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Masterworks Choral Ensemble Expresses Peace and Reverence in Winter Concert

Olympia – 10/31/2008 – Masterworks Choral Ensemble heralds the season of peace with its winter concert, “Musical Traditions,” Saturday, December 6, at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts. The 85-voice community choir sings songs of hope, peace, love, and reverence in this holiday offering of goodwill through music.

Artistic director and conductor Gary Witley connects this concert with the group’s 2008-09 theme, “Season to Season...Music Makes a Difference,” in which Masterworks uses music to spotlight four local service organizations. Witley explains, “All around us the social safety net is stretched thin. We hope to use music to make a difference in people’s lives by raising compassion, awareness, and support.” As part of this holiday concert, Masterworks highlights the Community Youth Services’ Haven House program which provides safe, temporary housing for youth in crisis.

The first half of the concert features modern sounds for the season, like “Christmas Pipes” and “Kyrie for Our Time” along with ancient hymns like “Psallite” and “Medieval Gloria.” Audience members are invited to sing along with traditional favorites like “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” and “The First Nowell.”

The second half of the concert is devoted to a contemporary Christmas cantata, “The Incarnation” by composer K. Lee Scott. For this work Masterworks is joined by an 8-member ensemble of players from Olympia Symphony Orchestra Brass and Percussion. “The Incarnation” features the fanfare of brass, organ, and timpani, juxtaposed with gentle, unhurried movements. This soaring hymn moves easily from majesty to mystery, and back again.

This Masterworks concert is the perfect way to open your holiday season with family and friends. Throughout the evening the annual Holiday Silent Auction to benefit MCE is happening in the Washington Center’s Black Box theater. Doors open at 6:00pm for the auction, a pre-concert lecture starts at 7:00, and the concert begins at 7:30.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$11 for students; available at the Washington Center Box Office, 512 Washington Street SE, Olympia, or by calling 360-753-8586. Information about Masterworks Choral Ensemble is available online at www.MCE.org.

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Who: Masterworks Choral Ensemble

What: Winter: Musical Traditions

When: Saturday, December 6, 2008, 7:30pm (Pre-concert lecture at 7:00pm)

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

Cost: \$18 adults, \$11 students