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**PALENKUMBE – OVERTURE FOR CARTAGENA
BY VENEZUELAN COMPOSER PAUL DESENNE TO OPEN II CARTAGENA
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF MUSIC 2008**

Bogotá, Colombia The début performance of the “*PALENKUMBÉ*” *CARTAGENA OVERTURE*, a piece especially created by Paul Desenne for the II Cartagena International Festival of Music, will open the event on January 5, at 7:30 p.m., at Cartagena’s *Teatro Heredia*.

“Paul Desenne was selected for this memorable occasion because of his relevance to contemporary Latin American music,” says Julia Salvi, president of the festival and the Salvi Foundation Colombia. “A lifetime devoted to the art of composition, of playing the cello and teaching converges in Paul Desenne’s many talents. We are fortunate to have *I Musici Montreal Chamber Orchestra* led by Maestro Yuli Turovski, perform the world premiere of this fine new work.”

“In *Palenkumbé, Overture for Cartagena*, I have tried to capture several images of the city’s cultural setting that cannot be detached: its rebelliousness against slavery embodied in a referential song trapped in an asymmetric rhythm; the liberation from those ties through a *Cumbia* rhythm; the people’s city in a small bus *fandango*; the trans-cultural meditation in a type of *Cumbia* with New York touches; the game of aerophones with *maracones* (Caribbean maracas) and, finally, a surprise,” says Desenne. “I also wish to pay a special tribute to the admirable musicians of the Atlantic Coast who make us dream and dance -- the unknown ones, the famous ones, from the past and the present and, of course, to Julia Salvi, who had the joyous idea of gathering so many talents to celebrate the grandeur of Cartagena. I dedicate this piece to you.”

Paul Desenne, Venezuelan composer and cellist, - born in Caracas in 1959, has been acclaimed by *The New York Times* critics in the *Summergarden Series*. His work has been described as having well-defined Latin American roots, a character he began creating in 1974 under the tutoring of Greek Maestro Manis Ioannidis. As a performer, he began his career with the highest award from the *Conservatoire Supérieur de Paris*, which he received from Pierre Fournier, in 1985.

From the debut performance of his three symphonic pieces at *Alice Tully Hall*, Lincoln Center, in New York, the last one was a concerto for double bass and orchestra, dedicated to his fellow countryman, Edison Ruiz, member of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.

The following pieces stand out from his broad catalogue: Concertos for various solo instruments; choral symphony; chamber music: quartets, duets with piano, trios, quintets, sextets, two major sonatas for solo violin, the “Jaguar” sonata for cello solo, and the “Impossible Variations for Solo Flute,” among many others.

He has been invited to perform in many important European, U.S., and Canada festivals and with many distinguished orchestras, - including, I Musici Orchestra from Montreal. Desenne has performed in Colombia with the Philharmonic Orchestra of Bogotá at the Central Bank’s *Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango* Concert Hall.

THE OPENING PROGRAM:

The Festival’s opening night program includes the Concerto in C Major, RV 443, piccolo and orchestra, by Antonio Vivaldi; the Concerto in G Major for piano and orchestra by Maurice Ravel; and Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67, by Ludwig van Beethoven.

Performers:

Paula Robison, piccolo

Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano

I Musici Orchestra from Montreal

Yuli Turovsky, Conductor

CONCERT SPONSOR: GRUPO NACIONAL DE CHOCOLATES

For more information about the 2008 Cartagena International Festival of Music including, the complete program please visit: www.cartagenamusicfestival.com

Editor's Note: Digital images of the artists and festival venues are available upon request.

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