



MUSIC MOUNTAIN 80TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MUSIC MOUNTAIN ONCE AGAIN SINGS IN THE NORTHWESTERN HILLS OF CONNECTICUT AS THE OLDEST SUMMER CONCERT SERIES IN THE COUNTRY TURNS 80

Governor Declares “Music Mountain Day” in Connecticut as Part of 80th Anniversary Celebration

Falls Village, CT, May 15, 2009 -- Music Mountain, the oldest summer chamber music series in the country, is celebrating 80 seasons this summer with a schedule full of memorable concerts and exciting events to celebrate a multigenerational appreciation of chamber and jazz music across the spectrum. **“Looking to the Future, Honoring the Past”** is this summer’s celebration theme -- reminding us how far we’ve come, and yet, how far we still can go.

The season begins with the 80th Anniversary Opening Benefit and Reception on June 14 featuring *Masterpieces for Piano Trio*, with piano extraordinaire Peter Serkin joined by accomplished soloists, Madalyn Parnas, on violin, and Cicely Parnas, on cello. The group will perform trios by Schubert, Brahms and Beethoven.

“Our first season opened on August 22, 1930 with the Gordon String Quartet playing Beethoven’s Third Razoumovsky Quartet,” said Nicholas Gordon, president of the Music Mountain board and the son of Jacques Gordon, founder of Music Mountain. “We’re so excited to have a Music Mountain favorite, Shanghai String Quartet, recreating that concert on Sunday, September 6th as part of ‘Music Mountain Day’ across the state, and to kick-off the 80th Anniversary Music Mountain Birthday Celebration.”

Connecticut Sate Senator Andrew Roraback has declared September 6th “Music Mountain Day”.

During the 2009 summer season, concertgoers will have the opportunity to attend over 16 chamber music concerts in Gordon Hall, one of the finest chamber music halls in this county; nine Saturday night twilight jazz and chorale concerts; and a number of special events including an opening benefit concert and reception in June, a TriArts theater and music day in June, the 4th Annual Family Festival in August, and in September the 80th Anniversary Birthday Celebration and Concert featuring The Shanghai String Quartet re-creating Music Mountain’s inaugural 1930 concert.

Ensembles appearing this season are *The Arianna String Quartet*, *The St. Petersburg String Quartet*, *The Avalon String Quartet*, *The Amernet String Quartet*, *The Penderecki String Quartet*, *The Cassatt String Quartet*, *The Bergonzi String Quartet*, *The Daedalus String Quartet*, and the *Zimro Project*. “A Piazzolla Weekend” of tangos in early August will feature the *Cuartetto Latinoamericano* with Daniel Binelli, Bandoneon.

This year will also feature the celebratory music of Eastern Europe and ancient Jewish Culture with “An Evening of Klezmer with the Alexander Fiterstein Trio”; a vivid recreation of the authentic Big Band sound with “Swingtime

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MUSIC ONCE AGAIN SINGS IN THE NORTHWESTERN HILLS...cont'd

Big Band"; a Music Mountain debut of the original arrangements of Hal McIntyre and his mentor, Glenn Miller, played by long-time "big band" musicians of "The World Famous Hal McIntyre Orchestra" directed by Don Pentleton; and the great band jump style of the 1940's performed by *Jive by Five*.

Others highlights include *Joyce Lyons* bringing back her magnetic and joyful music from classic Broadway, *Swinging Jazz*, and the *Great American Songbook*; the *The Bergonzi String Quartet's* unique version of Prokofieff's "Peter and the Wolf" performed in Gordon Hall; the guardians of traditional jazz, *The New Black Eagle Jazz Band*, playing their repertory of 1920's classics to Preservation Hall standards; and one of Music Mountain's favorites – traditional New Orleans blues, stomps and spirituals with *The Galvanized Jazz Band* and their exciting guest artists.

Children have always been an important part of the Music Mountain canvas. Once again the internationally acclaimed children's choir, *Chorus Angelicus*, under the artistic direction of Nicholas White will appear. Recognized as one of Connecticut's premier children's choir, *Chorus Angelicus* features 25 singers ages 12 to 17 performing Britten, Faure, Halley, Lauridsen, Mendelssohn, Tartini and White.

"As we embark on our 80th season we're looking to embrace our roots and reach out to all ages of chamber and jazz music goers," said Gordon. "People are talking about chamber and jazz music all over the Internet, in chat rooms, in social media circles, and more. Music Mountain is a part of that history, and is a part of the future, too."

Music Mountain is embracing change this summer, as well. A new dance floor is currently being completed for all those who want to get out of their seats and dance to the popular Saturday night Twilight jazz and choral concerts. A new blog, a Face book page, and a new look to the Music Mountain website—are already in the works. Music Mountain concerts are now available online 52 weeks a year at www.musicmountain.org.

Special ticket prices apply for the **Music Mountain Opening Benefit and Reception**, Sunday, June 14; **The Music Mountain/TriArts Combined Theater & Music** on Saturday, June 27; and the **80th Anniversary Music Mountain Birthday Celebration** on September 6. All other concert tickets are \$30 at the door, \$27 if purchased in advance, and \$17 for students. Children (ages 18 & under) are free. Group rates and pre-season ticket vouchers are available. Discounts apply through participating organizations. For a complete summer schedule and special ticket prices visit www.musicmountain.org or call 860-824-7126.

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****Attached:** Music Mountain Summer Schedule 2009

****Press photos:** Available at www.musicmountain.org/pressroom

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HISTORY & MISSION OF MUSIC MOUNTAIN

Music Mountain was founded in 1930 by Jacques Gordon, Concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and founder of the Gordon String Quartet, one of the leading string quartets of its time. Gordon Hall and the four houses now used for teaching and housing visiting musicians and students were built by Sears, Roebuck during the summer of 1930, and each is named for an instrument in a string quartet. Music Mountain is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Gordon Hall, where the concerts take place, is a resonant wooden concert hall with superb acoustics that produce pure sound without amplification. Gordon Hall seats 350.

Music Mountain's 130 acres are situated in a quiet country setting of lawns, gardens and woods with views of the Litchfield Hills. It is a place where one can enjoy music and nature as one.

From its inception, Music Mountain's mission has been to educate musicians and its audience in the history and repertory of classical music, with concentration on the string quartet. This mission is brought to life by a wide variety of teaching and performances by artists who come to us from all over the world. In the 1990's, this mission was expanded to include jazz and choral music.

It is also fulfilled by bringing together professionals, amateurs, adults and children in seminars and performances. It is further enhanced by developing new audiences through providing free admission to all concerts for anyone 18 years of age or younger, by always keeping ticket prices at the absolute minimum in order to make the experience of live music more widely affordable and, of course, by our radio broadcasts and Internet presence. The Music Mountain Chamber Music broadcasts are made possible through the generous support of Edward R. Hamilton Bookseller Company.

It is also Music Mountain's long-standing policy to make Gordon Hall available to other not-for-profit organizations and community groups to assist them in their fundraising activities.

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PRAISE FOR MUSIC MOUNTAIN:

THE NEW YORK TIMES

"For string quartets, Music Mountain is the place to be."

Anonymous, Well Known-writer

"Jacques Gordon is building what will be the spiritual and physical heart of the chamber music life of this country."

The Shanghai Quartet

"Music Mountain is the best place to go and hear chamber music in New England"

The St. Petersburg String Quartet

Music Mountain is one of the oldest series in the United States with a long tradition and a strong spirit. The nice and quiet atmosphere of New England's summer forest fills everybody with the joy of life. It is always a pleasure to be at Music Mountain. Music making here is so comfortable and so intimate. We are always inspired by the possibilities to have our music heard nationwide. It's such a privilege for us to have been invited back to play at Music Mountain year-after-year for the past 19 years. We are looking forward to celebrating Music Mountain's 100th anniversary, as well.

Galvanized Jazz Band

Congratulations Music Mountain on 80 years of beautiful music, and "thank you" so much for expanding your music to include Jazz, many years ago. I hope the Galvanized Jazz Band is still around for your 100th!"

There is so much to like about Music Mountain. The setting is beautiful, the ride there is spectacular, but most important, the audience really pays attention to every note. For a musician, that is nirvana, and it encourages and motivates us to do our very best.

Collin Walcott

Being a performer at Music Mountain was very much like being a member of the audience – a truly enriching afternoon of clarity and simplicity shared with wonderful people unpretentiously dedicated to the intimate majesty of chamber music.

Abraham Skernick

After thirty years of playing orchestral music winter and summer, the concerts at Music mountain have enabled me to participate exclusively in my first love; chamber music. Quartet rehearsals and concerts used to be a matter

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of hectic activity on precious few free days. Now I can enjoy an entire summer of chamber music as my only professional activity.

Performing the symphonies of Beethoven with a great orchestra and with great conductors was a pleasure and a privilege but, for me, the experience of rehearsing and performing the string quartets of Beethoven with my colleague in the Berkshire Quartet is even more satisfying. The symphonies of Beethoven are great. The quartets are much greater.

Elsa Borg Gillette

It is with great pleasure that I remember and cherish my singing years at Music Mountain. My first appearance in 1940 to my last in 1948 were thrilling and happy experiences. The Gordon String Quartet, with its changes in personnel, the Berkshire Quartet, accompanists, Board members, and responsive audiences, all were a pleasure to be with.

Ambassador Adrien Meisch

Participating in the festival organized by the oldest summer music center of its kind in North America is for me still a highly emotional souvenir. With its pleasing architecture in a beautiful natural setting, Music Mountain creates an atmosphere ideal for any artistic expression, in particular for chamber music; and public alike. The kindness of the people I met, the elegant hospitality I enjoyed and, above all, the splendid cooperation with the members of the superb Berkshire String Quartet made it a most rewarding experience for me. I sincerely hope that there might be one day another occasion to perform in your acoustically perfect Gordon Hall.

Margaret Scherr-Thoss Church

Having been invited to sing at the fourth Wednesday afternoon concert on August 28, 1946, I chose Lieder by Schuman and Brahms. My excellent accompanist was Martha Blake Walcott. The afternoon was an unforgettable occasion for me. Also I met Rico Rossi, who was playing at Music Mountain for the first time and who has remained my friend ever since.

Janos Starker

Music Mountain represents a rare oasis in the musical life of our country. Devoid of commercialism, it serves the love of music by dedicated artists in a surrounding of serenity and peace. May they continue for long.

Franco Gulli & Enrica Cavallo

Music Mountain: the joy of making music in a unique environment, along with marvelous musicians and highly qualified audience. Indeed, the magic Mountain of Music.

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