



CONTACT:

Stephanie DuPre

310.985.4037

stephanie@heartbeatsforchildren.org

Cellist Lynn Harrell and violinist Helen Nightengale to introduce pilot program for helping children on the world's most remote stage: the mountaintop villages of Nepal

Couple to lead first HEARTbeats Foundation mission to help children affected by poverty and conflict harness the power of music to heal

6 December 2010 (Los Angeles)– On December 13th, world-renowned cellist Lynn Harrell, violinist Helen Nightengale, and a team of experts depart for Kathmandu, where they will inaugurate a program designed to use music in a therapeutic way to help children affected by poverty and conflict.

The couple is preparing to lead the team on a 8,000 mile journey to debut the service programs provided by the HEARTbeats Foundation, a 501(c) charity they founded to help children in need harness the power of music to better cope with, and recover from, the extreme challenges they face.

Joined by singer/songwriter Neil Comess-Daniels, photographer Stephanie Waisler Rubin and a film crew of three documenting their work, Lynn and Helen will bring this new and unique program to the villages of Nepal. As the pilot country for this program - the basis of which is built upon proven research that music and art have a therapeutic aspect and as such, can bring relief, hope and solace - this small group of artists and musicians will spend seven days working with the children of Bhaktapur and Baglung.

“The intent is not to teach these children how to *make* music, but instead to use music and art to teach them how to find their voices and access their feelings *through* those mediums to help themselves cope better with whatever their conflicts and challenges may be,” says Nightengale.

Despite 45+ years of experience performing before audiences worldwide, Harrell says he is certain that this will be some of the most satisfying work he has ever performed.

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Cellist Lynn Harrell and wife, violinist Helen Nightengale to lead HEARTbeats Foundation to Nepal to help children affected by poverty and conflict harness the power of music to heal

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“We are excited to launch the work of HEARTbeats in a country with such a rich and diverse culture, but are also quite nervous,” said Harrell. “I am used to going into situations where the children have some knowledge of the music they are about to hear. I have a feeling that we will be learning as much as, if not more, than the children... about the music *and* ourselves on this trip.”

The couple and their team will depart from Los Angeles on December 13, arriving in Katmandu on December 15th. They will work with children in Baglung, a small village about 275 kilometers west of Katmandu, as well as children and orphans served by the Unatti Foundation in Bahktapur.

The HEARTbeats team will blog about their journey starting December 13th at: www.heartbeatsforchildren.org/nepal2010.

Harrell and Nightengale created the HEARTbeats Foundation last summer after becoming Artist Ambassadors for Save the Children. As Artist Ambassadors, they have pledged to raise money for the agency's Healing and Education through Art program (HEART).

In addition to working directly with the organization in Nepal, the couple has also recruited some of the most celebrated names in classical and contemporary music for a CD, *They are Why We Sing*, to be released next year.

Featuring legendary names in music including Harrell, Christine Brewer, Jessye Norman, Rod Gifry, Susan Graham, Andre Previn and John Williams, as well as up-and-coming artists Neil Comess-Daniels and Deborah Pardes, proceeds from *They Are Why We Sing* will go to Save the Children's HEART program.

The HEARTbeats Foundation

The HEARTbeats Foundation is a 501(c) charity founded in June 2010 by renowned cellist Lynn Harrell and his wife, violinist Helen Nightengale. Based in Los Angeles, the HEARTbeats Foundation strives to help children in need harness the power of music to better cope with, and recover from, the extreme challenges of poverty and conflict, in hope of creating a more peaceful, sustainable world for generations to come. To learn more, visit www.heartbeatsforchildren.org.

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