



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BARITONE STEPHEN SALTERS PREMIERES WITH VSO
AT OUTDOOR CONCERT SEPTEMBER 8

Awadagin Pratt conducts orchestra at free Esther Short Park concert

(Vancouver, WA) Renowned baritone Stephen Salters will be the featured singer at the Sunday, September 8, 2014 concert at Esther Short Park in downtown Vancouver. The 3 pm concert will be free and open to the public.

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra is happy to return a beloved Vancouver tradition to Esther Short Park after a five-year absence. The orchestra will play less than two weeks before the beginning of The VSO's 35th season at Skyview Concert Hall. For the first time ever, the orchestra will be led by acclaimed conductor, pianist and violinist, Awadagin Pratt.

The program will feature the overture from *La forza del destino* by Verdi, *Old American Songs* by Copland, *Slavonic Dances* by Dvořák, some stirring gospel spirituals and ends with Beethoven's majestic Symphony No. 5.

“We are so happy to be able to give the gift of music back to the community after such a long absence,” said VSO Chair Kathy McDonald. “Thanks go out to the Friends of the VSO for their tireless efforts to raise the funds to restore such a crowd-pleasing family event. Most of all, this is a chance for families to gather in a beautiful setting to listen to their community's great symphony.”

This will be Stephen Salters' premiere with The VSO. He first gained wide attention in 1996, when he took first place in Belgium's Queen Elizabeth International Competition of Singing. His passionate and impeccably articulated performances of a wide range of repertoire have won him acclaim throughout Europe, the UK, Asia and the United States. On the opera stage with over 30 roles played, he excels equally in contemporary works and standard repertoire. He received praise in the role of the Minotaur in the world premiere of Philippe Fenelon's *les Rois* for Opera National in Bordeaux. He created the title role in Elena Ruehr's *Toussaint Before the Spirits* for Opera Boston and has been acclaimed for his performances in *Don Giovanni*, *le Nozze de Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*.

Mr. Salters has demonstrated his versatility on the concert stage in such diverse works as Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*. Recently, he was seen in performances of Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer*, Copland's *Old American Songs*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, Britten's *War Requiem*, and

Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in a concert performance of *Der Freischutz*; Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*, Zemlinsky's *Symphonic Songs*, and the *Brahms Requiem* as well as Handel's *Messiah*. He has appeared with symphonies in Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Pittsburgh and San Francisco as well as the Chicago Symphony at Ravinia, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris, the National Orchestra of Belgium, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Radio Symphony Orchestra Frankfurt, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and the Tokyo Philharmonic. A versatile stylist, he also appears in Pops programs, including with the Boston Pops on their national holiday tour and twice at Bravo! Vail with the Rochester Philharmonic.

About The VSO

Entering its 35th season, The VSO has been a cornerstone of Southwest Washington's arts community, providing world-renowned classical music, promoting young musicians, and opening doors to classical music for young audiences through events such as the annual In-School concerts, Young Artists Competition and various family-styled special events and performances. With a full-sized professional orchestra of over 70 core members, many of whom are teachers in our school districts and beyond, the orchestra provides our region with a multi-concert classical season every year. The VSO performs at Skyview Concert Hall, 1300 NW 139th Street, Vancouver. Season support for The VSO is provided by Sterling Bank and All Classical Portland. Tickets for the VSO Chamber Series and all VSO symphony concerts are on sale now at (360) 735-7278 or www.vancouverSymphony.org.

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