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### ARTIST BIO: CORKY SIEGEL

(rev 2007) p. 1 of 1

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Corky Siegel has earned an international reputation as one of the world's great blues harmonica masters. He is a composer, blues pianist, singer / songwriter, and recent winner of the Lila Wallace/Reader's Digest/Meet the Composer's national award for chamber music composition and the Illinois Arts Council Fellowship Award for Music Composition.

Corky Siegel's career began with a fortunate break when he formed the legendary Siegel-Schwall Band that toured the major rock palaces and clubs in the 60's and 70's. He was introduced to the blues through his very first steady engagement at Peppers the internationally renowned blues club where his job included performances with the blues masters themselves, such as Willie Dixon, Little Walter, Muddy Waters, and Howlin' Wolf. "*For groups like the Rolling Stones ... names like Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf were exotic inspirations. For Siegel-Schwall they were the guys that played with them on 43rd Street.*" - Lin Brehmer - Music Director for WXRT radio.

Corky Siegel has 18 recordings and over 35 reissues on: Vanguard, RCA, Alligator (the exclusively Blues label) and Gadfly Records, and two album projects for the prestigious classical label Deutsche Grammophon (DG). The DG release of William Russo's Three Pieces for Blues Band and Symphony Orchestra featuring Corky's blues band, Siegel-Schwall (for whom the work was written) with Seiji Ozawa and the San Francisco Symphony, was a block-buster in sales and had "*an unprecedented inter-generational impact on the American music scene.*" - Music Critic - David Skolnik. In fact, one movement of "Three Pieces" became a successful "single" which scored very high on the Billboard Pop and Classical charts.

Mr. Siegel's solo recorded performance of William Russo's Street Music with Seiji Ozawa and the San Francisco Symphony (the 2nd recording for DG) won the French Government's Grand Prix du Disque, and received the Recording of Special Merit in Stereo Review for the LP and again in 1988 for the re-released compact disc.

Corky Siegel has written and performed works for Arthur Fiedler and the San Francisco Symphony, the Grant Park Symphony, the National Symphony Orchestra - for a Kennedy Center performance where the Washington Post proclaimed that "*Siegel is a Phenomenon*". His latest symphonic work Blues for a Green Planet - Opus 10 was commissioned and performed with the Grant Park Symphony in Chicago. This was his second commission from that orchestra. He also composed "Continuum" with Alwin Nikolias (father of modern dance) and Murray Louis. His music has been choreographed by 5 different international ballet companies and has been used for many national TV specials and motion pictures as well as the 1988 Olympic men's figure skating competition, the 1997 World Championship skating competition with Olympic Gold Medalists, Torvill and Dean, and a recent ABC-TV series including two works for three PBS programs - one of which won an Emmy Award for 2002.

Mr. Siegel's partnership in the renowned Siegel-Schwall Band, his performances as soloist with orchestras world-wide, and his collaborations with conductor Seiji Ozawa in bringing a ground-breaking blues-classical sound to national attention are all a reflection of Mr. Siegel's prodigious talent. Mr. Siegel continues to perform as guest soloist with symphony orchestras world-wide, which have included the New York Philharmonic, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra Metropolitana De Lisboa in Portugal, and most recently the Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal, the NHK Symphony in Japan, and the Philadelphia Orchestra with Maestro Charles Dutoit. In addition to ongoing tours with Maestro Dutoit, Corky has continued to perform numerous symphonic collaborations through the years with Doc Severinsen. Corky has also recorded on Sony International by touring globally from time to time through the invitation of Dr. Subramaniam, India's greatest Eastern classical violin virtuoso.

Corky Siegel's newest project Chamber Blues, with the West End String Quartet, and Frank Donaldson on world percussion, blends classical and blues styles in a chamber music setting. This ground breaking innovative sound (now on Alligator Records and Gadfly Records) has earned tremendous acclaim throughout the country and continues to open new doors for classical and blues/jazz listeners alike. Chamber Blues won Billboard's Editor's and Writer's top 10 Picks of the Year (1998) and Stereophile Magazine says; "... fantastic ... I've never heard anyone play harp with this much body and harmonic delicacy ... I guarantee you've never heard anything quite like it." The 2005 Alligator Records release of "Traveling Chamber Blues Show" is "A Crowning Achievement" - raves the Chicago Tribune. "*Watching them perform is nearly as much fun as hearing them play.*" - Blues Revue Magazine.