



Antonia Joy Wilson
Artistic Director & Conductor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MIDLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MOVES FORWARD IN SEARCH FOR NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR**

The Midland Symphony Orchestra's advisory board and Midland Center for the Arts announces its decision to move forward in the search for a new music director. The determination was made in October to investigate alternative models for the artistic direction of the MSO, and subsequent discussions among the management of MCFTA, the MSO advisory board, Central Michigan University, MSO staff and musicians resulted in the decision to hire a non-resident music director.

The non-resident music director model allows the MSO opportunities for new collaborations and growth by building on its strengths, and is a model followed by many smaller orchestras across the country, including the Traverse Symphony Orchestra, the Lansing Symphony Orchestra and the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra. The MSO search committee will undertake a nationwide search for a new music director, identifying the best candidates for the position.

"The MSO has enjoyed its collaborative relationship with Central Michigan University over the past 13 years, and that alliance has contributed to our organization's growth," remarks MSO Board Chair John Decker. "We continue to work closely with the University's School of Music and look forward to ongoing partnerships, including scholarships for CMU music students, master classes with our guest artists, and the opportunity for CMU faculty and students to perform with the orchestra. Now, the time has come for the MSO to move forward in a search for its own music director."

Midland Center for the Arts will work in close partnership with the MSO Board to make the best, most informed decision possible. A qualified conductor – outstanding in musicianship and one who connects with the musicians, audience and local community – will ensure that the MSO continues providing the region with the unparalleled symphonic music they have come to expect.

"This is positive news for the MSO, and one that the musicians welcome," says Matt Thomas, MSO Principal Trumpet and Advisory Board Player Representative. "The orchestra members are familiar with this prevailing model of conductor employment, and know that it not only allows the MSO to hire someone of the highest artistic standard, but is also a perfect fit for our current and future budgets. What may feel unfamiliar to the community is actually a well-established system that is used extremely successfully by the majority of U.S. orchestras similar in size to ours."

Maestra Antonia Joy Wilson remains the MSO Artistic Director and Conductor for the 2010/2011 season. Upcoming concerts conducted by Maestra Wilson are *Fire and Ice* on February 5 and *Dancing Dreams & Reveries* on April 16.

"During Maestra Wilson's time with us she conducted many exciting concerts and initiated artistic collaborations that garnered positive reviews from the media and our audiences," says Mr. Decker. "The public is invited to a post-concert reception after the April 16 concert in celebration of Maestra Wilson's years as resident Artistic Director and Conductor of the MSO."

For its 2011/2012 season the MSO will engage exciting and accomplished guest conductors from across the country. Conductor Emeritus Carlton Woods returns to open the season in October, featuring a guest pianist and Sibelius' *Symphony No. 2*. Other season highlights focus on classical masterpieces, featuring the works of timeless composers including Schumann, Shostakovich, Rachmaninoff, Gershwin, Copland, Bernstein, Strauss and Ravel. *Swingin' Holiday Pops* with the

Capitol Quartet (saxophone quartet) will provide a fun, lighthearted way to get in the holiday spirit. A formal season announcement and subscription offerings will be available to the public in March, 2011.

The Midland Symphony Orchestra (MSO) has provided mid-Michigan with continuous symphonic music since 1936. Along with concerts featuring renowned guest artists, the MSO also provides educational opportunities through its touring ensembles in the schools, Tunes for Tots, prelude lectures, scholarships, music appreciation programs and guest artist master classes and residencies.

Midland Center for the Arts, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation formed under the laws of the State of Michigan incorporating six groups: Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art, Center Stage Theatre, MATRIX:MIDLAND, Midland County Historical Society, Midland Symphony Orchestra, and Music Society – Choral. Activities at Midland Center for the Arts are supported in part by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. For the latest Center news, visit our web site at www.mcfta.org.

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