



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Caroline M. Cardiasmenos

Tel: 603.595.9156

Email: caroline@nashuasymphony.org

**Nashua Symphony Orchestra's
OPENING NIGHT
features guest conductor Jonathan Schiffman
and pianist Judith Gordon**

The Nashua Symphony Orchestra' 2007 | 08 season begins with a delightful program on Saturday, September 22 at 8:00 p.m. at Nashua's Keefe Auditorium. Entitled "Cast of Characters", the concert showcases three unique musical voices: Manuel de Falla, Maurice Ravel, and Ludwig van Beethoven. Leading the performance will be conductor Jonathan Schiffman, the first of four finalists in the symphony's international search for a new music director appearing with the NSO this season. For Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Major, Maestro Schiffman and the NSO will be joined by acclaimed soloist Judith Gordon, *The Boston Globe's* 1996 "Musician of the Year. The concert is sponsored by A.G. Edwards.

This will be an exciting night for the NSO and its audience, who will be invited to give their feedback on the performance and conductor through an interactive form at <http://www.nashuasymphony.org>. Audience members will also be invited to meet the Mr. Schiffman and Ms. Gordon at a post-concert dessert event held at Nashua's Crowne Plaza, whose desserts were named "Best in New Hampshire" by *New Hampshire Magazine*. Ticket holders will receive 10% off their bill, courtesy of the Crowne Plaza.

The theatrical theme implied by "Cast of Characters" is borne out in De Falla's first suite from his charming ballet, *The Three-cornered Hat*. A farce about love, loyalty, and lust, the ballet's music is sultry and full of light, evocative of sunny Spain.

As soloist with the Boston Pops, pianist Judith Gordon has performed Mozart, Saint-Saëns, and Ravel G Major concerto she'll repeat with the NSO (her appearance is sponsored by Triangle Credit Union). Ravel's work is dazzling: full of thrilling colors, flashes of wit, and a jazzy edge.

Richard Wagner called Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 "the apotheosis of the dance," meaning of course to praise its Dionysian spirit and the distinct rhythmic pulses that propel each of the four movements. But this glib catchphrase stuck like feathers to hot tar, encouraging musicological (and even choreographic) misinterpretation ever since. Wholly abstract and utterly symphonic, the seventh was Beethoven's definitive break with stylistic conventions practiced by Mozart and Haydn. Thus the character of the seventh is based at least somewhat on the character of Beethoven himself; his relentless drive to exceed his previous accomplishments in the symphonic form resulted in this relentlessly driving – and effervescent – masterpiece.

Maestro Jonathan Schiffman is eager to perform these three wonderful works here in Nashua. When asked about the contrasting nature of the works, Mr. Schiffman replied:

Whereas Falla's *Three Cornered Hat* ballet is rooted in Spanish folk-music, the Ravel is a remarkable fusion of jazz, impressionism, and classicism. Despite such different sources of inspiration, these two works are united by an irresistible joie de vivre.

Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, which ends tonight's concert, offers a distinct contrast to the Ravel and Falla. Written a century earlier, it contains a dramatic intensity and rhythmic propulsion of incredible power. I remember being completely swept away when I discovered this work for the first time at age 12 while playing cello in a youth orchestra. I have since gone on to conduct Beethoven's Seventh Symphony several times and I am very excited to have the opportunity to perform it with the Nashua Symphony tonight.

WHEN: September 22 @ 8:00 p.m.

**WHAT: CAST OF CHARACTERS
Jonathan Schiffman, Judith Gordon, Nashua Symphony Orchestra**

DE FALLA

Suite No. 1 from *The Three-cornered Hat*

RAVEL

Piano Concerto in G Major – Judith Gordon, *piano*

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 7 in A Major

WHERE: Keefe Memorial Auditorium, corner of Lake and Elm Streets, Nashua NH.

Ticket Information

Tickets, priced from \$10 to \$47, 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 by visiting the NSA website, www.nashuasymphony.org. Discounts for seniors and groups are available. Request a season brochure online, by phone, or via email to NSO@NashuaSymphony.org

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