

Metropolis Ensemble

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Metropolis Ensemble Showcases the Complete Chamber Orchestra Concerti of Israeli Composer Avner Dorman

Featuring Two U.S. Premieres and Guest Artist Mindy Kaufman of the NY Philharmonic

New York, NY--- **Metropolis Ensemble**, New York's premier professional chamber orchestra dedicated to emerging a new generation of composers and performers, devotes the entire evening of Thursday, October 11, 2007 @ 8pm, at Lower East Side's Angel Orensanz Center (172 Norfolk Street), to chamber works from acclaimed Israeli composer Avner Dorman. With the support of The Smithsonian Magazine, the Metropolis Ensemble, along with special guest artists including Avi Avital (mandolin), Eliran Avni (piano), and New York Philharmonic's Mindy Kaufman (piccolo), performs four of Dorman's concerti: U.S. premieres of *Concerto in A* (1995), and *Concerto Grosso* (2003); New York premiere of *Piccolo Concerto* (2001); and *Mandolin Concerto* (2006). As part of the annual Daniel Pearl World Music Days network, this concert is dedicated to celebrating the theme of "Harmony for Humanity" and the power of music.

According to Andrew Cyr, the Artistic Director/Conductor of the Metropolis Ensemble, it is Dorman's broad-minded interests and eclectic blend of musical influences that attracted him. "Dorman has an exceptional ability to combine both the traditional and contemporary with more mainstream forms of music. His work is a perfect fit for our modern orchestra." Known for creating works that are "*alive with inspiration and expertly crafted*," his music is easily distinguished by its unique, passionate, and inventive sound. From his first neo-classical piece *Concerto in A*, to his more recent *Mandolin Concerto*, the program proves why Dorman is a "*fresh young voice in so much demand*" (Gramophone).

Concerto in A for piano and string orchestra was Dorman's first attempt at composing a neo-classical piece. Initially inspired by Bach's keyboard *Concerto in A Major*, Dorman strived to keep the transparency and directness of the classical style. "*I realized that using the traditional harmonic vocabulary enabled me to easily integrate jazz, pop, and rock elements into the piece*," explains Dorman. "*Even though the piece is dedicated to Vivaldi, one can also find allusions to Nina Simone, The Police, The Cure, Stravinsky, and, of course, Bach.*"

Concerto Grosso for string quartet, harpsichord, and string orchestra, premiered in Israel with the Ashdod Chamber Orchestra under the baton of Ze'ev Dorman.

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Metropolis Ensemble

Based on the music of Handel and Vivaldi, *Concerto Grosso* is Dorman's "minimalist" take on baroque music, while taking techniques of Górecki, Pärt, and Glass to new extremes. Bringing the evening a taste of the Mediterranean is the New York premiere of *Piccolo Concerto* for piccolo, piano, and string orchestra. The piccolo's sounds reminded Dorman of Middle Eastern shepherd's flutes, so he used characteristic modes of Middle-Eastern music throughout the piece. "If you listen closely enough, you might hear the sounds of desert winds and of the Mediterranean Sea." Featuring New York Philharmonic's Mindy Kaufman on piccolo, *Piccolo Concerto* is Kaufman's first experience working with Dorman. "This is a wonderful virtuoso concerto that utilizes many unusual colors for the piccolo," says Kaufman.

Rounding out the program is Dorman's *Mandolin Concerto* which premiered with the Rostav State Theater Orchestra as part of the 2006 Nessiah Festival, followed by the U.S. premiere in 2007 by the Metropolis Ensemble. Written especially for mandolinist Avi Avital, the diverse sonic and expressive possibilities of the mandolin influenced the overall concerto. "The piece's main conflicts are between sounds and silence," says Dorman. "Similarly, the mandolin's tremolo- the rapid repetition of notes- embodies both motion and stasis."

Metropolis Ensemble is dedicated to building artistic connections between composer, performer, and audiences in settings that will inspire a new generation of music lovers. Founded in 2005 by Artistic Director/Conductor Andrew Cyr, Metropolis Ensemble is a nonprofit professional chamber orchestra bringing together the talents of an emerging generation of performers who have already begun to reshape the sound and feel of music making in New York. www.metropolisensemble.org

Avner Dorman has quickly risen to become one of Israel's most successful renowned composers. His works have been commissioned and performed by leading orchestras and ensembles such as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Zubin Mehta, The Hamburg Philharmoniker, The Verbier Festival Orchestra, The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Tanglewood Music Center. At the age of 25, he was the youngest composer to receive Israel's Prime Minister's Award and has since received several prestigious international awards. In 2006, an album of Dorman's piano music was released by Naxos to critical acclaim. A graduate of the Tel-Aviv University, Dorman holds a Doctorate in composition from the Juilliard School where he studied with John Corigliano. In Israel he was a student of Josef Bardanashvili. Dorman's catalogue, published exclusively by G. Schirmer, Inc., includes concert music, as well music for dance and film. For everything else, visit www.avnerdorman.com.

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Metropolis Ensemble

Solo piccolo and flutist **Mindy Kaufman** joined the New York Philharmonic in 1979 at the age of 22, after performing for three years with the Rochester Philharmonic. In addition to her duties as solo piccolo with the orchestra, she has performed as the Orchestra's Associate Principal Flute, including most recently during the 2007 Europe tour and the residency at the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival. Ms. Kaufman received a bachelor of music degree from the Eastman School of Music, and at the age of 19 won her first audition for a position, which led to her being Second Flute at the Rochester Philharmonic. For one season she served as Acting Principal Flute of the Milwaukee Symphony. Mindy Kaufman has appeared as a piccolo soloist with the New York Philharmonic under the direction of then music directors Zubin Mehta and Kurt Masur. Her playing on both flute and piccolo has been acclaimed throughout the world, as she has been praised for "the extraordinary control of the piccolo's long sustained pianissimos" (*The Times of London*), and *The New York Times* wrote, "Mindy Kaufman ... played the flute solos in the Takemitsu beautifully." Ms. Kaufman plays chamber music regularly with her colleagues in the New York Philharmonic Ensembles at Merkin Concert Hall, and she has performed at summer festivals including the Mt. Desert Festival of Chamber Music and the Grand Teton Music Festival. She can be heard on dozens of film soundtracks including *The Cotton Club*, *The Untouchables*, *Cape Fear*, *Aladdin*, and *The Alamo*.

Avi Avital, a 27-year old Israeli mandolinist, was recently awarded the precious "Doris and Mori Arkin Prize for Mandolin, the Aviv Competitions 2007". He has played as a soloist with orchestras and Baroque ensembles, including the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, the Israeli Chamber Orchestra in Tel Aviv, The Orchestra Cantelli di Milano, the Baroque Ensembles Arion and Fantazyas (Italy), the New Israeli Opera, the Israel Camerata Jerusalem, Orchestra "I Pomeriggi Musicali" (Italy), the Beer-Sheva Symphonietta, and the Chamber Orchestra of the Jerusalem Music Academy. Avital is a member of traditional and contemporary chamber ensembles with whom he recorded many albums. Those include the Kerman Mandolin Quartet, *Three Plucked Strings* (mandolin, guitar and harpsichord), Kaprizma Ensemble (Israel), Dissonanzen Ensemble (Italy) and David Orlovsky's Klezmer Quartet (Germany). www.aviavital.com

General Information:

What: Metropolis Ensemble performs Avner Dorman's Chamber Concerti

When: Thursday, October 11th @ 8:00pm

Where: Angel Orensanz Center, 172 Norfolk Street, NYC. Train F to Delancey St.

How: Tickets \$25. For tickets, call Metropolis Ensemble at 1.800.838.3006 or visit www.metropolisensemble.org.

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