

# LANSING SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

TIMOTHY MUFFITT • MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## LANSING SYMPHONY TO PRESENT VIOLINIST GIORA SCHMIDT IN “REFLECTIONS OF ROMANTICISM”

Lansing, MI – March 9, 2010 – The Lansing Symphony Orchestra will present 26-year-old violinist Giora Schmidt in **MasterWorks 5: Reflections of Romanticism** on Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 8pm at Wharton Center’s Great Hall. Music Director Timothy Muffitt will lead the orchestra in Respighi’s *Ancient Airs & Dances* and Schumann’s *Symphony No. 3 “Rhenish,”* and Schmidt will join the orchestra for Barber’s *Concerto for Violin & Orchestra*.

When Timothy Muffitt asked Violinist **Itzhak Perlman** who to watch out for as the next up-and-coming violinist, Perlman had two words: **Giora Schmidt**. In fact, Schmidt has been hailed by critics for recalling “... Perlman in his prime” (*The Miami Herald*). The *Fort-Worth Star Telegram* said “his thick vibrato-rich sound and sure self-possession suggested a player at least a generation older.” Schmidt will perform Samuel Barber’s demanding and virtuosic *Concerto for Violin & Orchestra*, a piece he performed in 2004 with the Israel Philharmonic, Perlman conducting.



Tickets for **MasterWorks 5: Reflections of Romanticism** range from **\$45-\$12**, based on seating, with student prices available. Tickets available by calling **(517) 487-5001** or online at [www.LansingSymphony.org](http://www.LansingSymphony.org).

The concert’s title “Reflections of Romanticism” refers to the musical inspiration of the Romantic era that runs through the night’s program. In the first suite of his *Ancient Airs and Dances*, Ottorini Respighi (1879-1936)

arranged lute pieces from the Renaissance era for a modern Romantic orchestra, resulting in a concert opener that is beautifully elegant and refined. The theme continues with Samuel Barber's (1910-1981) Concerto for Violin & Orchestra, which is a pivotal work in the contemporary American style. Completed in 1940, the concerto looks back on the Romantic era of the past, with a distinct eye on the future. The concert comes back to center at the end, with a symphony written during the Romantic era. Robert Schumann's (1810-1856) "Rhenish" Symphony was inspired by the celebration surrounding his appointment in September 1850 as Music Director to the city of Düsseldorf, Germany, which sits along the Rhine River. The symphony blends joyful, spirited moments with ecclesiastical themes, inspired by his visit to the Cologne cathedral.

*MasterWorks 5: Reflections of Romanticism is sponsored in part by Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Media Partner: TalkLansing.net.*

Hailed by critics for recalling "...Perlman in his prime" (*The Miami Herald*), violinist **Giora Schmidt** is quickly establishing himself as a virtuoso of the grand tradition with a distinctive sound. His performances are illuminated by a richness of color and effortless technique, making him one of the most commanding young artists on the stage today. Mr. Schmidt has appeared with numerous symphony orchestras across North America including Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, Honolulu, New Jersey, Fort Worth, San Diego, Vancouver, Toronto and the Israel Philharmonic. In 2003, he made his Carnegie Hall debut performing the Barber Violin Concerto. In recital, Mr. Schmidt has performed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Ravinia Rising Stars series, San Francisco Performances, the Louvre Museum in Paris and Tokyo's Musashino Cultural Hall. A passionate chamber musician, he has collaborated with eminent musicians including Yefim Bronfman, Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Lynn Harrell, Ralph Kirshbaum and Michael Tree. He is a regular participant at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and frequently performs with pianist Navah Perlman and cellist Zuill Bailey as part of the Perlman/Schmidt/Bailey Trio.

Born in 1983 to professional Israeli musicians, Mr. Schmidt began playing the violin at the age of four. At 13, he met Maestro Itzhak Perlman at the Perlman Music Program and at 16 was invited by Perlman to study under him full-time at the Juilliard Pre College. Mr. Schmidt continued his studies with Perlman at the Juilliard School and also with the late violin pedagogue Dorothy DeLay. Giora Schmidt was the First Prize winner of the Philadelphia Orchestra's Greenfield Competition in 2000, the recipient of a 2003 Avery Fisher Career Grant, and in 2005 won the Classical Recording Foundation's Samuel Sanders Award. His debut recital disc *Vocalise* is currently available on Allegro/Endeavour Classics.

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 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.

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