

Broadway Musicians Reclaim Center Stage in PIT STOP PLAYERS 2010-11 Season Opener

NEW YORK, N.Y., Sept. 8 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – The Pit Stop Players, a thirteen-member instrumental ensemble, will play its opening concert of the season on Monday, September 27 at 7:00 p.m., at New York's Second Presbyterian Church, 6 W. 96th St. @ Central Park West. The eclectic, genre-defying group will perform works by William Bolcom, Anthony Barrese, Dmitri Shostakovich, and Igor Stravinsky. The concert, titled "Riches to Rags," will also include world premieres by Michael Starobin, Steve Kenyon, David Chesky, and Joshua Rosenblum, the group's founder and conductor. Violinist Tom Chiu will appear as guest soloist for Chesky's Violin Concerto No. 2.

"Lots of contemporary classical composers, from Stravinsky to Bolcom, have been captivated by ragtime, and have written pieces that subvert, transform, or simply pay homage to the genre," said Rosenblum (rosenblummusic.com/pitstop.html). "I thought it would be fun to put several of those pieces together on a program. That, plus we're performing four world premieres. It should be very exciting."

In addition to the Chesky violin concerto, the group will be premiering Michael Starobin's Sleipnir, Steve Kenyon's Das Lied von der Subway, and Rosenblum's What If Bernard Herrmann Had Written Eleanor Rigby?

The Pit Stop Players, who collectively have played in pit orchestras for over 100 Broadway productions, include Ed Matthew, woodwinds; Steve Kenyon, woodwinds; Chris Jaudes, trumpet; Wayne Goodman, trombone; Dan Culpepper, horn; Robin Zeh, violin; Paul Woodiel, violin; Alissa Smith, viola; Mairi Dorman-Phaneuf, cello; Garah Landes, piano; Jeff Carney, bass; Scott Kuney, guitar; and Greg Landes, percussion.

Rosenblum anticipates presenting three concerts with the Pit Stop Players this season, and says nearly any genre is fair game for their programs, including traditional and contemporary classical, jazz, rock, fusion, and film music. However, the primary emphasis will be on new compositions and arrangements, written and orchestrated specifically for the group.

Rosenblum, who was trained as a classical pianist, has led the orchestras for thirteen Broadway and Off Broadway shows, including Wonderful Town, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, The Music Man, Miss Saigon and Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas. He is also the composer/creator of BUSH IS BAD, the hit Off Broadway satirical revue, and the composer/co-lyricist of Fermat's Last Tango and Einstein's Dreams. His instrumental music has been recorded on two CDs: Impetuosities and Sundry Notes, both on the Albany Records label. Rosenblum has written pieces on commission for Phil Smith, principal trumpeter of the New York Philharmonic; Ethel, America's premiere post-classical string quartet; and the Chase Brock Experience dance troupe. He teaches Composing

for Musical Theater at Yale University, his alma mater, and was recently awarded a grant from the Signature Theatre in Washington, D.C., as part of the American Musical Voices Project: The Next Generation.

Michael Starobin is an award-winning orchestrator and arranger working on Broadway and in Hollywood. He has orchestrated some of Broadway's most innovative musicals, such as *Falsettos*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Assassins* (2004 Tony Award for Best Orchestrations) and *Next to Normal* (2009 Tony Award for Best Orchestrations). He was the conductor and orchestrator for Disney's *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and contributed orchestrations to Disney's *Once Upon a Mattress* and the film versions of *Chicago* and *Nine*. Last year, the Queens Symphony performed the world premiere of his Sondheim Variations for string orchestra and percussion. *Sleipnir* is his second piece for the Pit Stop Players.

A three-time Grammy nominee is currently composer-in-residence for the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan. David Chesky's works span both jazz and classical genres, and have earned him the distinction of being the only jazz composer ever to be nominated for a Grammy in the category of Best Contemporary Classical Composition. His operas and orchestral works have been performed all around the world. David has developed his own unique style of composition he calls Urban Orchestral. This music emanates from the sounds he hears on the streets of New York. Also a pianist, David performs with the Grammy-nominated group The Body Acoustic, an ensemble that performs a mixture of Latin jazz and 12-tone contemporary classical works. In addition to working with major classical orchestras, David has performed at the world-famous jazz club The Village Vanguard, as well as the Newport, JVC, and Monterey Jazz Festivals. Besides being a musician and composer, David is also known worldwide as one of the leaders in the advancement of technological research on high-resolution recording techniques. His comic chamber opera, *The Pig, The Farmer, and The Artist*, was performed to great acclaim as part of this past season's NYC Fringe Festival.

Woodwind player and composer Steve Kenyon has led ensembles performing his original music at the Blue Note, Birdland, Carnegie Hall, and live on WNYC radio. He has performed throughout the U.S., Europe, and Asia with Maria Schneider, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Blood Sweat and Tears, Chuck Mangione, Rachel Z, Philip Glass, NYC Ballet, Brooklyn Philharmonic, NY Pops, American Symphony, NJSO, Aretha Franklin, Beyonce and A Prairie Home Companion. He is co-leader, composer, and lead saxophonist with the NewYorkestra big band and plays tenor with the NY Saxophone Quartet. He has performed with some 40 Broadway shows, numerous Encores! at City Center, and many Broadway cast recordings. Other recordings include his Quartet's CD *Fidel's Nightmare*, and albums with Mike Holober, Andy Middleton, NewYorkestra, Audra McDonald, Judy Collins, Maury Yeston, Ricky Ian Gordon, and Michael John LaChiusa. Television work includes *Ed*, *Today Show*, *David Letterman*, *Wonder Pets*, and many national jingles. He is currently lead woodwind for Broadway's *La Cage Aux Folles*.

A noted champion of new music, groundbreaking violinist and composer Tom Chiu has performed over 150 premieres worldwide by influential composers such as David Chesky, Virko Baley, Joan La Barbara, Oliver Lake, Alvin Lucier, and

Somei Satoh, among many others. His discography includes recordings for the Innova, Koch, Mode, Sombient, Tzadik labels, and his premiere recording of Chesky's Violin Concerto No.1 was picked as "Record of the Month" by Stereophile Magazine. In a cross-discipline context Chiu has created new mixed-media works with choreographers Eun-Me Ahn and Shen Wei, audio-video artists Phill Niblock and Elise Kermani, sculptor Ernesto Neto, conceptual balloonist Judy Dunaway, and director Lee Breuer from avant theater troupe Mabou Mines. His extensive work in film further showcases his creative versatility: as composer (Boris), solo fiddler (I Sell The Dead), voice-over artist (Chandni Chowk to China), and actor (The Man With One Red Shoe, with Tom Hanks). As founder of the FLUX Quartet, he has led – for over a decade – a pioneering new-music group which has become "legendary for its furiously committed, untiring performances." (Alex Ross, The New Yorker) Chiu holds degrees in chemistry and music from Yale, along with a doctorate from Juilliard. He appears frequently as a commentator on contemporary music and culture, and has served as panelist and consultant in a variety of artistic formats.

WHAT: Pit Stop Players Fall Concert

WHEN: Monday, September 27, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

WHERE: Second Presbyterian Church

6 W. 96th St. @ Central Park West

TICKETS: \$25 (\$15 for Students with ID) at the door

INFO: <http://rosenblummusic.com/pitstop.html>.

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