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AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA'S *PERFORMANCE TODAY* TO AIR MUSIC FROM FIRST-EVER CONCERTO FOR SHOFAR AND TROMBONE, BY AMERICAN COMPOSER MEIRA WARSHAUER

Performance Today broadcast of *Tekeeyah (a call)* to coincide with
Jewish High Holidays

Program hosted by *Performance Today's* Fred Child to feature portions of the
concerto along with comments from Meira Warshauer and soloist Haim Avitsur

(New York, NY, September 26, 2011) On Thursday, September 29th, American Public Media's *Performance Today*, the most-listened-to classical music radio show in the United States, will air portions of the first-ever concerto for *shofar*, trombone and orchestra, composed by Meira Warshauer and recorded by *shofar*/trombone soloist Haim Avitsur with the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra, Peter Vronsky conducting. The concerto, entitled *Tekeeyah (a call)* is featured on Warshauer's critically acclaimed new CD *Living Breathing Earth*, released by Navona Records. Hosted by *Performance Today's* Fred Child, the show will include comments from the composer and the soloist.

The broadcast of *Tekeeyah (a call)* will coincide with the celebration of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. This concerto for trombone and *shofar*, the instrument which traditionally ushers in the Jewish New Year, incorporates Jewish themes (the *shofar* call) in a contemporary context, with novel textures such as orchestral whispering and quiet *shofar* pulsing.

"In the Jewish tradition, the *shofar*, the horn of a ram or other kosher animal, is sounded to wake up the soul. The raw animal sound reaches inside, rousing us from our slumber of complacency and breaking walls of separation. In this concerto, the *shofar* calls to all of humanity", commented composer **Meira Warshauer**.

On Thursday, September 29th, *Performance Today* will feature excerpts from *Tekeeyah (a call)* during the first hour of the program on public radio stations throughout the country. (Check performancetoday.org/stations for local listings and times). The program will also be posted for streaming on performancetoday.org.

For more info about composer **Meira Warshauer**, visit her website at meirawarshauer.com

Additional info on *Living Breathing Earth* CD and how to purchase it is available at meirawarshauer.com/NEW/pages/breathing_earth.html

About *Tekeeyah (a call)*, concerto for shofar, trombone and orchestra

"Tekeeyah" is the Hebrew term for a long tone played on the *shofar* (the horn of a ram or other kosher animal), which is sounded to wake up the soul. The three sections of this concerto mark discreet shifts in the process of awakening. In the first section, **a call**, quiet whispers in the *shofar* and winds join with harmonic glissandi in the strings to evoke a time before we were born. A series of gentle string harmonies accompanies the soul on its journey into the world. Here the

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shofar sounds in quiet, disembodied tones, which become more intense as the music progresses. In the second section, **breaking walls**, the entire orchestra serves a wake-up call, with both solo trombone and *shofar* blasts contributing to the alarm. As the walls collapse and dissolve, a calm follows, with lyrical trombone solos and later, gently pulsing *shofar* calls. In the last section, **dance of truth**, a joyful 9/8 dance rhythm led by the solo trombone culminates in a climax of traditional *shofar* blasts.

On *Rosh Hashanah* (Jewish New Year), the *shofar* is sounded in three distinct patterns: *tekeeyah*, a long tone; *shevarim*, three shorter tones; and *teruah*, at least nine staccato notes. *Tekeeyah g'dolah*, a very long *tekeeyah*, concludes the sequence of sounding the *shofar* on *Rosh Hashanah*, and is sounded again at the end of *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement), concluding 10 days of *teshuvah* (return or repentance). For *Yom HaShoah* (Holocaust Remembrance Day), the *shofar* may be sounded with mournful, quiet tones and louder, aching cries. All of these sounds are part of the fabric of this composition.

Tekeeyah (a call) was commissioned by Lilly Stern and Bruce Filler, and Bill and Linda Stern, in loving memory of their parents, Jadzia and Ben Stern, and by a consortium of the following orchestras: Wilmington (NC) Symphony Orchestra, Steven Errante, Conductor; Brevard Philharmonic, Donald Portnoy, Music Director and Conductor; University of South Carolina Symphony, Donald Portnoy, Music Director and Conductor; Western Piedmont Symphony, John Gordon Ross, Music Director and Conductor; and Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra, Neal Gittleman, Music Director and Conductor. The work was recorded in July 2010 and released commercially on April 26, 2011. It began its premiere season performances in 2009 with soloist Haim Avitsur and commissioning orchestras Wilmington Symphony (NC), Brevard Philharmonic (NC), and University of South Carolina Symphony. Consortium premieres continued with Western Piedmont Symphony's performances in spring 2011, and will conclude with the Dayton Philharmonic's performances in the 2012-2013 season.

About Meira Warshauer

Meira Warshauer's music has been performed to critical acclaim throughout North America and Europe, as well as in South America, the Middle East, and Asia. Her musical palette is wide, ranging from traditional Jewish prayer modes to minimalist textures with rich melodic contours, and from joyful jazz-influenced rhythms to imaginative orchestrations of the natural world. At its core, her music expresses her personal spiritual journey. Her work also reflects a love and concern for the earth. Her *Symphony No. 1: Living, Breathing Earth*, commissioned by the Dayton Philharmonic, South Carolina Philharmonic, and Western Piedmont Symphony, was profiled by Aileen LeBlanc for PRI's "Living on Earth," and broadcast during the symphony's premiere season in 2007, and again in 2011. *Symphony No. 1* and *Tekeeyah* (a call) were recorded by the Moravian Philharmonic for Navona Records' 2011 release, *Living Breathing Earth* (NV5842). Warshauer has received awards from ASCAP, Meet the Composer, and the American Music Center, and Residency Fellowships from the MacDowell Colony and the Hambidge Center. She was twice awarded the Artist Fellowship in Music by the S.C. Arts Commission, and received the first Art and Cultural Achievement Award from the Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina. Her composition *Yishakeyni (Sweeter than Wine)* received the Miriam Gideon Award from the International Association of Women in Music. She has served on the faculties of Columbia College, University of South Carolina Honors College, and as the Nancy A. Smith Distinguished Visitor at Coastal Carolina University.

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Meira Maxine Warshauer graduated from Harvard University (B.A. *magna cum laude*), New England Conservatory of Music (M.M. *with honors*), and the University of South Carolina (D.M.A.), and studied composition with Mario Davidovsky, Jacob Druckman, William Thomas McKinley, and Gordon Goodwin. Her music is published by Lauren Keiser Music Publishing, Hildegard Music Publishing, World Music Press, and Kol Meira Publications. A native of Wilmington, North Carolina, she resides in Columbia, South Carolina, with her husband, Sam Baker.

Her other recordings include *YES!*, recorded by Richard Stoltzman and the Warsaw Philharmonic on *Perspectives* (MMC2162); *Bati l'Gani (I entered My Garden)*, recorded by Paula Robison and Cyro Baptista on *Places of the Spirit* (Pucker Gallery); *Shevet Achim (Brothers Dwell)* for two bass clarinets, recorded by Richard Nunemaker on *The Louisville Project* (AUR3127); *Bracha* (Blessing) for violin and piano, recorded by the Kobayashi-Grey duo on *Feminissisimo* (Troy1081); *Revelation*, recorded by the Silesian State Philharmonic on *Robert Black Conducts* (MMC2008); and *Jerusalem, Open Your Gates (third movement)* performed live by Neil Casey and the University of South Carolina Symphony on *Musicscapes, Vol 1* (MMC2170D). Other all-Warshauer CDs are the soundtrack to the documentary *Land of Promise: The Jews of South Carolina* (Kol Meira 2002) and *Spirals of Light: Chamber Music and Poetry on Themes of Enlightenment* (Kol Meira 2001).

About soloist Haim Avitsur

Trombonist Haim Avitsur has premiered over 80 new pieces encompassing a broad range of styles from solo trombone to chamber music and orchestra. Mr. Avitsur is the Trombone Professor at West Chester University School of Music (PA) and at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College, NY. He has served on the faculty of the University of Virginia and as Principal Trombonist of the Charlottesville Symphony orchestra. He is founder of the Summer Trombone Workshop at Temple University, PA. The Workshop was also in residence in Taiwan in 2007 and 2008, and at Rowan University, NJ, in 2009. Mr. Avitsur is a clinician for the Edwards Instrument Company. Read more about Haim Avitsur at www.haimavitsur.com.

About Performance Today®

Performance Today is one of America's most popular classical music radio programs, with more than 1.4 million weekly listeners on 243 stations around the country. *Performance Today* features live concerts by famous artists in concert halls around the globe and from the American Public Media studios, as well as interviews, news and features. Listeners to *Performance Today*, on any given day, may hear excerpts from performances in the great concert halls of New York, Prague, London, Berlin and Paris. The list of concert performers and studio guests on *Performance Today* is a Who's Who of the classical music world: the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, Yo Yo Ma, Gil Shaham, Midori, Maxim Vengerov, Itzhak Perlman, Andrew Manze, Pierre Boulez, John Adams, John Tavener, Plácido Domingo, Renée Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli, the Emerson Quartet, the Eroica Trio, Sir Simon Rattle, Lorin Maazel, Daniel Barenboim, Michael Tilson Thomas, Ravi Shankar, Mikhail Pletnev, Emanuel Ax, and Alfred Brendel, to name just a few. Several times each year, *Performance Today* also features young American soloists with the potential for great careers, as "Young Artists in Residence."