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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: April 29, 2009

Michael Morgan to conduct Marin Symphony's "Tribute to Copland" on May 3 & 5

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Oakland East Bay Symphony conductor to stand in for Alasdair Neale due to illness

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SAN RAFAEL, CA—The Marin Symphony's upcoming season-finale concert program "A Tribute to Copland" will be conducted by Michael Morgan of the Oakland East Bay Symphony. Mr. Morgan is a last-minute stand-in for the Marin Symphony's Music Director, Alasdair Neale, who is unable to conduct the concerts due to illness.

Currently in his nineteenth year as Music Director of Oakland East Bay Symphony, Michael Morgan also serves as Music Director of Sacramento Philharmonic, Artistic Director of Oakland Youth Orchestra and Artistic Director of Festival Opera in Walnut Creek. He also teaches a graduate conducting course at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Born in Washington, D.C., Mr. Morgan began conducting at age 12. While a student at Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, he spent a summer at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood, studying with Gunther Schuller and Seiji Ozawa. Here, he also worked with Leonard Bernstein for the first time.

In 1986, Sir Georg Solti invited Mr. Morgan to become the Assistant Conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a position he held for five years under both Solti and Daniel Barenboim. In 1986, Mr. Morgan was invited by Leonard Bernstein to make his debut with the New York Philharmonic. As a guest conductor, he has appeared with most of America's major orchestras as well as the New York City Opera, St. Louis Opera Theater and Washington National Opera. His operatic debut was in 1982 at the Vienna State Opera.

Mr. Morgan has received numerous prestigious music awards. In 2006, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) honored the Oakland East Bay Symphony with its Award for Adventurous Programming. The year prior, Mr. Morgan personally was awarded the Governor's Award

for Community Service by the San Francisco Chapter of The Recording Academy, and ASCAP's Concert Music Award. The San Francisco Foundation has honored him with one of its Community Leadership Awards. He has also received an Honorary Doctorate from Holy Names University.

Mr. Morgan makes many appearances in the nation's schools each year, particularly in the East Bay, and is highly regarded as a champion of arts education and minority access to the arts. He serves on the Board of the American Symphony Orchestra League as well as the International House at the University of California at Berkeley. He resides in Oakland.

The Marin Symphony's May 3 & 5 program consists entirely of Copland-composed audience favorites, including "Hoe-Down" from *Rodeo*, *Appalachian Spring* and his Symphony No. 3, the fourth movement of which commences with Copland's ever-popular theme *Fanfare for the Common Man*.

Aaron Copland is renowned as the most influential figure in twentieth-century American music. Musically trained in both America and Europe, he sought to establish American classical music as its own idiom, distinct from classical music in Europe, from which American classical music largely derived at the beginning of his career. He achieved this goal by incorporating popular forms of contemporary American music such as jazz and folk into his works, creating compositions that were both exceptionally innovative and that strummed vigorously on the heartstrings of his audiences.

Copland also saw the potential for American classical music to be as popular as jazz—which was at its height of popularity at the time. To bring classical music into the lives of more American people, he began composing works not just for the concert hall, but also for ballets and films. On the Marin Symphony concert program are his works from two ballets: Agnes DeMille's *Rodeo* (1942), which was Copland's second ballet score with a Wild West theme after *Billy the Kid*; and Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* (1944) for which Copland won the Pulitzer Prize. Among Copland's most popular compositions for film are "Of Mice and Men" (1939), "Our Town" (1940) and "The Heiress" (1949), which won him an Academy Award for best score. Perhaps Copland's most beloved work is *A Lincoln Portrait*, which the Marin Symphony will perform next season in concerts on February 28 and March 2, 2010. After offering to the public this impressive stream of hugely popular oeuvres, by the mid-1930s Aaron Copland had become one of the most popular composers in the country and a leader of the community of American classical musicians.

In his later decades, Copland did less composing and more conducting and educating, furthering his bipartite mission of elevating the status of American music abroad and increasing its popularity at home.

A Tribute to Aaron Copland

Sunday, May 3 and Tuesday, May 5, 2009 at 7:30pm

Michael Morgan, conductor

COPLAND "Hoe-Down" from *Rodeo*
COPLAND *Appalachian Spring*
COPLAND Symphony No. 3

Marin Center, 10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael

Tickets \$27-\$65 (students half price) at 415.499.6800 and www.marinsymphony.org

Pre-concert talk at 6:30pm by Alexandra Amati-Camperi, Music Program Director, University of San Francisco Department of Music

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Jpg: Oakland East Bay Symphony Music Director Michael Morgan conducts the Marin Symphony orchestra on May 3 & 5.