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Documentary director and producer John Beder discusses performance anxiety at 53rd International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians

Director of documentary film Composed launches new survey about the habits and anxieties of classical professionals

Philadelphia, PA – August 28th 2015 – John Beder, director and producer of *Composed*, has spent the past 9 months traveling the US and UK interviewing classical musicians and health care professionals, building a comprehensive story about all the ways musicians address performance anxiety.

Initially, Beder was interested in the debate surrounding a prescription drug called propranolol, a heart and blood pressure medication that some musicians use to calm the physical symptoms of stage fright. After many months of interview and conversations, Beder has learned of a plethora of additional remedies which musicians have explored and embraced in their quest for the highest quality performances.

In exploring these anxieties and remedies, *Composed* explores themes that are relevant to everyone, not just musicians: on how people deal with fear and pressure; how to understand and address moments of fear and doubt; how to move past these obstacles and achieve high-pressure, high-performance goals.

In the research phase of *Composed's* pre-production, Beder focused on a key question about what methods of addressing performance anxiety are most popular amongst classical musicians. A 1987 study with the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM) has stood for the past 28 years as the closest indicator of what's happening within the American orchestras; it is long overdue for an update. The original survey was also the first publication made about the percentage of musicians who used propranolol, or beta-blockers, and is often quoted when mentioning the drug.

With the support of ICSOM Beder sought out health professionals from the US, UK, and Australia, and has worked with them to develop a new survey to learn what has changed among musicians over almost 30 years, where performance fears come from, and what can be done to address them.

As a guest presenter of the 53rd annual ICSOM conference in Philadelphia, Beder will work to convince the delegates of all 52 orchestras represented to participate in this new survey. ICSOM is the only organization of its kind, representing 52 orchestras and over 4,000 classical musicians in the US.

John Beder is a percussionist, classical musician, and filmmaker based out of his hometown of Boston, MA. ***Composed*** is a forthcoming documentary about overcoming performance anxiety, and the lengths to which professional classical musicians are willing to go to deal with the stress of performance. Beder is anticipating a Spring/Summer 2016 release of the final feature. Learn more at www.composeddocumentary.com.

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