

# Celebrating 20 Years of Excellence

February 10, 2010

**Contact:**

Lawrence Kopp, Executive Director  
(772) 460-0850

[acomusic@bellsouth.net](mailto:acomusic@bellsouth.net)

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## **Atlantic Classical Orchestra Series II Chamber Concerts Announced**

**February 10, 2010, Fort Pierce, Florida---** The Atlantic Classical Orchestra, Stewart Robertson Music Director, continues their acclaimed Chamber Series Concerts on February 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> with a pair of concerts in Vero Beach and Stuart.

The second series concerts of 2010, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am, at the Blake Library in Stuart and February 21<sup>st</sup>, 4:00 pm, at the Vero Beach Museum of Art, features ACO Principal Cellist Ian Maksin as a member of the renowned Armitage Trio with fellow members Jeff Yang, Violin, and George Lepauw, Piano.

“We are extremely happy that our principal Cellist, Ian Maksin, will again be joining us on our Chamber Series with the Armitage Trio,” states Larry Kopp, ACO Executive Director. “Ian’s appearance last season was extremely well received by audiences. Overall, the Chamber Series this season has taken a large leap forward in popularity with audiences. The attendance for our first series concerts was remarkable.”

The opening concerts of the series on January 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> saw audiences well exceeding those of last year. In Vero Beach at the Vero Beach Museum of Art, the audience increased in size well over 50% from the inaugural season. And in Stuart, at the Blake Library as part of the Chautauqua South Series, the concert saw an overflow, standing-room only audience of well over 350. That is an over 400% increase in attendance in the past three seasons at the Blake Library performances!

The Atlantic Classical Orchestra

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“We have seen spectacular growth in attendance at our Chamber Series programs,” states Kopp. “It is very gratifying to see the community embrace this series. We felt there was a void in the concert life of the community in a lack of chamber music performances and our successes have confirmed that theory.”

The programs on February 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> feature works by two Czech composers- Bedřich Smetena’s Piano Trio in G Minor and Antonin Dvořák’s Piano Trio #3 in F Minor.

Smetena’s Piano Trio, composed in 1855, was a very poignant work for the composer- it was written as a way to vent his grief at the death of his eldest daughter at the tender age of five. A confirmed and active Czech patriot during the time when his Czechoslovakian homeland was part of the Hapsburg Empire, Smetena wrote much music that was “nationalistic” in content which makes the string trio even more remarkable for its personal tone and inspiration. A lovely work with many changes in mood and tempo, it, like much of Smetena’s output, makes use of Czech folk and “folk-like” melodies as an integral part of the composition.

The other great Czech composer of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the one much known to a much wider audience is Antonin Dvořák. Dvořák’s Piano Trio #3 is considered a milestone in his compositional output, a work that marked the arrival of Dvořák as a serious composer of great talent and insight. It is, like the Smetena Trio it is paired with on the Chamber Concerts, a work connected with personal tragedy- Dvořák’s Trio was composed in aftermath of the death of the composer’s Mother. Displaying an amalgam of nationalistic folk influences, a cosmopolitan 19<sup>th</sup> Century musical flavor and a stormy, serious and tragic emotional depth, Dvořák’s Piano Trio #3 is a dramatic work that has been extremely popular with audiences since its debut in 1883.

ACO Principal Cellist Ian Maksin gave his first recital at age six in his native St. Petersburg, Russia. He has performed as a soloist and as a part of chamber ensembles throughout Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Ian has performed as a concerto soloist with numerous orchestras throughout the United States and Europe and his live performances and interviews have been broadcast on National Public Radio and its affiliate stations throughout the United States. He has performed at some of the most prestigious festivals such as Spoleto

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USA, Ravinia, Norfolk, Lancaster, in the United States, and the White Nights Music Festival in St. Petersburg, Russia, to name a few.

Ian has premiered and recorded numerous works by contemporary composers, including a critically acclaimed CD "Sculpting Clouds". The album came out on Albany Records in 2007 and features works by Juilliard-based award-winning American composer Eric Ewazen. Also, in 2006 Ian recorded on the album "Clocks" music by Miguel de Aguila with the celebrated Cuarteto Latinoamericano. Ian's debut solo CD, entitled *SOLO FLIGHT*, was just released in January 2010 to great audience and critical acclaim.

The outstanding cello being used by Ian is a Francesco Rugeri made in Cremona, Italy around 1690, on loan through the generous efforts of the Stradivari Society of Chicago. The Stradivari Society is a unique organization that supports the very highest level of string playing by assisting patrons who own the most precious antique Italian instruments and choose to make them available to artists of exceptional talent and ability.

Violinist Jeff Yang was born in Taiwan in 1971, of Chinese parents and came to the United States in 1979 growing up in Seattle, Washington. He began studying violin at the age of 5, and gave his first major solo performance with the Northwest Symphony Orchestra at the age of 19 performing Vivaldi's Four Seasons.

Mr. Yang has served as the concertmaster with many leading symphony orchestras including the Spoleto Festival Orchestra in Italy, and the National Repertory Orchestra in Colorado. He served as assistant concertmaster with the International Symphony Orchestra of Israel, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. He also toured throughout Russia as principal second violin with the American-Russian Youth Orchestra including performances in the United States at Carnegie Hall and Tanglewood.

Mr. Yang also performs as guest soloist from time to time with symphony orchestras in the United States including concertos by Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Prokofiev, Beethoven and Vivaldi. He has won many awards for

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his solo violin playing including the Anna Lockwood Award for Excellence in String Playing from Northwestern University and the Civic Graduate Fellowship in Chicago.

George Lepauw began his studies at the Rachmaninov Conservatory in Paris, France at the age of three, and soon after, was accepted by Madame Aida Barenboim as her youngest student with the exception of her son, pianist and conductor, Daniel Barenboim. George went on to study with Russian virtuoso, Elena Varvarova who prepared him for his first public concert at the age of ten in Paris, performing Beethoven sonatas. On the recommendation of the conductor Carlo-Maria Giulini, George began working under the tutelage of Maria Curcio, a disciple of the great Arthur Schnabel, and later continued his studies in Paris and in Alsace with Rena Cherechevskaia, the renowned professor responsible for the "Gifted Young Artists" at the Moscow Conservatory.

George obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. with a double major in English Literature and History and received his Masters of Music in Piano Performance at Northwestern University in Chicago. Since graduating from Northwestern University, George has been actively performing worldwide. He went to Finland to perform programs of Ravel and Debussy for the Archipelago Summer Music Festivals and at the Sibelius Museum, and has given several recitals in Paris, France over the last two years. An avid chamber musician, George has partnered with several members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for chamber music recitals, including Charles Pikler and David Taylor.

"We have another excellent program in store for audiences with our second chamber series performances of the 2010 Season," states Kopp. "And we are again featuring one of our exceptional first chair players in the ACO in these performances. I invite all music lovers to come enjoy these chamber concerts of two masterworks by Czech composers."

The ACO Chamber Series II Concerts will be held on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 11:00 am, at the Blake Library, 2351 SE Monterrey Road, Stuart, and Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010, 4:00 pm, Vero Beach Museum of Art, 3001 Riverside Park Drive, Vero Beach. No tickets are required for the Stuart performance and admission

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is free of charge. Tickets for the Vero Beach performance are \$40 for non-Museum members and \$30 for members of the Museum and are available through the ACO Box Office by calling toll-free (866) 310-7521 or visiting the orchestra's website at [www.acomusic.org](http://www.acomusic.org).

For more information concerning the ACO's Chamber Music Series, electronic copies of artist photos, artist biographies or an interview with Music Director Stewart Robertson, cellist Ian Maksin, violinist Jeff Yang, pianist George Lepauw or Executive Director Larry Kopp, please contact the ACO Business Office at (772) 460-0850. In-depth information on the orchestra is available on the orchestra's website, [www.acomusic.org](http://www.acomusic.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](mailto:marketing@acomusic.org). Press and advertising information can be obtained through the Symphony office as well.