

# LANSING SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

TIMOTHY MUFFITT • MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LANSING SYMPHONY TO OPEN 2009/2010 SEASON SEPT. 12 WITH “MASTERWORKS 1: ESPAÑA”

Lansing, MI – August 25, 2009 – The Lansing Symphony Orchestra will present its season premiere - **MasterWorks 1: España** - on **Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 8 p.m.** at the Wharton Center’s Great Hall. The program, conducted by **Music Director Timothy Muffitt**, will take the audience on a musical tour of Spain with works from three composers: Emmanuel Chabrier’s *España*, suites from Manuel de Falla’s ballet *The Three-Cornered Hat*, Falla’s *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (featuring guest pianist **Christopher O’Riley**), and Maurice Ravel’s *Boléro*.

**MasterWorks 1: España**  
**Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm**  
Wharton Center’s Great Hall

**Timothy Muffitt**, Conductor  
**Christopher O’Riley**, Piano

CHABRIER – *España*  
FALLA – Suites from  
*The Three-Cornered Hat*  
FALLA – *Nights in the*  
*Gardens of Spain*  
RAVEL – *Boléro*

Tickets: \$12 - \$45, based on seating  
**(517) 487-5001**  
[www.LansingSymphony.org](http://www.LansingSymphony.org)

Tickets start at \$12, available by calling **(517) 487-5001** or online at **[www.LansingSymphony.org](http://www.LansingSymphony.org)**. Six- and four-concert **MasterWorks Series Subscriptions** are also available, with a 25% discount offered to first-time subscribers. Student discounts available on all concerts and subscriptions.

Emmanuel Chabrier wrote his *España* after a four-month trip to Spain. He set his impressions of the country to music using two dances, the malagueña and the jota. He wrote to conductor Charles Lamoreaux, “my rhythms, my tunes will arouse the whole orchestra to a feverish pitch of excitement.” The work was an instant hit with audiences and remains Chabrier’s most popular piece to date.

Manuel de Falla’s *The Three-Cornered Hat* is a ballet that tells the humorous story of a miller, his lovely young wife and a flirtatious Corregidor (the wearer of the three-cornered hat). The music extracted from the

ballet to make up the orchestral suites combines traditional Spanish dances with orchestral writing that is both colorful and masterful.

Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, featuring legendary pianist Christopher O'Riley, is neither a piano concerto nor a symphony. It is more of a collaboration between orchestra and piano, meant (in the composer's words) "... to evoke places, sensations and sentiments." *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* was written in 1916, and its three movements offer the audience a moving journey through the sights and sounds of Falla's native land.

Last on the night's program will be Maurice Ravel's *Boléro*, known for its intoxicating melody and incessant rhythm (played over and over throughout the entire 13-minute piece on the snare drum). The work begins simply and gradually grows in melodic and orchestral complexity to a wonderful key change and an abrupt ending.

*MasterWorks 1: España is sponsored in part by Plante & Moran. Media Partner: AM Lansing.*

Pianist **Christopher O'Riley** redefines the possibilities of classical music. He takes his unique vision to both traditional classical music venues and symphonic settings, as well as to entirely new audiences in radio, TV, performances halls, universities and even clubs. From early in his career, Mr. O'Riley was honored with many awards at the Leeds, Van Cliburn, Busoni and Montreal competitions, as well as an Avery Fisher Career Grant. He was also a finalist at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 1981. He has appeared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, the Minnesota Orchestra and the symphonies of Pittsburgh, Detroit, Colorado, Atlanta and Baltimore.

As host of the most popular classical music radio show on the air today, NPR's *From the Top*, Mr. O'Riley works and performs with the next generation of brilliant young musicians. An interpreter and arranger of some of the most important contemporary rock music of our time, he is a cherished bridge between musical tastes, genres, media and audiences, fostering the new generation contemporary artist



personality. His recording of Radiohead transcriptions, *True Love Waits* (Sony/Odyssey), received 4 stars from *Rolling Stone* and is as critically acclaimed as it is commercially successful. His latest recordings, *Home to Oblivion: An Elliott Smith Tribute*, released in 2006, and his latest *Second Grace: The Music of Nick Drake*, are all available on iTunes and on his website. Mr. O'Riley studied with Russell Sherman at the New England Conservatory of Music. He splits his time between Los Angeles and rural Ohio. His radio and TV show can be found online at [www.fromthetop.org](http://www.fromthetop.org). His personal website is [www.christopheroriley.com](http://www.christopheroriley.com).

This is **Music Director Timothy Muffitt's** fourth season with the Lansing Symphony. In addition to his role with the LSO, Muffitt is in his 11<sup>th</sup> season as Music Director & Conductor of the Baton Rouge Symphony. In the summer, he also serves as Music Director of the Chautauqua Institution's Music School Festival Orchestra, one of the country's premier orchestral training ensembles. Previously, Muffitt served as the Associate Conductor of the Austin Symphony and as Artistic Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic's Casual Classics Series, for which he was awarded a Certificate of Meritorious Service from the American Federation of Musicians. Muffitt has appeared with leading orchestras throughout the country and is recognized as a strong proponent of community arts education. He also has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, the Long Beach Symphony, Columbus Ohio's Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Virginia Symphony, the Grant Park Music Festival Orchestra in Chicago, and the Symphonies of Houston, Phoenix, Edmonton, Harrisburg, and Spokane. He has worked with many prominent performers, including Renee Fleming, Yo Yo Ma, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Andre Watts, Alicia de Larrocha, Pinchas Zukerman, Van Cliburn, Lynn Harrell, and Itzhak Perlman; and many prominent composers, including John Cage, Joseph Schwantner, Ellen Taffe Zwilich, John Harbison, Joan Tower, and Bernard Rands. Born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Timothy Muffitt studied at the Eastman School of Music, where he earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree.

The Lansing Symphony Orchestra was established in 1929 and is currently celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> season. More than 20,000 people attend LSO concerts each year, and more than 50,000 listeners are able to hear broadcasts of the LSO's performances by NPR affiliate WKAR-FM Radio. The Symphony's highly acclaimed education programs reach 15,000 students in kindergarten through 12th grades in five counties. For more information, visit [www.LansingSymphony.org](http://www.LansingSymphony.org) or find us on Facebook® or Twitter.