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For Immediate Release

**OAKLAND EAST BAY SYMPHONY, OAKLAND SYMPHONY CHORUS AND
OAKLAND YOUTH ORCHESTRA
FORM NEW ALLIANCE:
*EAST BAY PERFORMING ARTS***

Music organizations combine operations for greater impact and strength

OAKLAND, Calif., December 4, 2009—The Boards of Directors of **Oakland East Bay Symphony (OEBS)**, **Oakland Symphony Chorus (OSC)** and **Oakland Youth Orchestra (OYO)** today announced their approval of a plan to form a new alliance called **East Bay Performing Arts (EBPA)**. This new configuration will allow the organizations to increase the impact of their artistic and educational programs and bring music to more people. The 2009-10 season programming for these groups will not change as a result of this merger.

Commenting on the new organization, OEBS Music Director **Michael Morgan** said, “These organizations have already been working together so closely for so long that an actual merger is completely logical and will allow all of us to pursue even more ambitious artistic goals. I hope this will also make us a louder voice for the arts in the East Bay, even for groups that are not members of this alliance at present but might benefit from our advocacy. “

EBPA offers enhanced opportunities for year-round programming, administrative efficiency, artistic synergy and collaboration. By combining efforts, these organizations will be able to reach more people, teach more children, guide students from learning to play instruments to playing in an orchestra, and expand their musical offerings.

Tom Schunn, president of the OYO board stated, “OYO has always had a strong connection to OEBS, especially with Michael Morgan our Artistic Director and **Bryan Nies** our Principal Conductor. Additionally, many OYO alumni have been regular members of the symphony. We can now look forward to even more educational and performance opportunities for our young musicians as a result of this exciting merger.”

OSC board president **Barbara Miller** expressed similar sentiments. “We have enjoyed a close relationship with OEBS for many years, performing with them on their holiday concert, *Let Us Break Bread Together*, as well as on countless subscription concerts, including performances of Bernstein's *Mass*, Verdi's *Requiem* and Kern and Hammerstein's *Show Boat*. Merging with OEBS and OYO will better enable us to achieve our mission of performing a wide range of choral music to an expanding and diverse audience, and educating our community in the art of choral singing.”

Over the next few months the legal steps to complete the merger of OEBS, OSC and OYO will take place. All three groups will then operate as part of EBPA under OEBS’s current 501C3 status. All board members of the three groups will be invited to join the board of EBPA to oversee the new organization, and each organization will maintain its own advisory board. Staff positions will not be eliminated due to this consolidation. The integration of staff will occur over the next twelve to twenty-four months.

“There is a great deal of collective talent and experience among the Board, staff and musicians of these three organizations,” said OEBS board president Paul Garrison, reflecting on the opportunities created by the merger. “Combining those assets will enable us to operate more efficiently, more fully support our visionary artistic leadership, and further leverage our position in the Bay Area’s cultural community.”

OEBS and OSC will perform together next week in ***Let Us Break Bread Together: A Target Holiday Celebration*** at Oakland’s historic **Paramount Theatre, 2025 Broadway on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 4 pm**. **Ticket prices** for this concert, which is not part of OEBS’s regular subscription series, range from \$15 to \$40 for adults, \$10 for youth under 18 and \$50 for a special Family 4-Pack. For tickets visit www.oeps.org or call Ticketmaster at 800-745-3000. Groups of 10 or more get 20% off. For information on group discounts, call 510-836-1981 or email grouptix@oeps.org.

Oakland East Bay Symphony’s regular subscription series takes place November through May at the Paramount Theatre. For complete information about OEBS’s season, visit www.oeps.org or call 510-444-0801. Information about Oakland Symphony Chorus can be found at www.oaklandsymphonychorus.org, and about Oakland Youth Orchestra at www.oyo.org.

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Video available upon request.*

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