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**BOSTON YOUTH SYMPHONY TO PERFORM WITH YO-YO MA AT
SYMPHONY HALL, MAY 18, 2008**

World Renowned Cellist Helps BYS Celebrate 50 Years of Musical Excellence

(BOSTON - March 18, 2008) The Boston Youth Symphony (BYS) under the artistic leadership of Music Director Federico Cortese, performs the Dvořák Cello Concerto with master cellist Yo-Yo Ma, as well as other works, as part of its 50th anniversary season, at Symphony Hall on Sunday, May 18 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$50-75, and are available at the Symphony Hall box office at www.bostonsymphonyhall.org or by calling (888) 266-1200. For more information, visit www.BYSOweb.org.

Boston Youth Symphony
Federico Cortese, *Conductor*

DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 8
DVOŘÁK Cello Concerto
Yo-Yo Ma, *Cello*

"It is an incredible opportunity for me as an aspiring musician to play this amazing piece with one of the world's most accomplished cellists," said concertmaster Hillary Ditmars, a 12th grader at Westford Academy in Westford, Massachusetts. The entire orchestra is absolutely thrilled to have the chance to work with Yo-Yo Ma. I am honored to be the concertmaster, and I know it will be an unforgettable experience!"

BYS is the most advanced of four different orchestras that comprise the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO). This 120-member ensemble is made up of students grades seven through 12 from all over New England. BYS performs a wide range of demanding orchestral repertoire, conducted by Mr. Cortese.

This Gala event celebrates the BYSO's 50th Anniversary season and continued commitment to pursue musical excellence, and funds raised will support its endowment. The concert will also feature performances by BYSO's Young People's String Orchestra (YPSO) and Intensive

Community Program (ICP), both conducted by Bonnie Black. YPSO focuses on major repertoire from the standard string orchestra literature and ICP provides rigorous string instrument instruction serving underrepresented youth in the region.

The BYS concludes its Boston season on June 15 with the premiere of a BYSO-commissioned piece, *Evening Prayer*, by Robert Beaser, at Sanders Theatre, followed by its 19th international tour to perform by invitation at Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Germany, one of the finest concert halls in the world.

Federico Cortese

Federico Cortese assumed the post of Music Director of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras in 1999. He has conducted throughout the United States, Australia and Europe. He joined the New England String Ensemble as Conductor in 2005 and was named Music Director in 2006. From 1998-2002, he served as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa. In addition to his annual scheduled concerts, Mr. Cortese led the Boston Symphony several times in Symphony Hall and at Tanglewood, most notably performing Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. Mr. Cortese has conducted several prominent symphony orchestras, including Atlanta, Dallas, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony and Oslo Philharmonic. Opera engagements have included Maggio Musicale in Florence, the Spoleto Festival in Italy and the United States, the Boston Lyric Opera, the Saint Louis Opera, the Finnish National Opera, Opera Australia, and the Washington Opera. Mr. Cortese has been music coordinator and associate conductor of the Spoleto Festival in Italy. He also served as Assistant Conductor to Robert Spano at the Brooklyn Philharmonic and to Daniele Gatti at the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Mr. Cortese studied composition and conducting at the Conservatorio di Santa Cecilia in Rome and subsequently studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. In addition, he has been a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. Mr. Cortese also studied literature and humanities and holds a law degree from La Sapienza University in Rome.

Yo-Yo Ma

The many-faceted career of cellist Yo-Yo Ma is testament to his continual search for new ways to communicate with audiences, and to his personal desire for artistic growth and renewal. Whether performing a new concerto, revisiting a familiar work from the cello repertoire, coming together with colleagues for chamber music or exploring musical forms outside of the Western classical tradition, Mr. Ma strives to find connections that stimulate the imagination.

Yo-Yo Ma maintains a balance between his engagements as soloist with orchestras throughout the world and his recital and chamber music activities. He draws inspiration from a wide circle of collaborators, each fueled by the artists' interactions. One of Mr. Ma's goals is the exploration of music as a means of communication, and as a vehicle for the migrations of ideas, across a range of cultures throughout the world.

Expanding upon this interest, Mr. Ma established the Silk Road Project to promote the study of the cultural, artistic and intellectual traditions along the ancient Silk Road trade route that stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Pacific Ocean. By examining the flow of ideas throughout this vast area, the Project seeks to illuminate the heritages of the Silk Road countries and identify the voices that represent these traditions today.

Mr. Ma is an exclusive Sony BMG Masterworks artist, and his discography of over 75 albums (including more than 15 Grammy award winners) reflects his wide-ranging interests. In addition to the standard concerto repertoire, Mr. Ma has recorded many of the large body of works that he has commissioned or premiered. Across the full range of releases Mr. Ma remains one of the best-selling recording artists in the classical field (www.yo-yoma.com).

Yo-Yo Ma is strongly committed to educational programs that not only bring young audiences into contact with music but also allow them to participate in its creation. While touring, he takes time whenever possible to conduct master classes as well as more informal programs for students—musicians and non-musicians alike.

Bonnie Black

Bonnie Black has been a conductor with BYSO since 1998. She brings her experience as director, conductor, and master teacher for many successful programs, including the Harlem School of the Arts, the Harlem Children's Orchestra, and the Arcady Youth Orchestra. Honored through the years for her innovative teaching methodologies, Ms. Black is currently the Artistic Director of BYSO's Intensive Community Program, a dynamic string program for underrepresented youth. She also teaches on the faculty of Boston University's College of Fine Arts, and maintains an active involvement mentoring and training teachers in string pedagogy and methods.

About Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras

Since its inception at BU fifty years ago, the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (formerly the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras or GBYSO) continues to achieve the highest artistic standards, and remains committed to musical excellence. Today, the BYSO is widely regarded

as one of the country's finest youth orchestras and is recognized nationally as a model music and arts education organization.

The BYSO receives generous support from JPMorgan Chase Foundation, its 50th Anniversary Season sponsor, as well as Boston University's College of Fine Arts, individual donors and Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). According to the selection criteria used in MCC's three-year granting cycle, the BYSO was ranked first among all orchestras in the Commonwealth for its quality, community outreach and fiscal and administrative management.

JPMorgan Chase

The BYSO 50th Anniversary Season is made possible in part by JPMorgan Chase Foundation. JPMorgan Chase Foundation's legacy of supporting education, the arts and diversity inspired the sponsorship of BYSO's 50th Anniversary season. JPMorgan Chase shares a common mission of a commitment to excellence, access to the arts and investing in and inspiring youth. To encourage youth engagement in and access to the arts, JPMorgan Chase & Co. has subsidized 50 Gala concert tickets for distribution community groups in the Boston area; individual and corporate sponsors have subsidized an additional 100.

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