



PRESS CONTACT: Lisa Petrie
Senior Manager, Communications
415.503.6265
lep@sfc.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC'S LARGEST GRADUATING CLASS
POISED FOR A MUSICAL FUTURE
FLUTIST PAULA ROBISON RECEIVES HONORARY DEGREE**

SAN FRANCISCO, June 2, 2008: The San Francisco Conservatory of Music graduated its largest class of 147 students (51 undergraduates and 96 graduates) in its 91-year history, on May 23 at 10:30 a.m. in the school's new Concert Hall. Festivities included musical performances by students and speeches by Conservatory President Colin Murdoch, Board of Trustees Chair Warren Hashagen, and student speakers Deanna Said and Indre Viskontas. **Paula Robison**, one of the most influential performing and teaching flutists of our time received the honorary degree of Doctor of Music at the ceremony, and delivered the second commencement address since the Conservatory's relocation to the Civic Center in the fall of 2006.

In her inspiring speech, Ms. Robison gave the students a mandate as artists: "It's about shining our light out to others: Changing their lives, Scaring them, maybe, Helping them to know more clearly who and what they are....Helping them to get closer to the mystery of our life on this earth, Helping to preserve the legacy of great music which is ours and making it ALIVE in the place where we gather together."

More about Paula Robison

Honoree **Paula Robison** was born in Tennessee to a family of actors, writers, dancers, and musicians. When she was a young student at the Juilliard School, Leonard Bernstein invited her to be a soloist with the New York Philharmonic. Soon after that Paula Robison became the first American to win first prize at the Geneva International Competition, and her career as a world-traveling groundbreaking flute soloist was launched. A passionate advocate for new music, Ms. Robison has commissioned works by Leon Kirchner and Toru Takemitsu to name but a few, and premiered music by Pierre Boulez, Alberto Ginastera, and Elliott Carter among many others. *Notturmo* was written for Ms. Robison by Michael Tilson Thomas, and the two artists performed the work together in February of 2008 with Tilson Thomas conducting the San Francisco Symphony. Ms. Robison is a founding artist member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, with which she has

performed for 20 seasons. Paula Robison has recorded on many labels such as Sony Classical and CBS Masterworks, and her historic recordings for Vanguard Classics are now being reissued. Her books on the art of flute playing are published by Universal Edition, Schott, European-American Music, and G. Schirmer. Paula Robison has taught at The Juilliard School, The New England Conservatory and given classes all over the world, including at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

About the Conservatory

Recognized as one of the premier music schools in the world, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music offers music instruction to more than 1,200 students annually through its Collegiate, Preparatory, and Adult Extension divisions and summer programs, and its students and faculty present more than 1,500 public performances each year. In September 2006, the Conservatory relocated to its spectacular new teaching, performance, rehearsal and practice facility at 50 Oak Street in San Francisco's Civic Center, providing students, faculty and the Bay Area community with access to world-class musical resources in the heart of San Francisco's performing arts community. For more information and to view a schedule of concerts, please visit www.sfcm.edu

Conservatory Alumni

Today, more than 142 alumni are members of 11 Bay Area orchestras including the San Francisco Symphony. Conservatory alumni have also performed with such major orchestras as the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic and the Tokyo Philharmonic, as well as major opera companies worldwide. They also serve on the faculty of many of the nation's most renowned collegiate music programs. Notable alumni include conductor/pianist **Jeffrey Kahane**; soprano **Catherine Naglestad**; pianist **Robin Sutherland**; cellist **Hai-Ye Ni**; violinist **Krista Benion Feeney**; guitarist **David Tanenbaum** and more.

end