FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Thornton School of Music
Michael Dowlan University of Southern California
dowlan@thornton.usc.edu 840 W. 34th Street
(213) 740-3233 Los Angeles, CA 90089-0851
Images available upon request www.usc.edu/music

USC Thornton School of Music Focuses On Exceptional Artist Development For 2011

Joseph Silverstein Residency • Robert Mann Endowed Chair • Key Faculty Appointments
• Partnerships with Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra among highlights

LOS ANGELES (March 31, 2011) — From Tuesday, March 29th to Thursday, April 7th, the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music welcomes internationally acclaimed conductor and legendary violinist Joseph Silverstein for a week of master classes, lectures, and performances. Highlights include a discussion with Margaret Batjer, Martin Chalifour, and Silverstein on the life of a concertmaster that includes the New World Symphony via Internet2 video teleconference, and two highly anticipated performances — a chamber music concert with the students of the Thornton School and a performance with the USC Thornton Chamber Orchestra that Silverstein will lead from the concertmaster’s chair. The residency is the latest in a series of noteworthy appointments and partnerships at the school this year highlighting exceptional young artist development.

“It has been a remarkable year for the Strings Program and the school,” said Robert Cutietta, Dean of the USC Thornton School of Music. “In addition to inviting many internationally recognized artists to campus to lead master classes and perform with our students, we appointed exceptional new faculty, launched a new partnership with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and announced the Robert Mann Endowed Chairs in Violin and Chamber Music.”

In January, the Thornton School and the Manhattan School of Music announced a combined gift of $6 million from philanthropists Alfred and Claude Mann in honor of Robert Mann, the founder of the Juilliard String Quartet. The gift enabled the schools to create the Robert Mann Endowed Chairs in Violin and Chamber Music. At Thornton, the new position will join three other chairs that honor legends of the string world and USC Thornton faculty: Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, and Alice and Eleonore Schoenfeld. “We are so excited and honored to add Robert Mann’s name to this impressive list to act as an inspiration to our students,” said Cutietta. Along with the Mann Endowed Chair, Thornton has added four esteemed faculty members to its Strings...
USC Thornton School of Music Focuses On Exceptional Artist Development For 2011

Program. Henry Gronnier, associate professor of practice and the new director of chamber music, and David Allen Moore, assistant professor of double bass, are joined by renowned violinist Kathleen Winkler and bassist Paul Ellison, both distinguished visiting artists.

The new faculty members enhance the Thornton Strings Program’s unique approach to music education. Under the leadership of celebrated concert artist and teacher Midori, the Jascha Heifetz Chair in Violin, a sense of community pervades the department. A team of faculty works with each student while encouraging them to take advantage of the superb liberal arts education offered by USC. “I prefer this openness to learning,” said Midori. “We want our students to advocate for music in many different ways. We don’t want to take a cookie cutter approach. We want to treat individuals as individuals, preparing them for the globalized world and the realities of life as a working musician.”

With the goal of offering students a broad experience, the Strings Program is developing strategic partnerships with professional music organizations across Los Angeles. Thornton recently announced a new collaboration with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (LACO). The LACO-USC Thornton Strings Mentorship Program offers select Thornton students opportunities to play with LACO. Master’s student Mary Reed, the winner of this year’s audition, will join LACO’s bass section in April in a program that includes work by John Harbison, Dvořák, and Beethoven.

“The new collaboration is part of a drive to enhance the preparedness of strings students in their professional careers,” said Midori. The mentorship program is unique among conservatories in the U.S., and the value of the experience goes beyond the concerts. “It’s about so much more than the actual performances,” said Midori. “It’s about learning what it’s like to be an orchestral musician.”

In addition to its collaboration with LACO, the Thornton School of Music is the collegiate partner of choice for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera, the GRAMMY Foundation, and The Recording Academy.

“We offer an educational experience unlike any other institution in the country, and a large part of our appeal is that we are a comprehensive school that is reflective of our community,” said Cutietta. “From our partnerships with major orchestras to our work with the GRAMMY Foundation and The Recording Academy, we have tried to capture everything in Los Angeles. That’s what great schools do. They reflect their environment.”

###

About the USC Thornton School of Music

USC Thornton School of Music Focuses On Exceptional Artist Development For 2011
Led by Dean Dr. Robert A. Cutietta, the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music brings together a stellar faculty chosen from a broad spectrum of the music profession and gifted students from around the globe. Founded in 1884, and today the oldest continually operating cultural institution in Los Angeles, the Thornton School consistently ranks among the top one percent of the nation’s music schools and conservatories. Graduates of the school attain positions with major orchestras, ensembles, recording studios and music industry firms and perform on stages and in studios around the world.

Blending the rigors of a traditional conservatory-style education with the benefits of studying at a leading research university, the Thornton School offers students a thorough music education in a real-world context. Located at the center of Los Angeles, the school is the collegiate partner of choice for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the GRAMMY Foundation and The Recording Academy, to name a few.

In addition to their work with these ensembles, Thornton students are a constant presence in local classrooms, reaching out to the next generation of musicians through music education and appreciation courses. With its faculty, its students, its events and its work, the Thornton School is one of the most important cultural resources in Los Angeles. For more information, visit www.usc.edu/music.