



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **KW native Evan Mitchell appointed Assistant Conductor of Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony**

The **Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony** (KWS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Waterloo Region native **Evan Mitchell** to the new position of **Assistant Conductor** beginning in August 2011. Recently finishing a three-year appointment as Assistant Conductor at the Vancouver Symphony, Mr. Mitchell studied percussion at Wilfrid Laurier University and conducting at the University of Toronto with KWS Music Director Laureate Raffi Armenian. Long associations with the KWS include performing as an extra in the percussion section and leadership roles in the KWS Youth Orchestra under Paul Pulford.

"The audition panel's decision was unanimous," notes Music Director Edwin Outwater. "Evan's talent as a musician and leader is undeniable and I look forward to working with him over the next few years."

The post of Assistant Conductor replaces the position of Resident Conductor at the KWS, which was held for 14 years by second trumpet Daniel Warren. His outstanding work conducting the KWS has been noted by critics and audiences alike, and he will continue to lead the orchestra as an occasional guest conductor.

The Assistant Conductor position provides a major opportunity for a young Canadian conductor to work on a daily basis with a leading professional symphony orchestra and youth orchestra.

Mr. Mitchell makes his KWS conducting debut in the fall and will lead the Canadian Brass on October 28 & 29 – the second concert in the Pops series. A major role will be conducting the senior Youth Orchestra of the KWS' nationally recognized Youth Orchestra Program, succeeding Paul Pulford as conductor. Mr. Mitchell will be working with the KWS Education and Community Programs staff, conducting and hosting the KWS school concerts sponsored by Research in Motion and two Family series concerts in January and May. Over the next three seasons, he will continue to conduct school concerts, the Family Series and many other main series performances.

"We are privileged to bring Evan into our Education, Youth Orchestra and Community programs," says Director of Education and Community Programs Christopher Sharpe. "With his recent hands-on experience with the Vancouver Symphony's programs and his past experience as a graduate of Wilfrid Laurier University, musician and former Assistant Conductor of the KWS Youth Orchestra, Evan brings a wealth of knowledge and creativity from which we can directly benefit."

"I'm absolutely thrilled to be working with the KWS," says Mr. Mitchell. "I'm extraordinarily lucky to be a part of this orchestra which has always meant so much to me, and I'm looking forward to coming home and once again being part of this wonderful community."

Evan Mitchell is proving to be one of Canada's most innovative young conductors. He has recently completed his residency as the Assistant Conductor of the Vancouver Symphony, where he led the Vancouver Symphony in more than 100 concerts over a three year period, acted as a Canadian ambassador during an historic two week tour of China, Korea and Macau, and served as an official consultant to the Vancouver Olympic Committee and Assistant Producer for the recording of the medal ceremony national anthems. Mitchell has also taught extensively with student musicians of all ages and is often called upon as an adjudicator, coach, and repeat guest speaker in schools. He is an award-winning percussionist both home and abroad.

Winner of the Jean-Marie Beaudet award for orchestral conducting, Mitchell studied with Maestro Raffi Armenian, earning his Masters degree at the University of Toronto on full scholarship. He has also studied with Helmuth Rilling and continues his more than seven-year partnership with the National Academy Orchestra, Canada's largest Orchestral Music festival, where he holds the title of "Associate Mentor" to the orchestral conducting and percussive apprentices.

Formed in 1945, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony is the cultural centrepiece of Waterloo Region. The orchestra comprises 52 professional musicians under full-time contract and plays close to 90 performances of music from early Baroque composer Monteverdi through commissioned music by Arcade Fire bassist and Canadian composer Richard Reed Parry. The KWS is nationally praised for its performances, has an education program unparalleled for an organization of its size, and is heard regularly across Canada on CBC. KWS Music Director Edwin Outwater is one of North America's most creative, dynamic, and engaging conductors. His innovative programming has earned him international acclaim, in particular for his Intersections series.

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