



## PRESS RELEASE

### Apocalypse with the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra

The Cyprus Symphony Orchestra presents the programme titled "Apocalypse" under the Music Direction of Greek conductor Michalis Economou. More specifically we will hear the works: *Fratres* by A. Pärt and *Apocalypse* (Symphony No. 4) by Cypriot composer Savvas Savva, which was awarded in the CySO Foundation Composition Competition 2010 for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Republic of Cyprus. In the second half we will hear Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36.

Three evening concerts which start at 8:30pm will take place on Thursday 26 January 2012 at the Strovolos Municipal Theatre, Nicosia (tel. 22 313010), on Friday 27 January 2012 at the Larnaca Municipal Theatre (tel. 24 665794) and on Saturday 28 January at the Rialto Theatre, Limassol (tel. 77777745). Tickets are available at the Theatres' box office at €12 and €7 (18- 26 years old and pensioners). Free entrance for children and students under 18 years old. Information: 22 463144 and [www.cyso.org.cy](http://www.cyso.org.cy).

#### The programme:

Born in 1935, **Arvo Pärt** is perhaps Estonia's most notable composer and one of the most radical representatives of the Soviet Avant-garde. His music has been subject to an extensive evolutionary process – starting with Neoclassicism and followed by other 20th century trends such as Dodecaphony, Aleatorism and Serialism. The composer was always in search for his own individual language, however, and in the late 1960s, he withdrew from composition in order to study the principles of polyphony and the Gregorian Chant. When he emerged from his eight-year-long silence, he invented a new compositional technique inspired by chant music, which he named tintinnabuli (Latin for "little bells"). "Tintinnabulation is an area I sometimes wander into when I am searching for answers – in my life, my music, my work", the composer has confessed. Showcasing this particular technique, the highly meditative *Fratres* was composed in 1977. The original version was for strings, wind and percussion, although a great number of adaptations have followed, including one for violin, strings and percussion and one for violin and piano. Pärt described *Fratres* as "the evocation of bells – the bells' complex but rich sonorous mass of overtones, the gradual unfolding of patterns implicit in the sound itself, and the idea of a sound effect that is simultaneously static and in flux."

According to the composer; *Apocalypse* has been composed at a particularly difficult period for the future of Cyprus and all of its inhabitants. It's a monothematic one-movement Symphony, in which I practically unfold my concern as to "what happens next" (in regard to our future) with the percussion holding the leading role in the work serving as a constant alert, allowing no complacency for any of us, while winds and strings maintain and convey my anguish for the end; sometimes by isocratima and others by outbreaks. An end which I admit I see with restrained optimism; yet with my fears and concerns regarding our struggle for salvation floating around vividly. I believe that *Apocalypse* acts prophetically as it leaves to the listener no room for complacency in order to feel the salvation, but urges him to think and search within in order to find the answers to the questions he himself raises, and determine what it is that he really wants for the future of his country; as a state and as part of Europe. Even more so today, when Europe struggles more than ever before to survive and tries to define the role it really wants to play in the world.



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By the time **Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36** was premiered in Vienna, in 1803, the 33-year-old Beethoven was almost totally deaf. The composer started drafting the Symphony back in the beginning of 1801 when he was still in denial about his condition. Later that year, he confessed to his friend doctor, Franz Wegeler, that for almost two years he avoided attending any social events because he could not admit to people that "he was deaf". He was still positive, however, that his hearing would improve, hence he sought the advice of many doctors who prescribed a number of treatments, to no avail... Perhaps the best medical advice came from Dr. Schmidt who advised Beethoven to abandon Vienna for the quiet suburb of Heiligenstadt. During the summer of 1802, the composer (having already moved to Heiligenstadt), was working on a number of works, including his Second Symphony and it was obvious that the composer had fallen into deep depression. None of these feelings is apparent nevertheless in his sunny and extremely energetic Second Symphony, probably because Beethoven completed the work a few weeks before he decided to write a testament. The Symphony, which was premiered along with the composer's Third Piano Concerto and the oratorio Christ on the Mount of Olives, betrays something of Haydn's spirit – mainly as with regards to the orchestration – although it is certainly more forward-looking. And while some music-critics commended that "the first symphony was better", the Second Symphony was, by the end of the year, triumphantly embraced by the general public.

### The conductor:

**Michalis Economou** has conducted the Athens State Orchestra, the Kamerata Orchestra of Megaron, the Municipal and State Orchestras of Thessaloniki, the National Symphony Orchestra of Greek TV, the Orchestra of Colours, the Patras Orchestra, the Contemporary Radio Orchestra of Greece and various orchestras and ensembles in the world including the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra, the Festival Orchestra di Sofia, the ALEA III contemporary ensemble and many more. His works have been performed all over the world and he has been commissioned to compose music for Carnegie Hall and, among other venues, for the Athens Megaron Concert Hall. Currently, Mr. Economou teaches orchestral conducting in Greece and has trained at least 50 young conductors since year 2003 in collaboration with National Technical University of Athens, the Hellenic American University, the Conservatories "Musiki Orizontes", Katerina Maska and "Anagennisi", the Composition and Performance Music Workshop and the Music Ensembles of Athens Municipality. Also, for four years he was the producer and presenter of the programme "Sto Podium" at the 3<sup>rd</sup> radio channel of Greek Radio. Since 1998 he is a regular member of the Greek Composers Union. In May 2004 Mr Economou became Chairman and Artistic Director of the Music Department of the National Technical University of Athens and since year 2000, he has been the permanent conductor of the Athens Symphony Orchestra. Recently, after the anonymous voting of more than 100 orchestra members of 33 nationalities, Mr Economou was elected Music Director of the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra.

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