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Images available upon request

International Beethoven Project announces Beethoven Birthday Month 2014

Highlights include:

- Free “Beethoven Birthday Concert for Chicago”, December 16th, 2014**
- “2020 City of Culture” Initiative Announced**
- Free Concert in Hyde Park on December 17th**
- & Launch of IBP’s first full-time Educational Initiative**
- IBP Crowdfunding Campaign**
- Launch of the “Cultural Citizen Project”**
- First New Year’s Eve Celebration and Fundraiser**

CHICAGO (November 25, 2014)—The **International Beethoven Project (IBP)**, led by President and Artistic Director **George Lepauw**, announced its first annual **“Beethoven Birthday Month”** initiative today with the purpose of drawing attention to Beethoven’s legacy as musician and to his spirit of universal brotherhood, as well as promoting the ongoing work of the International Beethoven Project and strengthen its financial foundations for future festivals, season programming, educational outreach, and other initiatives. The “Beethoven Birthday Month” program is built around IBP’s 5th annual “Beethoven Birthday Bash”, celebrated in Chicago since Beethoven’s birthday of December 16th, 2010.

Beethoven’s 244th birthday anniversary, **Tuesday December 16th**, will be celebrated at the Chicago Temple, 77 W Washington Street, across from Daley Plaza, with a **Free Concert for Chicago**, beginning at **noon**. At 12:30pm, Lepauw will announce the **“2020 City of Culture” initiative**. At 1:00pm, a second round of music will be performed. The musical program, by IBP’s Prometheus Chamber musicians and guests, will include a performance of Beethoven’s “Ghost” Piano Trio Opus 70 Nr. 1, among other works.

On **Wednesday, December 17th**, IBP will present a **Free Concert in Hyde Park**, at **University Church**, IBP’s new Artistic Programming and Educational Partnerships base, 5655 South University Avenue, at **noon**, in a repeat of the previous day’s program at the Chicago Temple. A special presentation, reception, and performance celebrating Beethoven’s Birthday and IBP’s educational partnership Kickoff with the **Chicago Academy of Music (CAM)** and the **Chicago Metamorphosis Orchestra Project (ChiMOP)** is scheduled from **6 to 8pm**, free with RSVP. The education announcement, to launch and grow a music program in Hyde Park for the benefit of residents of Chicago’s South Side, with a particular focus on reaching underserved communities from Bronzeville, Woodlawn, Back of Yards, South Shore and Englewood, is a major new undertaking of IBP and its partners. An orchestra program and private music lessons will be held at **University Church** in 2015, along with concerts throughout the year.

Parallel to these events, IBP will lead a **crowdfunding campaign** through the month of December, with the goal of raising a minimum of \$25,000. The newly launched “**Cultural Citizen Project**” is meant to engage supporters more directly, and geared to individuals and corporations, through a variety of means. This December, the Cultural Citizen Project will allow IBP enthusiasts to organize and host their own Beethoven Birthday Bash, or to add the IBP cause to their planned holiday parties.

“Engagement, collective creativity, and building a participatory culture is what we have always stood for, in the spirit of Beethoven’s music and call for universal brotherhood, and we believe that citizens can take a proactive stance for the cultural health of our city. Unfortunately, the Great Recession has caused much harm to cultural non-profits and artists, and though the economy is doing better, funding for culture has remained challenging. IBP’s past financial obstacles are reflective of this landscape, but, inspired by our namesake’s tenacity and creativity, we are moving forward and doing what we believe in. We hope independent citizens and businesses will help us grow,” says Lepauw. “The Cultural Citizen Project we have started work on is something we hope people will have fun with, while supporting a good cause focused on leveraging the talent of artists for the benefit of Chicago’s many communities.”

A ticketed celebration and fundraising event, in partnership with the Chicago Academy of Music, is scheduled for **New Year’s Eve, December 31**, to cap off Beethoven Birthday Month and close the 2014 fundraising season. The event, at University Church, 5655 South University Avenue in Hyde Park, will include a broad selection of live music, along with food and drink in an atmosphere of general merriment. A separate Press Release will be sent with further details on the event.

More information on all aspects of Beethoven Birthday Month 2014 will be made available in the first week of December on our website: www.internationalbeethovenproject.com

About George Lepauw: Named Chicagoan of the Year (2012) for Classical Music in the Chicago Tribune and listed in Chicago Magazine’s Classical Music “Power List” (2013), George represents the ideal 21st century musician, intensely focused on his art and wholly engaged with the world. “A prodigious pianist” (Chicago Tribune), George is extremely committed to the Chicago cultural scene. In 2009, he founded the International Beethoven Project, a non-profit organization focused on innovation in the arts and humanity’s potential in line with Beethoven’s own spirit; in 2011, he founded the annual Chicago-based Beethoven Festival, a radical happening that showcases the relationship between the creative arts, culture, and community.

About the International Beethoven Project (IBP): IBP, a Chicago-Based Non-Profit, inspired by the creativity, genius, and social idealism of Ludwig van Beethoven, came into existence when its founder, concert pianist George Lepauw, was asked by renowned Beethoven scholars to organize, and to perform, the World Premiere of Beethoven’s long-lost Piano Trio H47, in 2008-09. The worldwide broadcast of the historic Chicago concert led to a Billboard charting, and critically acclaimed, studio recording co-produced by IBP and Chicago’s Cedille Records, released at New York’s Lincoln Center in 2010. Seeing the potential to connect to new generations through the concept of Beethoven’s radical innovative spirit, George decided to take the initial momentum of the project and develop it into a full-fledged all-arts-inclusive multi-dimensional Beethoven Festival, inaugurated in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood in September 2011, titled “Man and Muse”. The second annual Beethoven Festival, “Revolution 2012”, was held in Chicago’s Uptown neighborhood and the third annual Beethoven Festival, “LOVE 2013”, was held in the West Loop of Chicago primarily at the Merit School of Music, covering one hundred events in ten days. In 2014, IBP launched a season-long series entitled “UnFestival”, to activate private and public spaces around Chicago for the benefit of local communities. For more information, visit www.internationalbeethovenproject.com.

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