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Press Contact:

Kathryn Mueller: 520-XXX-XXXX

kathrynmueller@gmail.com



TRIO TO TOUR INDONESIA

Tucson-based Swara Sonora Trio to give a musical Peace Tour to benefit UNICEF

Three Tucson musicians, Kathryn Mueller, Nathan Krueger, and Aryo Wicaksono, will perform in several cities across Indonesia on the Swara Sonora Trio's Peace Tour in August 2009. The tour is a fundraiser, with all proceeds going to UNICEF's Indonesia Country Office. The goal of the tour is not only to raise funds for children's programs, but also to use music to foster understanding and cooperation among cultures through concerts, teaching, and artistic collaborations.

The Swara Sonora Trio is based in Tucson and made up of Kathryn Mueller, soprano, Nathan Krueger, baritone, and Aryo Wicaksono, piano. The members of the trio met during graduate school at The University of Arizona. All three members of the trio are accomplished soloists in their own right, with performance careers that span the United States and Europe. For four years they also taught opera and language arts to first graders as a team in the Opening Minds Through the Arts program in the Tucson public schools. Krueger and Wicaksono still teach together at Hudlow and Corbett Elementary Schools.

The idea for the Peace Tour was born when the trio, at the urging of Indonesian-born Wicaksono, commissioned "Love and Variations" from Ananda Sukarlan, a prominent Indonesian composer. The work for soprano, baritone, and piano consists of eight songs in three languages (English, Spanish, and Indonesian). The successful world premiere, and the international scope of the commission project, inspired them to bring Sukarlan's music to Indonesia and to interact with audiences and musicians in that country.

"Our trio was formed with the goal of uniting diverse artistic disciplines and exploring multi-

cultural themes; deciding to dedicate the tour as a fundraiser for UNICEF was a natural extension of that mission,” says Mueller. “As performers we all strive to infuse our art with purpose, and the dual goal of international cooperation and support for UNICEF’s children’s programs makes this tour more special than the average performance project.”

The main idea of the Peace Tour, according to pianist Wicaksono, “is to create a performance that will hopefully promote world peace, mutual understanding, cooperation, tolerance, and compassion.” Says baritone Krueger, “what I enjoy most about performing is sharing music with others. The opportunity to share Ananda Sukarlan's wonderful ‘Love & Variations’ with people both here in the United States and in Indonesia is very exciting.”

The Peace Tour will take the Swara Sonora Trio to five Indonesian cities: Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya on Java, and Denpasar in Bali. The trio will spend three weeks giving performances in each city as well as doing master classes at music schools, meeting with young musicians, and performing in musical collaborations with local performers.

The trio has embarked on an ambitious fundraising campaign to support the tour, and sponsors can make tax-deductible donations to the tour through Swara Sonora’s website. For further information, or to support the Peace Tour and UNICEF in Indonesia, please visit the trio’s website, www.swarasonora.com.

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P.O. Box 31453, Tucson, AZ 85751
(520) XXX-XXXX www.swarasonora.com swarasonora@gmail.com