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news release

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**THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
RESIDENCY AT UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
TO CONTINUE THROUGH 2011**

CHICAGO, JAN. 2, 2007 – The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO) will continue its highly successful residency with the University of Chicago Presents (UCP) and the University’s Humanities Division through 2011. Since launching its partnership with UCP in 2005, the 35-member chamber orchestra from Minnesota has enjoyed a significant presence in Chicago’s South Side through its mentoring program, outreach efforts and performances. UCP executive director Shauna Quill said, “Chicago Presents is thrilled that the Chicago community has embraced the SPCO, and we look forward to their continuing presence here in Hyde Park.”

The three principal components of the SPCO Residency Program at the University of Chicago are public performances; community-focused educational programs for K–12 students and their families; and tutorial and mentoring programs for University students. Since the start of the residency in the 2005–06 season, artists and conductors appearing on the stage of Mandel Hall have included SPCO’s Artistic Partners Douglas Boyd (preeminent oboist and rising star as a conductor), Roberto Abbado (renowned Italian opera and orchestral conductor) and Stephen Prutsman (innovative pianist and composer), as well as Jeffrey Kahane (music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and Colorado Symphony). Future artists scheduled to appear include soprano Dawn Upshaw and pianist Jon Kimura Parker.

Both the University of Chicago and the SPCO have a long-standing and deep commitment to the Music of Our Time—the SPCO through its commitment to regular commissioning and performance of new work, and the University of Chicago through its famous and rigorous music composition program, led by a distinguished faculty of composers. Putting these commitments together has resulted in one of the most significant activities of the residency: each year, graduate students in the Department of Music at the University compose orchestral works, which are read by the SPCO in master classes. Based on feedback received from University faculty and the conductor and musicians of the SPCO, the students make revisions to their compositions, which are then recorded by the SPCO. “Working with University of Chicago composition students is a particular highlight for the SPCO,” said Bruce Coppock, president and managing director of the SPCO. “It is something we consider utterly important in terms of fulfilling the SPCO’s mission as well as ensuring the future of the art form.”

These sessions have provided significant enhancement to the University’s composition program, for it is extremely rare for young composers to have the opportunity to work directly with a professional orchestra at this stage in their careers. Both from the curatorial and compositional perspectives, and from that of “learning the ropes” of working with professional musicians, this aspect of the residency has proved an important addition to the depth and notoriety of the University of Chicago’s PhD program in music composition. The composition readings are led by University faculty member Cliff Colnot, who has a distinguished career conducting and preparing performances of MusicNOW for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to the student composers, SPCO members work with individual students and student ensembles through coaching sessions, which are mutually stimulating. Chuck Ullery, principal bassoon of the SPCO and father of a University of Chicago student stated, “It has been a huge privilege for me as an SPCO musician to be of service to the University of Chicago...because I get the feeling that I may be showing a new fingering to a future Nobel Prize winner.”

Outside of the campus setting, the SPCO and the University of Chicago Presents also work together to bring the SPCO’s award-winning CONNECT music education program (Chamber Orchestra’s Neighborhood Network of Education, Curriculum and Teachers) to five schools in the South Side of Chicago. Through this music education initiative, students in Hyde Park-area schools have gained a personal, hands-on experience through classroom visits conducted by musicians of the SPCO and their local cultural partners. Quill said the SPCO has succeeded in bringing music education to over 3,000 students in the South Side, where such programs are underserved.

“The University of Chicago has a long-standing tradition of excellence in music—in addition to bringing a world-class chamber orchestra to new audiences, we are enhancing the breadth and depth of our artistic offerings for our students, our faculty and the city of Chicago,” said Martha Roth, dean of the Humanities Division. But bringing an orchestra of the SPCO’s size and reputation to Chicago three times a year for the

educational and outreach opportunities they provide is no easy task. In addition to the support provided by the University and local sponsorships, UCP also relies on generous contributions from Seyfarth Shaw LLP and Arts Midwest, as well as grants from the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which funds the SPCO's engagement with the University's undergraduates and doctoral students.

Remaining 2007/2008 SPCO performances as part of the UCP season, dubbed "Music Among Friends," include the annual family concert, *xplorchestra!* on Saturday, January 26 at 10:30 a.m., followed by the SPCO with pianist Jon Kimura Parker on Sunday, January 27 at 3 p.m. performing a program of Mozart and Bartók. Closing out the season, renowned soprano and SPCO Artistic Partner Dawn Upshaw performs with the SPCO on Sunday, April 27 at 3 p.m. On the program are works by Stravinsky and Haydn, as well as newly commissioned arrangements of Schubert songs by Osvaldo Golijov. Tickets for all events can be purchased by calling the University of Chicago Presents Concert Office at (773) 702-8068, or by visiting 5720 S. Woodlawn Avenue.

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