



New York

March 26, 2009

Press Release

German President Horst Köhler Honors Lewis Kaplan

One of the most influential musicians of our time, he has built bridges between Germany and the United States

In a ceremony at The Juilliard School on April 29, 2009, Lewis Kaplan will receive the *Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany*, awarded by President Horst Kohler, from the hands of Consul General Dr. Horst Freitag.

Mr. Kaplan, a Senior Professor of Violin and Chamber Music at his alma mater, The Juilliard School in New York, is being honored for his continuous commitment and dedication to the development of exchange programs between German and U.S. music students. In the context of these programs, talented students from the "Hanns Eisler" Academy in Berlin and The Juilliard School in New York created joint chamber music projects in master classes, given by Juilliard and Hanns Eisler faculty, and performed together. Mr. Kaplan was instrumental not only in teaching these classes but also in organizing the exchanges and enlisting sponsors. Given the importance that performing in New York and Berlin has for both the young musicians and the audiences in both cities, this exchange program has been particularly enriching.

Mr. Kaplan's connection with Germany reaches back more than 50 years since his time as concertmaster and soloist of the US Seventh Army Symphony stationed in Stuttgart, where he performed throughout Germany building bridges between the two countries. Since then he has performed and given master classes regularly in many of the major music centers in Germany. He has used his skills and his enthusiasm to build musical bridges between Germany and the United States of America.

Mr. Kaplan is also well-known as founder of one of the world's most important festivals, the Bowdoin International Music Festival, and is conductor of the Festival Orchestra. He has been listed as one of the 100 most influential musicians of our time by the International Biographical Centre in Cambridge, England.

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