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ARTIST BIO: CHICAGO SINFONIETTA

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Now in its 21st season, the Chicago Sinfonietta has enriched the cultural, educational and social quality of life in Chicago, while gaining significant recognition on the national and international stage. Under the guidance of Founding Music Director Paul Freeman, the orchestra performs at the highest artistic level and has achieved an outstanding reputation for its work in promoting diversity and inclusiveness in classical music, and for its innovative programming. The Sinfonietta is dedicated to the authentic performance of Classical, Romantic and Contemporary repertoire and excels at presenting imaginative new works by ethnically diverse composers and soloists.

During the first ten years, the Sinfonietta embarked on a number of successful tours including concerts in Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, the Canary Islands, and twice at the JFK Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC. The Sinfonietta mounted equally successful seasons at home. By 1997 the Sinfonietta was attracting 1,100 season subscribers, had released nine recordings, and had an annual budget of \$1.2 million. Notable artists presented during our first decade included the Vienna Boys Choir, Ben Vereen, Marian McPartland, Angel Romero, Ellis Marsalis, the Modern Jazz Quartet and many others.

Since 1997 the Sinfonietta has released five additional recordings including the much heralded African Heritage Symphonic Series released by Cedille Records in 2002, seen its subscriber base increase to 1,600, and performed with an incredible cross-section of artists including Poi Dog Pondering, the Congo Square Theater Company, Howard Levy, Rachel Barton, Orbert Davis, R. Carlos Nakai, Danny Glover, and the Apostolic Church of God Choir, to name just a few.

The Chicago Sinfonietta's vision of inclusiveness also extends beyond the concert hall. To help develop tomorrow's musicians and audience members, the orchestra has created innovative outreach programs that serve thousands of elementary and high-school age children annually. Developed in collaboration with the Chicago Public Schools, these programs provide in-depth music programming and subsidized tickets to Sinfonietta concerts for students in underserved areas of Chicago.

The orchestra performs in Chicago's renowned Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center, is the official orchestra of the Joffrey Ballet and has been the orchestra in residence at Dominican University in River Forest since 1987.

The upcoming 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 seasons will be our busiest season ever. In summer 2008, the Chicago Sinfonietta will perform Gustav Holst's *The Planets* at Millennium Park in the heart of downtown Chicago. The Sinfonietta will perform as the pit orchestra for the San Francisco Ballet at the Harris Theater in September 2008. In addition to these exciting opportunities, the Sinfonietta will perform the Chicago debut of Toni Morrison's opera, *Margaret Garner* at the Auditorium Theater.

The Chicago Sinfonietta truly represents the city's rich cultural landscape, and continues to fulfill the mission of *Musical Excellence through Diversity*.

Maestro Paul Freeman - Music Director and Founder, Chicago Sinfonietta

Fanfare Magazine proclaimed Maestro Paul Freeman to be "...one of the finest conductors our nation has produced." Born in Richmond, Virginia, Dr. Paul Freeman has established himself as one of America's leading conductors.

In 1987, he became the founding music director of the Chicago Sinfonietta. In 1996, he was appointed music director and chief conductor of the Czech National Symphony Orchestra in Prague, a position he holds simultaneously with his Sinfonietta post. He records and tours with both orchestras on a regular basis. From 1979 to 1989, he served as Music Director of the Victoria Symphony in Canada. He has also served as Principal Guest Conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic in Finland, as Associate Conductor of the Dallas Symphony, Conductor-in-residence of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and as Music Director of the Opera Theatre of Rochester, New York.

A recipient of the Mahler Award from the European Union of Arts, Freeman is in constant demand as a Guest Conductor all over the world. He has conducted over 100 orchestras in over 30 different countries. As one of America's most successful recording conductors, Dr. Freeman has to his credit approximately 200 releases, including a series tracking the history of black symphonic composers from 1750 to the present.

In 2004, Dr. Freeman began a project called *Global Maestro*, consisting of a 13-week series of two-hour radio programs featuring music, which he recorded with international orchestras, including the Chicago Sinfonietta. The series was syndicated to over 150 cities in the U.S. and several countries by WFMT. Freeman has been nominated for two Emmy Awards and has received numerous awards for his recordings. As a media personality, he has been involved in more than a dozen televised orchestral productions, and garnered recognition in *The History Makers Project*.

Dr. Freeman, who studied on a U.S. Fulbright Grant at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, holds a PhD degree from the Eastman School of Music and LHD Degrees from Dominican University and Loyola University. Through his artistry, Freeman passionately promotes innovative change and diversity.