

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Some Assembly Required**

*a musical journey for children*

**February 16, 2004 - BROOMFIELD, CO** Sometimes the smallest thing, with effort and time, can become grand. That is the moral of ***Some Assembly Required*** a musical journey for children written by composer Todd Goodman and author Justin Cober-Lake. This new work commissioned by the Altoona Symphony Orchestra ([www.AltoonaSymphony.org](http://www.AltoonaSymphony.org)) for a series of Young People's concerts will be premiered on February 25, 2004, at the Mishler Theatre in Altoona, Pennsylvania with an audience of over a thousand fourth graders from regional public, private and parochial schools.

***Some Assembly Required*** takes the listener through a young girl's experience with a complex toy spaceship and her frustration with its assembly. When she gets fed up with the toy and her parents lack of attention to her struggles, goes outside for a walk to relax. She ends up discovering a nest of baby birds and recalls a story she heard on TV where a flock of young birds defend their home from a hawk by ganging together to fight the larger bird. As she's walking she starts to also think about the acorns she's been throwing and that a small tiny acorn, like the one in her hand, can grow into the largest oak tree just like the one in her neighborhood. With this discovery, she heads back to her house and decides that she to could work a little harder to put her new spaceship together.

*"This work is an exciting mix of music and storytelling that is sure to warm the hearts of listeners of all ages. The internal struggle this girl feels reflects our own personal struggles we have dealt with growing up. Sometimes we didn't think we were big enough, or skinny enough, or tall enough and the list goes on". -Todd Goodman*

Todd Goodman, a native of Bedford, Pennsylvania, wrote this piece to help show kids that with hard work, they can do anything they put their minds to. Mr. Goodman, resident composer for the Altoona Symphony, has been a regular part of these concerts as a guest speaker/composer. A movement from his dramatic retelling of the battle of Gettysburg, ***Symphony No. 1 "Fields of Crimson"*** was played at the March 2003 Young People's Concert and the kids who attended liked it more than the music from the movie ***Harry Potter*** by world renowned film composer John Williams. Todd Goodman currently resides in Broomfield, Colorado, with his wife Katie, and their two St. Bernards "Doc" and Snuffy.

These free Young People Concerts are directed concerts utilizing a particular theme, and pre-concert preparation for teachers and students include an outline of the material that will be performed, including excerpts of the music, information on the composers, basic instrument identification and teaching plans. The fourth graders are also invited to participate through projects, either written composition or art work that illustrates the particular theme. Art and music teachers are encouraged to integrate and utilize the materials to better prepare their students for the concert experience. One of the favorite part of these concerts for most children is the instrument demonstration and explanation of the works performed by Maestro Nicholas Palmer and guest artists.

(OVER)

The combination of music and the spoken word in *Some Assembly Required*, narrated at the premiere by WTAJ-TV news anchor Carolyn Donaldson, adds another level of information to a medium of music that many of these kids will see for the first time. An orchestra and classical music can be an overwhelming experience and storytelling with the music can help a child better understand the composer, the conductor and musicians' intent.

*"The acorn gets watered and the birds team up. I just need to grow a little bit, but that will happen soon enough. I can also take care of things now just by sticking at it, like with this spaceship, and by learning what I can. The package this ship came in says 'Some Assembly Required'. I guess I can handle that." - Justin Cober-Lake from **Some Assembly Required***

Also a native of Bedford, Justin Cober-Lake is a professional author and journalist currently living with his wife Nicole in Charlottesville, Virginia. Mr. Cober-Lake is a regular music reviewer with the online music journal [www.popmatters.com](http://www.popmatters.com) and is a constant collaborator with Todd Goodman. Being friends since middle school, Cober-Lake and Goodman work seamlessly together even with a 1,200 mile location gap. Justin Cober-Lake has written text for Goodman's *Symphony No. 1 "Fields of Crimson"* a recording of which is now available on the Wrong Note Media Label ([www.WrongNoteMedia.com](http://www.WrongNoteMedia.com)); *In Bloom* a chamber work for high voice, clarinet and piano; and *He Needs His Sleep*, a reflection on the birth of Christ for chorus and orchestra (premiered by the Altoona Symphony in December 2003). Mr. Cober-Lake's style is evocative yet inviting and makes a wonderful addition to the music of Todd Goodman.

Reservations for third and fourth grade students are required for the Altoona Symphony Orchestra's Young People Concerts and can be made by calling 814.943.2500.

For more information about the music of Todd Goodman and Justin Cober-Lake please visit: [www.WrongNoteMedia.com](http://www.WrongNoteMedia.com) or call 720.890.0380.

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"Without music, life would be a mistake."

— *Friedrich Nietzsche*