

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Beloved children's book author Tomie dePaola joins the
Nashua Symphony Orchestra and Chorus
For a Holiday POPS Cabaret**

"...one of the best-known and loved authors in the world." *NH Public Television*

"...a creative visionary." *The Boston Globe*

(Nashua, NH) Award-winning children's book illustrator and author Tomie dePaola is coming to Nashua on December 14th. But he won't be here for a traditional reading or book signing; he'll be here to add his speaking voice 46-piece Nashua Symphony Orchestra at its two Holiday Pops CABARET performances.

Mr. dePaola has been engaged by the NSO to narrate *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*, an arrangement of Tchaikovsky's classic score by the Symphony's Music Director, Jonathan McPhee. When McPhee saw dePaola speak at the NH Business Committee for the Arts' award dinner this past spring, he knew right away that he'd make an excellent narrator for the piece.

NSA Executive Director Eric Valliere recalls the moment. "Jonathan and I were sitting at the dinner – the Nashua Symphony Chorus was being honored that night as well – and the minute Tomie started speaking he had our full attention. He was absolutely hilarious, and warm and approachable, too." An invitation to dePaola followed and the collaboration was born.

"We're really excited to have Tomie join us for this," added Valliere. "It will be the centerpiece of a terrific and celebratory program." That program also includes traditional favorites like *Sleigh Ride*, *Carol of the Bells*, and an orchestral suite from the popular animated movie *The Polar Express*. The NSO will be joined by the Nashua Symphony Chorus, and the Nashua Choral Ensemble, both conducted by Diane Cushing.

dePaola studied art at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. In art school, he said he "spent four years learning how to draw everything - tin cans, dogs, cats, horses, trees - and I practiced and practiced." Still, he didn't get a contract for his first book for several years after graduating from Pratt. When he did get a children's book job, it was to illustrate a science book called SOUND. A year or so later, he wrote and illustrated his first book, THE WONDERFUL DRAGON OF TIMLIN.

That was over 40 years ago; dePaola has now illustrated over 200 books and written the stories for over 100 of those books. He works in a new studio attached to a renovated 200-year-old barn in New London, New Hampshire.

These performances, at 3:00 and 6:30 P.M. on Sunday, December 14 at Nashua's Crowne Plaza, offer an opportunity to experience festive holiday music while sitting at cabaret tables with friends and family with snacks and beverages (made available by the hotel for purchase).

Audiences last season raved about the cabaret-style seating, but those attendees who do not elect to sit at tables can also enjoy refreshments at their seats. The atmosphere is friendly and celebratory – an afternoon to remember and a great kick-off to the Holiday season.

“There is something about New England at the Holidays that has always meant a lot to me,” notes conductor McPhee. I have created a very special *Nutcracker* treat narrated by the incomparable Tomie dePaola, and brought together a collection of holiday favorites to be performed by our full orchestra and chorus. I am looking forward to adding the voices of our audience to the festivities in the Sing-A-Long at the end of the concert.”

These performances are made possible, in part, by Crowne Plaza, Nashua, and by RBC Wealth Management.

WHEN: Sunday, December 14, at 3 and 6:30 p.m.

WHAT: **HOLIDAY POPS CABARET**
Nashua Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Jonathan McPhee, Music Director
Diane Cushing, Director of Choral Activities

TCHAIKOVSKY (arr. McPhee)
The Nutcracker and the Mouse King
(music from the ballet, with narrator Tomie dePaola)

SILVESTRI
Suite from *The Polar Express*

ANDERSON
Sleigh Ride

And many more seasonal favorites!

WHERE: Nashua's Crowne Plaza, Somerset Ballroom, 2 Somerset Pkwy. Nashua, NH

Ticket Information

Tickets, priced from \$20 to \$50, are available at the Nashua Symphony Box Office, 6 Church St., can be charged to major credit cards by calling 603.595.9156 or can be purchased online at NashuaSymphony.org. Discounts for seniors and students are available. Request a season brochure online, by phone, or via email to NSO@NashuaSymphony.org

