



Salida Aspen Concerts

For immediate release

Contact: Earle Kittleman, 719-539-6153, or kittleman@amigo.net

PIANIST RITA SLOAN TO PLAY SALIDA WITH PRINCIPAL HORNIST JENNIFER MONTONE AND VIOLINIST DAVID HALEN—AUG. 12

SALIDA, COLORADO—At 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 12 at John Held Auditorium, the Salida Aspen Concert series will present a horn player who occupies two prestigious chairs: Jennifer Montone is principal hornist for both the Philadelphia Orchestra and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

In late June, she was named to the principal hornist post in Philadelphia. She is the first woman to become principal horn of a Big Five orchestra (Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, and Philadelphia) in 60 years.

She had been offered the post in spring of this year, but considered remaining in St. Louis as principal hornist under Music Director David Robertson. So a deal was worked out: in the upcoming season, she will be principal horn in Philadelphia, but will retain the title in St. Louis, and play 12 concerts there. “It’s a unique situation,” says Jeff Trammel, director of communications for the St. Louis Symphony. The dual seats aren’t permanent; after one season, she will choose which seat to occupy. It’s truly a game of high-ranking musical chairs.

And what’s almost as amazing: she is only 29 years old. A graduate of Juilliard School in New York, she was associate principal horn with the Dallas Symphony from 2000 to 2003, and also played with the Metropolitan Opera orchestra and New York Philharmonic.

Joining her will be Russian-born pianist Rita Sloan, who studied under such famed performers as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Leon Fleisher and Rosina Lhevinne. She has played at chamber music festivals all over the world, including Chicago, Seattle, New York and Aspen.

Rounding out the group will be violinist David Halen, concertmaster of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared as a soloist with the St. Louis, San Francisco, and Houston symphonies, and has served as concertmaster at the Aspen Music Festival.

At the Aug. 12 concert, Montone and Sloan will perform “Villanelle for Horn and Piano,” a work by Paul Dukas, the French composer best known for “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice.” In May, Montone performed the work at New York’s Lincoln Center. The host announced that she was considering the Philadelphia Orchestra’s offer, but had not yet acquired a taste for Philly cheese steaks. Hearing the villanelle is a special treat, because Dukas, French composer who lived from 1865 to 1935, destroyed most of his works later in life.

Sloan, Halen and Montone will perform Johannes Brahms’s well-loved Trio in E-Flat Major. It was composed in 1865 when Brahms was mourning his mother’s death. The work was inspired by the composer’s walks through the woods. The slow movement contains parts from a Rhenish folksong that evokes happy childhood memories.

Halen and Sloan will perform the Sonata for Violin and Piano by Cesar Franck. The piece was written in 1886 for the wedding of famed violinist Eugene Ysaye, and has become one of the most-performed works for violin and piano from the Romantic era.

Finally, in honor of the 250th anniversary of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s birth, Sloan will play from Mozart’s 15 Variations for Solo Piano. He began writing them from the time he was nine years old until he died at age 35. Many are variations on opera arias, and some on children’s melodies such as the tune we know as “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.”

—end—

Aug. 2, 2006