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Contact: Silvia Longa, Dir. Of Communications
(772) 460-0850
marketing@acomusic.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Atlantic Classical Orchestra Fourth Series Concert of 2009 Principal Cellist Ian Maksin Featured in Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations*

March 9, 2009, Fort Pierce, Florida--- The acclaimed Atlantic Classical Orchestra, Stewart Robertson Music Director, announced its Fourth and final Series Concerts of the 2009 Season to be held on Thursday, March 26th, 2009, 8:00 pm, at the Waxlax Center for the Performing Arts at St. Edwards Upper School in Vero Beach and on Tuesday, March 31st, 2009, 4:00 pm & 8:00 pm, at the Lyric Theatre in Stuart. The concert will feature the ACO's own virtuoso Principal Cellist Ian Maksin as soloist.

The program will include the lyrical *Benedictus* from Romantic-era Scottish composer Sir Alexander MacKenzie; contemporary British composer John McCabe's colorful, virtuosic *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra*; Tchaikovsky's beautiful *Variations on a Rococo Theme* for solo cello and orchestra featuring Principal Cellist Ian Maksin; and Saint-Saëns' little-known Symphony #2.

"Our final series concerts of 2009 feature, fittingly enough, the virtuoso musicians of the ACO," states Larry Kopp, ACO Executive Director. "We are extremely proud of the quality of our musicians and the incredible artistry they bring to every performance. This concert features not only our Principal Cellist as soloist but the entire ACO in McCabe's *Concerto* and Saint-Saëns Symphony #2. Our orchestra is the equal of any chamber orchestra in the world and we thought it proper to feature our talented musicians on the final concerts of the 2009 Season."

Scottish compser Sir Alexander MacKenzie spent a good portion of his career as Director of the Royal Academy of Music in London. Despite the often overwhelming administrative burden associated with this post MacKenzie still managed to compose a large amount of music in a variety of genres, music which was quite

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popular at the time although which has since fallen into undeserved obscurity. His *Benedictus* was one the “greatest hits” of the late 19th and early 20th Century era in England, being performed over and over in a variety of settings and arrangements. With ravishing melodies and lush harmonies, it is undoubtedly a beautiful work and one which deserved the immense popularity it enjoyed during its heyday. It is truly a work that is timeless in its appeal- a beautiful melody never goes out of style!

British composer John McCabe's *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra* is just what the title implies- a chance for individual members of the orchestra to appear as soloists within the framework of the composition as a whole. A relatively short work, the *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra* gives individual members of the ACO a chance to “shine” in virtuosic interludes, showing off the exceptional quality of our orchestra individually as well as collectively.

And speaking of both beautiful AND virtuosic, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's *Variations on a Rococo Theme* besides being a virtuoso showpiece for cello has held audiences spellbound with its sheer grace, elegance and beauty since its premiere in 1877. Composed in 1876 and 1877 during a period in which the composer faced quite a number of professional setbacks, Tchaikovsky responded with what is perhaps one of his lightest and most enchanting works, an homage to Mozart and the classical era. The lyric, refined grace and beauty of the melodies combined with the uniquely “Tchaikovskian” lush harmonies and virtuosic “pyrotechnics” for the cello combine to make the *Rococo Variations* one of the most popular works ever written for solo cello and orchestra. Tackling the extremely challenging solo cello part is the ACO's own Principal Cellist, Ian Maksin.

Cellist Ian Maksin has been described by the critics as one of the most passionate and versatile players of his generation. After giving his first cello recital at the age of six in his native St. Petersburg, Russia, Mr. Maksin has performed as a soloist and as a part of chamber ensembles throughout Russia, Europe, and the Americas. In the United States, he has given critically acclaimed performances in New York City, Boston, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, and many other major cities.

Several of Mr. Maksin's live performances and interviews have been broadcast on National Public Radio and its affiliate stations throughout the United States. Mr. Maksin has appeared as a concerto soloist with numerous orchestras throughout the United States and Europe and has been the winner of several

competitions, including the New World Symphony Competition and the Westmoreland Young Artist Competition.

In 2000, Ian Maksin was invited to become member of the New World Symphony, America's foremost orchestra for young musicians from around the world directed by Michael Tilson Thomas. During his years with the orchestra, Mr. Maksin performed as principal cellist and appeared as a concerto soloist under the direction of such conductors as Michael Tilson Thomas, Hans Graf, Andreas Delfs, Donald Runnicles, Zdenek Macal, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, Yan Pascal Tortelier, John Adams, Lukas Foss and many others.

The final work on the program is a little-known work by a well-known composer- Camille Saint-Saëns' Symphony #2. Saint-Saëns emerged as a child prodigy in the mid-19th Century and held an honored place in French musical life until his death in 1921. Fellow French composer Hector Berlioz said famously of a young Saint-Saëns, "He knows everything, but lacks inexperience," and it was a young 24-year old Saint-Saëns who composed the Second Symphony with which the ACO will complete its 19th Season. A sophisticated work that at the same time is quite accessible to audiences, it breathes the same air as the famous Symphony #3, the "Organ" Symphony, of the same composer and is a fitting conclusion to the best season yet for the Atlantic Classical Orchestra.

"The 2009 Season has been a great one for the ACO," states Kopp. "We have again exceeded our Annual Fund Campaign Goals, exceeded \$600,000 in gifts and pledges to the Challenge Gift Campaign, have had the best attendance ever at our orchestra series performances, and our chamber music series is going wonderfully. And most importantly, the orchestra continues to improve from concert to concert. Maestro Robertson's and the musician's dedication to the ACO and artistic excellence allow the orchestra to continue to thrive and grow, to the benefit of our patrons and the entire Treasure Coast community.

Orchestra musicians featured, a trademark ACO program of classics and unknown gems and the Treasure Coast's own world-class ensemble- it all adds up to a concert experience not to be missed!

The ACO Series IV Concerts will be held on Thursday, March 26th, 2009, 8:00 pm, at the Waxlax Center for the Performing Arts, 1895 St. Edward's Drive, Vero Beach, and Friday, March 31st, 2009, 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm,

Lyric Theatre, 59 SW Flagler Avenue, Stuart. Tickets are \$40 for the Vero Beach performance and the 4:00 pm Stuart performance; \$45 for the 8:00 pm Stuart performance. Tickets for the Vero Beach performance are available through the ACO Box Office by calling toll-free (866) 310-7521 or visiting the orchestra's website at www.acomusic.org. Tickets for the Stuart performances are available by visiting the Lyric Box Office at 59 SW Flagler Avenue in downtown Stuart or calling (772) 286-7827.

For more information concerning the ACO's Series IV Concerts, electronic copies of artist photos, artist biographies or an interview with Music Director Stewart Robertson, Soloist Ian Maksin or Executive Director Larry Kopp, please contact Director of Communications Silvia Longa at (772) 460-0850. Additional information on soloist Ian Maksin can be found on-line at <http://www.maksin.org>. The ACO office is located at 415 Avenue A, Suite 301, Fort Pierce, and is open 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Mail should be sent to 415 Avenue A, Suite 301, Fort Pierce, FL 34950. For more information about the Atlantic Classical Orchestra or its events, call the Orchestra office at (772) 460-0850 or fax (772) 460-0851. E-mail to marketing@acomusic.org. Press and advertising information can be obtained through the Symphony office as well.