

## **Portland Youth Philharmonic Celebrates Jacob Avshalomov's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

PORTLAND, OR — (September 19, 2008)

To celebrate the 90th birthday of Jacob Avshalomov, Conductor Laureate of the Portland Youth Philharmonic, new Conductor and Music Director David Hattner will add Avshalomov's composition *Seasons' Greetings* to the Winter Concert on March 7.

David Hattner said, "Jacob Avshalomov is an important figure in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century music. His accomplishments as both a composer and as an educator of young performers are of the highest caliber imaginable. I am thrilled that PYP will help Mr. Avshalomov and his family celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. I consider it an honor to be conducting the world premiere of *Seasons' Greetings* with the PYP."

"What finer way to celebrate our rich history and 85th anniversary than to pay tribute to Jacob Avshalomov. We welcome the opportunity to bring together alumni, past board, and current members for this joyous occasion," said Board President Paul Migchelbrink.

Event Details: March 7, 2009, Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, 7:30 PM  
Repertoire: Mussorgsky, Prelude to Khovantchina; Avshalomov, *Seasons' Greetings*;  
Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 4; Annual PYP Concerto Competition Winner

Jacob Avshalomov, Conductor Emeritus of the Portland Youth Philharmonic, was the Conductor and Music Director of the PYP from 1954 to 1995. Born in 1919 in Tsingtao, China, Mr. Avshalomov learned early the richness of cultural diversity. He came to America in 1937, attended Reed College 1939-1941 and Eastman School of Music 1941-1943, and attained bachelor of music and master of arts degrees. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II with the Office of Strategic Services.

Following the war, Mr. Avshalomov taught music at Columbia University for eight years and founded the Columbia University Chorus. He was the winner of the A.M. Ditson Fellowship for Composition, twice, the Ernest Bloch Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the New York Music Critics Award for his composition "Tom O'Bedlam," the Naumberg Recording Award, the Oregon Governor's Arts Award, and Portland's First Citizen Award. He was awarded honorary doctorates from Reed College, the University of Portland, and Linfield College. Composing throughout his career, he recently premiered a chamber work, "Cintimini Turns," at Oregon State University on June 29, 2008.

Mr. Avshalomov became the conductor of the Portland Junior Symphony/Youth Philharmonic in 1954, taking the orchestra on six international tours to Europe and Asia. During his tenure with the Portland Youth Philharmonic, he published three books on the Orchestra, won the ASCAP Award for Imaginative Programming of Contemporary Music, and served as a visiting professor and guest conductor at the University of Washington, Tanglewood, and the Aspen School of Music. Under his direction, PYP performed at the Seattle World's Fair, was the first recording orchestra in the Northwest, and appeared on three national television programs on public broadcasting. During his 40 years with the Portland Youth Philharmonic, "Mr. A.," as he is lovingly known to his musical alumni, inspired those around him by believing in their abilities and giving them courage to succeed.

*PYP, America's first established youth orchestra, has nearly 300 members who make up the four ensembles under the PYP umbrella. The Philharmonic Orchestra, the most advanced group, presents a subscription series of concerts in the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. Members come from throughout NW Oregon and SW Washington and are chosen by auditions each year.*