



AMERICAN CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA
— music as the masters heard it —

American Classical Orchestra
New York's premier original instrument orchestra announces 23rd Season
Opening Night Concert with renowned fortepianist Malcolm Bilson

Date: Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Time: 7:30pm 6:30pm pre-concert lecture

Location: Society for Ethical Culture Hall 64th and Central Park West, Manhattan

Tickets: 212-717-3181 online at www.amerclassorch.org \$50/\$40/\$20

For immediate release:

Wednesday, October 24, the American Classical Orchestra will open its expanded Twenty-Third Season with Mozart's most beloved piano concerto, No. 20 in D Minor. The soloist is the pre-eminent fortepianist Malcolm Bilson. This is Mr. Bilson's only New York City appearance this season. Also performed are Joseph Haydn's "Echo" Symphony No. 38 and "Surprise" Symphony No. 94. ACO Music Director and Founder Thomas Crawford will conduct.

Maestro Crawford remarked on the significance of the opening concert: "Hearing one of Mozart's greatest masterpieces performed on instruments known to him is a rare opportunity for New Yorkers. The powerful and disturbing opening of the concerto moves the audience to a disquieted place, followed by heroic music, strange silences, then repose. The famed 2nd movement lives in that ethereal and patient world that only Mozart knew. The furious finale asks more of the players than any other Mozart concerto."

Malcolm Bilson has been in the forefront of the period-instrument movement for over thirty years. A member of the Cornell Music Department since 1968, he began his pioneering activity as a performer of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert on late 18th - and early 19th - century pianos. Bilson has toured with the English Baroque Soloists with John Eliot Gardner, the Academy of Ancient Music with Christopher Hogwood, the Philharmonia Baroque under Nicholas McGegan, Tafelmusik of Toronto, Concerto Koln, and other early instrument orchestras around the world. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by Bard College and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Mr. Bilson has recorded the Mozart piano concertos with John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists, the piano-violin Sonatas with Sergiu Luca, and the solo piano sonatas. He has recorded the 'Pasticci' Piano Concerti with the American Classical Orchestra and Thomas Crawford.

The Twenty-Third Season 2007-08 of the American Classical Orchestra also features a residency of the firebrand Mexican recorder virtuoso Horacio Franco, including a concert called *Midwinter Heat Wave* and the award winning ‘Classical Music for Kids’ schools program played to thousands of NYC students. The ACO season continues with an all-orchestral concert, *As the Masters Heard It*, a concert of chamber music for winds, and a *Gala Concert with Stars of the New York City Opera*.

The American Classical Orchestra is the only regularly performing musical ensemble in the tri-state area to play the repertoire of the 17th-19th centuries on authentic instruments. The use of leather-skinned timpani, valveless horns, and gut strings adds a richness and texture to these celebrated masterpieces that is much closer to the original intentions of the composers. The Orchestra revives the art of playing period instruments, and fosters the education of musicians and the public to authentic performance technique. The acclaimed *Classical Music for Kids* program has won national recognition for its innovation and excellence.

The American Classical Orchestra has appeared on the Lincoln Center Great Performers Series. In 2000 the Orchestra made its debut at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in a program specially designed for the exhibition *Art and the Empire City: New York 1825-1861*.

The ACO has recorded the *Complete Mozart Wind Concerti*, using its principal players as soloists. These three compact discs, released as a boxed set in 1998 by the Musical Heritage Society, sold out in the first printing. They mark the first comprehensive survey of the Mozart wind concerti by an American period instrument ensemble and conductor. ACO recordings with fortepianist Malcolm Bilson have won praise worldwide.

“What reaches the ears is the aural equivalent of a fine aged brandy: warm, smooth, and seamlessly blended.” The New York Times

For further information or to set up an interview, please call 212-717-3181.

Contributed articles and press tickets available.

Photos are available on the ACO website www.amerclassorch.org.

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