



MERCURY . ORCHESTRA

Channing Yu, Music Director . Justin Albstein, General Manager

PO Box 425082, Cambridge, MA 02142 . (617) 826-9092 . www.mercuryorchestra.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2010

MERCURY ORCHESTRA WINS 2010 AMERICAN PRIZE COMPETITION

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS—The Mercury Orchestra has been selected as the national winner of the 2010 American Prize in Orchestral Performance, community orchestra division, in a competition including orchestras from 26 states and the District of Columbia.

The American Prize is a series of new non-profit national competitions designed to recognize and reward the very best in the performing arts in the United States. Founded in 2009, the American Prize rewards the best recorded performances of music by individuals and ensembles in the United States at the professional, community/amateur, college/university, church and school levels.

The 97-member Mercury Orchestra, directed by the young American conductor Channing Yu, brings together some of the most talented amateur musicians in the Cambridge/Boston area to perform some of the most challenging works in the symphonic repertoire. Now in its third season, the orchestra will perform two highly colorful and evocative works—Stravinsky's *Petrushka* (1911) and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*—on July 17 in Sanders Theatre at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In their evaluations, the competition judges praised the orchestra's "excellent interpretations" and made special mention of the orchestra's "thrilling rendition of the Rondo-Finale from the Mahler Symphony No. 5," taken from a live recording of the orchestra's performance in July 2009.

"What an incredible tribute for the Mercury Orchestra," says Maestro Yu, who is also a finalist in the 2010 American Prize for Conducting competition. "The musicians in our orchestra are some of the most dedicated, serious, and expressive artists I have ever worked with, and it is a thrill to make music together."

The Bravura Philharmonic Orchestra of West Windsor, N.J., took second prize, and the Auburn University/Community Orchestra of Auburn, Ala., won third prize. The judges' decision was announced on June 18, 2010, on the American Prize website,

www.theamericanprize.org, where the three orchestras were congratulated “for their outstanding achievement, ranked among the finest community orchestras in the country.”

Justin Albstein, the Mercury Orchestra’s general manager, says, “It’s wonderful that our orchestra has received this recognition in only its second year. The musicians deserve tremendous credit for taking on some of the most challenging pieces in the repertoire and succeeding brilliantly.”

Adds Brian Van Sickle, principal flutist: “This is really an honor to receive such recognition. What I love most about playing in this orchestra is how sensitively all of the players work together and listen to one another. It’s a thrill to be a part of it all.”

#

PRESS CONTACT:

Justin Albstein, General Manager
info@mercuryorchestra.org
(617) 826-9092
www.mercuryorchestra.org

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE AMERICAN PRIZE:

www.theamericanprize.org
theamericanprize.blogspot.com/2010/06/mercury-orchestra-wins-american-prize.html