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For Immediate Release

CHICAGO'S GRANT PARK MUSIC FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FIRST-EVER *INDEPENDENCE DAY IN MILLENNIUM PARK* CONCERT

*Free July 4 Afternoon Concert Expected to be an Annual Holiday Tradition;
Event Part of Grant Park Music Festival's Historic 75th Season, June 10 – August 15, 2009*

CHICAGO –May 4, 2009- Chicago's **Grant Park Music Festival**, celebrating its historic 75th season this summer, is proud to announce its first-ever ***Independence Day in Millennium Park*** concert, to be presented at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, Saturday, July 4, at 1:30 p.m. Expected to be an annual Independence Day holiday tradition, this year's concert will feature a program of traditional and patriotic favorites performed by the Grant Park Orchestra, under the baton of Christopher Bell, along with special guest, Chicago tap dance master **Lane Alexander**. This concert, which replaces the Orchestra's performance as part of the Taste of Chicago Independence Eve festivities, July 3, is part of the official 2009 75th Grant Park Music Festival season program.

"This is a perfect addition to the City of Chicago's Fourth of July festivities," said Lois Weisberg, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. "Millennium Park is a wonderful gathering spot, and this new tradition will bring people together on the 4th to celebrate our country's history as well as a look to its future."

Added Grant Park Chorus Director Christopher Bell, who will conduct this concert, "I'm not only tickled pink, but also red, white and blue, to be a part of this new tradition at Millennium Park. Although our Independence Day concert takes place on a different stage – and different date - from years past, we will continue to perform the patriotic hits our audiences have come to expect, along with some additional classics. The Grant Park Music Festival is proud to contribute to the City's celebration of Independence Day with this concert, and hopes the City will join us."

This joyous concert for the whole family begins with Francis Scott Key's Star Spangled Banner and works its way through an all-star American canon, including Tchaikovsky's Overture 1812 and John Philip Sousa's Stars and Stripes Forever. Special guest, Chicago tap dance master Lane Alexander will perform with the Grant Park Orchestra to three selections from Morton Gould's Concerto for Tap Dancer and Orchestra, a work on which Alexander is considered one of the foremost experts. The co-founder and director of Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Alexander has a performing career spanning over 30 years that includes work on the concert stage, musical theater, television and film. He has performed Gould's Concerto at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops, the London Philharmonic, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Illinois Philharmonic, and the Chicago Sinfonietta. This concert marks Lane Alexander's Grant Park Music Festival debut.

The Fourth of July in Millennium Park begins with workouts in Tai Chi, Yoga, Pilates and dance on the Great Lawn beginning at 7 a.m. The Family Fun Festival opens at 10 a.m., full of interactive activities and musical games for kids of all ages.

(more)

INDEPENDENCE DAY IN MILLENNIUM PARK

Saturday, July 4, 1:30pm

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

Grant Park Orchestra; Christopher Bell, Conductor; Lane Alexander, Tap Dancer

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY	Star Spangled Banner
COPLAND	Fanfare for the Common Man
RON NELSON	Savannah River Holiday
KATHERINE	
GLADNEY WELLS	Minor Reflection
MORTON GOULD	from Concerto for Tap Dancer and Orchestra
	Toccata
	Minuet
	Rondo
WARD/Arr. Dragon	America the Beautiful
STEFFE/Arr. Wilhousky	Battle Hymn of the Republic
TCHAIKOVSKY	Overture 1812
SOUSA	Stars and Stripes Forever

The Grant Park Music Festival, comprised of the Grammy®-nominated Grant Park Orchestra and award-winning Grant Park Chorus led by Principal Conductor Carlos Kalmar and Chorus Director Christopher Bell, will commemorate its historic 75th season with a wide ranging series of classical music concerts and special event programming at the state-of-the-art Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park, June 10 – August 15, 2009. The concerts, which are always free and open to the public, will generally take place on Wednesday and Friday evenings at 6:30 p.m., and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m.

In addition to the *Independence Day in Millennium Park* concert, other 75th Season highlights include the **World Premiere performance of Michael Torke's *Plans*** for Orchestra and Chorus, commissioned by the Grant Park Music Festival to serve as the opening event for the city-wide Burnham Plan Centennial celebration, June 19 & 20; and a live **re-creation of the first-ever orchestral concert of the Grant Park Music Festival** from July 1, 1935, on July 1, 2009. In conjunction with the July 1 Gala concert, the Grant Park Music Festival will officially release **Sounds of Chicago's Lakefront: a Celebration of the Grant Park Music Festival**, a collector's edition coffee table book commemorating the Festival's rich history in Chicago. Sounds of Chicago's Lakefront features over 200 pages of never-before-published photographs and interviews with more than fifty renowned artists and important Chicago figures.

Millennium Park is an award-winning center for art, music, architecture, and landscape design. The result of a unique partnership between the City of Chicago and philanthropic community, the 24.5 acre park features the work of world-renowned architects, planners, artists and designers. In addition to the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, the most sophisticated outdoor concert venue of its kind in the United States, the Park's prominent features include the interactive Crown Fountain by Jaume Plensa; the contemporary Lurie Garden designed by the team of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel; and Anish Kapoor's hugely popular Cloud Gate sculpture. Since opening in June 2004, Millennium Park has welcomed more than 16 million people, making it one of the most popular destinations in Chicago.

For more information regarding the ***Independence Day in Millennium Park*** concert or other Grant Park Music Festival 75th Season programming, please call the Grant Park Music Festival at 312-742-7638 or visit the Festival's website at www.grantparkmusicfestival.com.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For more information on the previously announced Taste of Chicago Independence Eve concert, July 3, please contact: Cindy Gatzliolis at the Mayor's Office of Special Events at 312.744.0573 or cgatzliolis@cityofchicago.org