



KITCHENER-WATERLOO  
SYMPHONY

EDWIN OUTWATER • MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**The Composer is Dead: A Delightfully Unpleasant Concert Lead by KWS  
Conductor Edwin Outwater – We warn you to STAY AWAY!**

KITCHENER, Ontario (March 18, 2008) - If you are interested in something pleasant, like a bluebird singing to a bunny, you would be better off reading some other announcement. This announcement is about *The Composer is Dead*, an alarmingly stunning musical collaboration between Lemony Snicket, one of the most popular children's authors of our time, Nathaniel Stookey, the preposterously talented composer and the KW Symphony's own astoundingly gifted Music Director, Edwin Outwater. If you delight in things depressing and morbidly amusing, then it is advisable that you reserve your seats now. For those unlucky few who dare to witness this calamity in Guelph, at the River Run Centre on March 27, your adventure begins at 7:30pm and again in Kitchener at the Centre In The Square on March 28<sup>th</sup> at 8pm.

The idea for the show began when Edwin Outwater contacted Mr. Stookey to ask if Mr. Snicket would be willing to narrate a performance of *Peter and the Wolf*. Unfortunately he was and the evening was a terrible success. Following the concert, Mr. Stookey approached Mr. Snicket with the idea of collaborating on a new work, a concert in the tradition of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. *The Composer is Dead* was the result and everything went swiftly downhill from there.

*The Composer is Dead* is a gripping murder mystery in which every member of the orchestra is a suspect; this new work ruthlessly tricks unsuspecting audience members into listening closely. Consider, for instance, the suspicious alibi of the concertmaster: "I was talking with the composer about a cadenza," he said, using a word which here means 'fancy solo part.' I'd never murder someone who was giving me such an excellent opportunity to show off."

According to Mr. Snicket, who himself narrates the piece, "I have been asked if I might say a word or two about the text of *The Composer Is Dead*, and the one or two words are 'Boo hoo.' The story—which, as far as I know, is absolutely true—is so heartbreakingly glum that I cannot imagine that you will be able to listen to it without dabbing at your tears with a nearby handkerchief, or, if necessary, the program you are now holding in your hands."

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Adds Mr. Stookey, "I hope I'm not giving too much away by saying that *The Composer is Dead* ends with a funeral march. The march is made up of music about death by some of the world's greatest composers, a solid majority of whom are alas no longer with us. Classical composers have always had a preoccupation with death, partly because we are human, like you, partly because we grapple with the mysteries of the universe, partly because death sells records and always has, even before there were records. Most of the great classical composers wrote at least one piece about death. Many wrote several. The funeral march that ends *The Composer is Dead* includes brief quotations from some of these works, which happen to represent some of the most extraordinary music of all time. (All the rest of the music in the piece is mine and will also be by a dead composer some day, which is very sad if you stop to think about it.)"

We are sorry to tell you that when it premiered at the San Francisco Symphony on July 8, 2006, *The Composer is Dead* left audience members in utter hysterics. Indeed, San Francisco Chronicle critic Joshua Kosman was left no choice but to call it "deliciously morbid entertainment."

Now, please consider yourselves informed of the awful, wretched fate which awaits those who dare come to the show. (We highly advise staying at home) However, for the thrill seekers and sickeningly curious among you, we promise an evening you will never forget. (Or an evening you may want to forget)

Autographed books will be available for purchase at both concerts, not that you will want one anyway.

**Tickets** for the Centre In the Square (CITS) range in price from \$15 to \$50 and may be purchased at the CITS box office (101 Queen Street North, Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6P7), by phone at 519-578-1570, toll free at 1-800-265-8977 or online at [www.centre-square.com](http://www.centre-square.com).

Tickets for the River Run Centre range in price from \$15 to \$38 and may be purchased at the RRC box office (35 Woolwich Street, Guelph, Ontario N1H 3V1), by phone at 519-763-3000 or online at [www.riverrun.ca](http://www.riverrun.ca).

Information regarding group sales is available through the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony at 519-745-4711.

## *At a Glance...*

Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony *The Composer is Dead*

Edwin Outwater, conductor

Lemony Snickett, narrator

Nathaniel Stookey, composer/host

Mar. 27, 2008 – 7:30 p.m. at River Run Centre, Guelph

Mar. 28, 2008 – 8:00 p.m. at Centre In The Square, Kitchener

### **Tickets:**

#### **River Run Centre**

**Call: 519-763-3000 or toll free 1-877-520-2408**

**Online: [info@riverrun.ca](mailto:info@riverrun.ca)**

**Prices: \$38 and \$15 for Children and Students (with valid ID)**

#### **Centre In The Square Box Office**

**Call: 519-578-1570 or toll free 1-800-265-8977**

**Online: [www.centre-square.com](http://www.centre-square.com)**

**Prices: \$27, \$39, \$46, \$50 and \$15 for Children and Students (with valid ID)**

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