

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Annual Sibelius Festival is Coming Soon!

HANCOCK – Finlandia University will present the 10th Annual Sibelius Academy Music Festival the week of July 28, 2008, in Hancock and Eagle Harbor. The series of three concerts showcases the professional-level talent of musicians from the Sibelius Academy of Helsinki, Finland.

“We are excited to welcome these gifted Finnish musicians to the U.P.” said Finlandia President Philip Johnson. “We are looking forward to this annual celebration of the Copper Country’s Finnish heritage and the furtherance of our contemporary connections with Finland.”

Since 1999, Finlandia University and the Sibelius Music Academy have collaborated to bring a taste of Finland’s musical excellence to Michigan’s Upper Peninsula and the Midwest, President Johnson said. The annual international event promotes the enjoyment and appreciation of contemporary and traditional Finnish classical music, and strengthens Finnish-American ties with modern Finland. More than 50 Sibelius Academy students have performed as part of this festival.

The classical music festival begins Wednesday, July 30, with a concert by mezzosoprano Melis Jaatinen and her piano accompanist, Maija Väisänen, at the Finnish American Heritage Center, Hancock. The concert is preceded at 6:45 p.m. by a free performance of the local Kivajat Dancers, a children’s traditional dance troupe directed by Kay Seppala. The feature performance begins at 7:30 p.m.

On Thursday, July 31, also at the Finnish American Heritage Center, pianist Joonas Ahonen will perform at 7:30 p.m. Thursday’s concert is preceded at 6:45 p.m. by the Noteworthy Chorus, a local women’s a cappella vocal ensemble directed by Theresa Goodell.

The third and final Sibelius Festival concert takes place Friday, August 1, at 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter’s by the Sea Church in Eagle Harbor, Mich., featuring Kaisa Koivula, clarinet, and Jukka Ojala, accordion.

To conclude this year’s festival, a public reception will take place Saturday, August 2, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. at the Vertin Gallery, Calumet, Mich. During the reception, Sibelius Academy musicians Kaisa Koivula, clarinet, and Jukka Ojala, accordion, will perform several selections. The reception is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

For ticket information, please visit www.finlandia.edu or contact Karen Johnson at 906-487-7348.