic Connections

**When:** Saturday, October 11, 2008, 7:30pm (Pre-concert lecture starts at 7:00pm)

**Where:** Washington Center for the Performing Arts, 512 Washington Street SE, Olympia

**Cost:** \$18 adults, \$11 students