



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2005

**Gerard Schwarz, Music Director for the Seattle Symphony,
To Receive Honorary Degree From Cornish College of the Arts**

Cornish College of the Arts
Commencement Ceremony
Saturday, May 14, 2005, 2 pm
Saint Mark's Cathedral on Capitol Hill
1245 10th Avenue East, Seattle

SEATTLE, WA – Cornish College of the Arts is proud to announce the 2005 Commencement ceremony, held on Saturday, May 14 at Saint Mark's Cathedral in Seattle. Gerard Schwarz, Music Director for Seattle Symphony, will be this year's commencement speaker and will be awarded an Honorary Degree.

Graduating students will have the rare opportunity to hear renowned American conductor Gerard Schwarz speak. In an award-winning career spanning almost 40 years, Schwarz is celebrating his 20th Anniversary as Seattle Symphony Music Director. Since becoming Music Director at Seattle Symphony, Schwarz has initiated several concert series and introduced many new works to Seattle Symphony's repertoire. His nearly 100 recordings with the Seattle Symphony, including music by many contemporary American composers, have received widespread recognition including 10 Grammy nominations.

The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) recognized Gerard Schwarz in 2002 as a champion of American music and the music of our time. According to ASCAP, Schwarz "exemplifies the ideal American conductor. ASCAP honors his leadership and commitment to bring the music of our time to audiences everywhere, through his concerts and recordings."

Schwarz began his conducting career in 1966, and within ten years he was appointed Music Director of the Waterloo Music Festival, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, New York Chamber Symphony, Eliot Feld Dance Company and the Erick Hawkins Dance Company. In 1981 he founded the Music Today Contemporary Series and served as its Music Director through 1989. From 1982 to 2001, he was Music Director of New York's Mostly Mozart Festival and currently serves as its Conductor Emeritus. Schwarz co-founded the New York Chamber Symphony in 1977 and served as its Music Director through the ensemble's 25th anniversary season in 2002. This season is also Schwarz' fourth season as Music Director of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

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Gerard Schwarz's many recordings with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra have been devoted to music of American composers such as Howard Hanson, Aaron Copland, William Schuman, David Diamond, Paul Creston, as well as music of Stravinsky, Strauss, Bartok, Ravel, Schumann, Shostakovich, and Wagner. These recordings have earned accolades and "Best Classical Album" awards from Stereo Review Magazine, as well as more than ten Grammy nominations. Schwarz has also recorded with other orchestras including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Scottish and English Chamber Orchestras, Mostly Mozart, the New York Chamber Symphony, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

Born to Viennese parents, Schwarz is a graduate of the High School of Performing Arts and The Juilliard School. He is a recipient of the Ditson Conductor's Award from Columbia University. Winner of numerous awards, Schwarz was named Conductor of the Year in 1994 by *Musical America International Directory of the Performing Arts*, the first American to receive this award. In April 2003, the Pacific Northwest Branch of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences gave Schwarz its first "IMPACT" lifetime achievement award. He also serves on the National Council on the Arts.

ABOUT CORNISH COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Cornish College of the Arts is the premier, accredited arts college in the Northwest, inspiring the highest standards of artistic and academic excellence. Founded in 1914 by Nellie Cornish, Cornish College is the only private, accredited college in the region offering baccalaureate degrees in visual and performing arts. Cornish College offers a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in art, dance, design, theater and performance production. Cornish College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design.

Over the years, Cornish has hosted a parade of important artists in the roles of students, teachers or as visiting artists-in-residence, including John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Mark Tobey, Martha Graham, Morris Graves, Imogen Cunningham, Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass, Jacob Lawrence, Mark Morris, Meredith Monk, Bobbie McFerrin, Obo Addy, Rinde Eckert, Bebe Miller, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Bill Frisell, Robin Holcomb, Jeff Koons, Michael Spafford, Lynda Barry, Chet Huntley, Syvilla Fort, Ping Chong, Kenny Werner, Ralph Towner, Mary Frank, Thornton Wilder, Lou Harrison, Jane Ira Bloom, Kraig Patterson, Musicians Accord, Bun Ching Lam, Brendan Fraser, Myra Melford, Sharon Isbin, Joanne Brackeen, Oliver Lake, California Ear Unit, Colorado Quartet, and Gary Peacock, among others.

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