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## **PROMINENT DAKOTA SCHOLARS WILL LEAD COMMUNITY CHATS DURING “DAKOTA MUSIC TOUR” STARTING MAY 22 IN MANKATO, MINNESOTA**

**SAINT PAUL, Minn., May 5** – Four prominent Dakota scholars will lead community chats with audiences at the four venues of “Dakota Music Tour” – a 90-minute musical response to the Dakota-American events of 1862 in Minnesota. “Dakota Music Tour” will feature four concerts that will reach out to Dakota and non-Dakota communities in southern Minnesota.

“Dakota Music Tour” will begin Sunday, May 22 in Mankato, which was the site of the largest mass execution in American history when 38 Dakota men were hung on December 26, 1862.

**The Dakota scholars will include: Roger Trudell, chairman, Santee Sioux Nation of Nebraska; Dave Larson, Dakota educator and elder, former tribal chairman of the Lower Sioux Community, tribal historian, and descendant of Chief Wapasha (Wabasha); Tom Ross (Minnesota Indian Affairs Council cultural resources specialist and former council member of the Upper Sioux Community); and Melvin Houston (Santee Sioux Nation of Nebraska spokesman on Minnesota Indian affairs).**

**“The community chats led by these four well respected Dakota scholars are designed to explore the intersection of our common humanity and the history of the Dakota and non-Dakota communities,” says composer, flutist and scholar Brent Michael Davids (Mohican).**

Each concert will feature traditional American Indian music, Western classical music, music that merges the two together, and community chats. Internationally renowned composer, flutist and scholar Brent Michael Davids, a citizen of the Mohican Nation, has composed the orchestra music, which will be performed by the Mankato Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Music Director and Conductor Kenneth Freed. The production will feature Santee Dakota Maza Kute Drummers, Chickasaw/Choctaw actor and musician Cochise Anderson, and Manny Laureano, who is the principal trumpet of the Minnesota Orchestra. Funding has been provided by the “Arts Tour Minnesota,” a new program of the voter-approved “Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment” of the Minnesota Constitution.

The four stops on the concert tour will include: Mankato West High School Auditorium, Mankato (Sunday, May 22, 3 p.m.), **community chat led by Trudell**; Estebo Performing Arts Center, Redwood Valley High School, Redwood Falls (Saturday, May 28, 1 p.m.), **community chat led by Tom Ross**; Prairie Edge Casino, Upper Sioux Community, Granite Falls (Sunday, May 29, 1 p.m.), **community chat led by Dave Larson**; and Winona-Dakota Connection 2011, Unity Park, Winona (Saturday, June 4, noon), **community chat led by Melvin Houston, Trudell, Larson and Ross.**

The Winona concert will be hosted by the Winona-Dakota Unity Alliance (WDUA), a nonprofit organization formed in 2004 with Winona Mayor Jerry Miller, whose mission it is to continue the reconciliation process. Dakota citizens from across North America, including Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Canada, will be in attendance.

In addition to the musical production, a documentary video will be produced by Flandreau Santee Dakota filmmaker Syd Beane.

“It is my hope that ‘Dakota Music Tour’ will offer a musical response to the terrible events of 1862 that took so many Dakota and American lives,” says Davids. “By musically honoring the Dakota people and their intersection with the Western world, all citizens can benefit from a deeper understanding of our shared living history.”

Visit Mankato Symphony Orchestra at HYPERLINK "<http://www.mankatosymphony.com/>" <http://www.mankatosymphony.com/>. For news, blog postings, and other information about Dakota Music Tour, visit HYPERLINK "<http://dakotamusictour.blogspot.com/>" <http://dakotamusictour.blogspot.com/>.

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## **About the Production**

### **Brent Michael Davids**

When American composers are described as “native” the definition is not usually as accurate as when applied to Brent Michael Davids, an American Indian and enrolled citizen of the Mohican Nation. He has consciously and deliberately focused on his indigenous heritage, honoring its unique qualities in a contemporary setting. He blends Eurocentric techniques of classical music with Native musical traditions in a way that is never glib or facile, but rich in resonance. Davids’ composer career spans 35 years, including awards from ASCAP, NEA, Rockefeller Foundation, In-Vision, Joffrey Ballet, Chanticleer, Kronos Quartet, Meet-The-Composer, Miró Quartet, National Symphony Orchestra, Bush Foundation, McKnight Foundation, and Jerome Foundation, among others. Performed in Lakota tribal communities and several SD cities, Davids’ “Black Hills Olowan” was featured in 2009 by the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra and the famed Porcupine Singers on a SDPB-TV network special. Davids’ work, Powwow Symphony (for Powwow M.C. and Orchestra), was premiered by New Mexico Symphony (1999) and Phoenix Symphony (2002) to rave reviews. Commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra, his Canyon Sunrise (1996) premiered at the Kennedy Center to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Kennedy Center and the 60th Anniversary of the NSO. Garrison Keillor asked Davids for an orchestra work, Prayer & Celebration (2005), that premiered on “A Prairie Home Companion” show in Indiana. Davids has also been commissioned by Grammy Award-winning Chanticleer, for Night Chant (1997), Mohican Soup (1999), and Un-Covered Wagon (2003). In 2006, the National Endowment for the Arts named Davids among the nation’s most celebrated choral composers in its project “American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius,” along with Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Foster, and 25 others. Davids holds Bachelors and Masters degrees in Music Composition from Northern Illinois University (1981) and Arizona State University (1992) respectively, trained at Redford’s Sundance Institute (1998), and in 2003 apprenticed with film composer Stephen Warbeck (Shakespeare In Love) on the TV-Miniserie Dreamkeeper (Hallmark and ABC). He has garnered the Distinguished Alumni Awards from both of the universities he attended, NIU (1996) and ASU (2004), and has been nominated for the prestigious CalArts Alpert Award two times (1995, 2006). Davids has been featured on ABC, NBC, CBS, NPR, PBS and NAPT.

Davids' film scores include: *The 1920 Classic Myth: Last of the Mohicans* (2003), *World of American Indian Dance* (2003), *The Business of Fancy Dancing* (2002), *The Silent Enemy* (1996) & *Bright Circle* (2006).

### **Mankato Symphony Orchestra**

Organized in 1950, the mission of the Mankato Symphony Orchestra is to celebrate classical music through public presentation, to promote arts education by introducing the children of our community to the wonders of orchestral and choral music, to make such music accessible to all residents, and to contribute vital energy to regional economic development and cultural tourism. Under Music Director and Conductor Kenneth Freed, the Mankato Symphony Orchestra has raised its musical excellence to new heights in recent years. Its mission is carried out by providing free music education opportunities and concerts to children, five concerts featuring the full symphony, a family concert series for parents and children, and a brand new chamber music series.

### **Maza Kute Drummers**

The Maza Kute Drummers are a traditional singing group from the Santee Indian Reservation. Santee, Nebraska is located in the northeast corner of Nebraska along the banks of the Missouri river. Formed in 1979, the Maza Kute drum group has been singing for more than 30 years. This drum group has kept the music alive in the Santee community with the help of many great singers. They have singers and relatives scattered throughout Indian Country and have traveled extensively.

### **M. Cochise Anderson**

M. Cochise Anderson, from the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations of Oklahoma, is a musician, actor, poet, spoken word performance artist, playwright, storyteller, and educator. Cochise received the Jerome Fellowship for playwriting and the Bush Artist Fellowship for Storytelling/Performance Art. He has performed at The National Museum of the American Indian twice and The Open House Arts Festival at the Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. He has also been a repeat performer at the Lincoln Center Outdoors Series in New York City. Cochise has been the instructor for The Penumbra Theatre's Summer Youth Institute and he has worked as a Native American cultural arts educator for the past 20 years throughout the country. From elementary schools to colleges and national cultural institutions he has developed a variety of curriculums and programs to entertain and educate all people about the beauty and struggle of Native America.

### **Manny Laureano**

Principal Trumpet Manny Laureano, who joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 1981, has performed solos in all the Orchestra's concert series and served as an assistant conductor during the 2005-06 season. In 2003 he premiered Stephen Paulus' Concerto for Two Trumpets and Orchestra, which was written for him and Doc Severinsen, who was then the Orchestra's principal pops conductor. His other solos with the Orchestra have included Haydn's Trumpet Concerto, Copland's *Quiet City*, Clarke's *Southern Cross*, Vizzutti's *Compadre* and Hertel's Concerto a cinque in D major. In demand as a conductor, Laureano serves with his wife, Claudette, as co-music director of the Minnesota Youth Symphonies. In 2006 he led a series of Minnesota Orchestra Young People's Concerts, *¡Viva Latino!* Laureano, a native New Yorker, began

playing trumpet in the public school system and later studied with James Smith while at the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music and Arts and with William Vacchiano of the New York Philharmonic. After graduating from the Juilliard School of Music, Laureano served as principal trumpet of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra.

### **Sydney D. Beane**

Sydney D. Beane was born in 1942 on the Mdewakanton Dakota/Flandreau Santee Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. His father was Sydney E. Beane a Nakota/Yankton Sioux Tribal member whose grandfather was Chief Blue Cloud. His mother Lillian M. Beane at 98 years is the oldest living member of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe and the granddaughter of John Eastman who along with his father Jacob Many Lightnings Eastman and brother Charles Alexander Eastman were exiled from Minnesota after the 1862 Dakota War. Syd, like his Eastman ancestors, has been a life long educator, activist and organizer for American Indian concerns locally and nationally. He is generally recognized as one of the leading authorities in the country on the relocation and aftermath of American Indians into the cities from rural reservation communities. His educational experience includes college and graduate degrees with related teaching positions at a Minnesota high school, Arizona State University, and San Francisco State University. He has administered American Indian Center organizations in Phoenix, Arizona, and Lincoln, Nebraska, while also serving as Assistant to the Executive Director of Intertribal Council of Arizona and Chairman of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribal Holding Company. His work in media began in Phoenix during the 1970's where he was for eight years the co-host of the 21st Century Native Americans TV talk show on a major network. While working in California, Syd became a founder of the Native Media & Technology Network (NMTN), which recruits and trains American Indian youth for employment opportunities in the entertainment industry. He is serving as the NMTN National Field Coordinator of the Los Angeles-based American Indian Summer Institute for Film & TV co-sponsored by NMTN with Fox Entertainment Group. His current media board memberships include; Lincoln, Nebraska-based Native American Public Telecommunications (public television and new media production), Oakland, California-based Native Public Media (Native radio production), and Minneapolis, MN based Migizi Communications (training Native youth in media). Most recently, Syd was the co-producer/writer/director of Native Nations: Standing Together for Civil Rights a one-hour documentary on the American Indian Civil Rights Movement released by ABC, NBC, and the Hallmark Channel for national network broadcast. He is currently producing a documentary film about his great uncle Charles Alexander Eastman currently titled Ohiyesa: The Soul of an Indian. The music score for this film is under development with Composer Brent Michael David and the Mankato Symphony Orchestra. His Ohiyesa Sampler can be viewed online on You Tube. Syd and his wife Becky currently reside in Plymouth, Minnesota, where he is an adjunct faculty at Minneapolis Community & Technical College.