



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### When We See A Picture in Sound

**March 1, 2005** - PITTSBURGH, PA Everyone knows the saying, “A picture is worth a thousand words” but no one ever hears “A picture is worth a thousand notes.” In his new work *Sketches of Home*, composer Todd Goodman brings this phrase to life. Goodman’s inspiration comes from the works of painter Kevin Kutz in this new work commissioned by the Altoona Symphony Orchestra. This three-movement voyage for string orchestra looks at subjects Kutz tackles in some of his most cherished works. Goodman, who is an advocate and lover of paintings by living artists, has always had a special place in his heart for Kutz’s work.

I grew up with his works on our walls so Kevin was a clear choice in deciding on an artist for this *Sketches of Home* project. Growing up in Bedford, I was sheltered from the exposure to contemporary art that others my age would find in more urban areas; however, the quality of local art is astonishing. The community of Bedford is so lucky to have artists like Kutz to give the town such a strong tradition of incredible quality.

The movements of this work capture the spirit of three landmarks that define the rural landscape of my picturesque hometown, Bedford, Pennsylvania. The first movement, *The Narrows Bridge* is written about a large concrete bridge that was built in 1934 to cross the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River. This bridge has a special place in my heart, for I had to pass this bridge everyday of my childhood. Kevin’s treatment of this landmark gives the bridge a noble and stately quality, yet the traffic above and the river below are complete opposites. Rushing people and dangerous intersections create an unsettling sense to the bridge while the river, in good weather, was peaceful and serene. The second movement, *Pitt Street in the Winter* depicts one of my favorite places. The new fallen snow creates a clean blanket over the town. The crisp air and quiet streets always yield to the townspeople as they make their way out of their comfortable homes. Typically there are always people who do not like winters, but in the end the feeling of a beautiful snow always lingers. The third and final movement, *The Coffee Pot* plays with an excellent example of the wild roadside architecture of the 1930’s as a building which acted as its own sign. This landmark although never a working business during my lifetime, has always been a work of art and something unique to the Bedford landscape. This movement takes the listener back to the working coffee shop and the hustle of such an establishment. One can hear the customers come and go and the coffee perk in the background. As the piece moves to present day, a happy figure is played by the principle players of the orchestra which express the joy of still having this wonderful landmark. At the end the two worlds come together and the essence of Mr. Kutz’s work is captured as just pure jubilation.

Todd Goodman, resident composer  
*Altoona Symphony Orchestra*

Kutz was born in Pittsburgh in 1955, and began painting at age 8. He studied at the Kiski School in Saltsburg and Carnegie Mellon University, and held a residency at the Vermont Studio Colony. He is a multi-award winning artist, including taking First Place in 2001 at Laurel Arts’ Juried Competition and Best of Show at the 2001 Bedford County Arts Festival. His work has been widely exhibited in solo and group exhibitions, and his paintings are included in several private and public collections, including the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art and the Westmoreland Museum of American Art.

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*Sketches of Home* marks the seventh work commissioned of Goodman by the ASO in this his third season as resident composer. Mr. Goodman has had the honor of writing the opening work for the last three seasons, including a special commission *Fanfare for a New Era* to celebrate the orchestra's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Goodman's works have been a staple of the repertoire of the Altoona Symphony Orchestra since the opening of their 2002 season. His Symphony No. 1 *Fields of Crimson, Some Assembly Required, He Needs His Sleep, American Rhetoric* and others have entertained previous ASO audiences.

"It's rare for a composer to have such a long on-going relationship with an orchestra, but this is a great fit for all concerned! The orchestra and the public really enjoy Todd's music, and Todd enjoys both the opportunity to compose a variety of different kinds of works for the ASO as well as the opportunity to have his music played where he grew up."

Maestro Nicholas Palmer, music director  
*Altoona Symphony Orchestra*

The premiere of his Symphony No. 1 *Fields of Crimson* which was released on the 140th anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg has been widely well received. Music critics, Civil War authors and scholars, music educators, and orchestra administration have all found the music and story of *Fields of Crimson* to be a powerful new addition to the American music repertoire.

"I found the entire piece including the spoken word, Wonderfully Haunting. Well Done!"  
Jeff Shaara, author *Gods and Generals*

Other upcoming projects for Mr. Goodman include a commission from the Juniata College Wind Symphony to write them a new piece to be premiered in April 2006. The piece *River of Sorrows* is based in part, with the generous blessing of the author, on the recent best selling regional book *Juniata: River of Sorrows* by area writer Dennis McIlnay, as well as the composer's own studies and experiences with the river and its heritage. The Altoona Symphony has also commissioned Goodman to write a new work (title TBA) for brass and percussion to open its February 26, 2006 concert. Goodman is also working on a commission to write incidental music for the play *No Way Out: Letters and Lessons of the Holocaust* by Susan Prinz Shear (visit [www.WrongNoteMedia.com](http://www.WrongNoteMedia.com) for updated information).

Tickets for the world premiere of *Sketches of Home* by the Altoona Symphony Orchestra on March 12, 2005 at the Mishler Theater can be purchased by calling 814.943.2500.

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"Without music, life would be a mistake."

— *Friedrich Nietzsche*