

CLASSICAL PIANIST LEON BATES PERFORMS AND EDUCATES

Friday, February 24, 2006 marks the third performance in Scranton Community Concerts' 2005-2006 concert season, featuring the incomparable pianist, **Leon Bates**. Mr. Bates, the 2001 Pennsylvania Artist of the Year, is known equally throughout the United States and abroad for his exceptional talent as a performer as well as for his dedication to arts education. He will perform a program featuring the works of Rachmaninoff and Chopin at **8:00 PM at the Mellow Theater** at Lackawanna College.

A native of Philadelphia, Leon Bates began his formal study of music at the age of six on both piano and violin. Since winning the Philadelphia Orchestra Senior Auditions as a student, Leon Bates has emerged as one of America's leading pianists. He is invited to the most prestigious concert halls and his performances have warranted critical and audience accolades in such halls and the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Philadelphia's Academy of Music and Kimmel Center, and in San Francisco where he has been presented numerous times by Four Seasons Concerts. His sheer mastery of the instrument has led to many invitations to perform with major symphonies in the U.S. such as the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the American Symphony. One of his career highlights includes being chosen to play at Carnegie Hall in the Steinway Foundation's Gala celebration commemorating the building of their 500,000th piano.

Mr. Bates' performance is sponsored in part by Penn Security Bank. "Penn Security Bank & Trust Company welcomes our role in bringing the talent of Leon Bates to our community," says Nick Gianuzzi, Scranton Community Concerts Board Member and Penn Security Bank Trust Officer. In addition to this public performance, Mr. Bates will present a lecture/mini-performance at 10:00 AM on February 24th that centers around the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and the impact that it has had on his life and career. This performance will be presented by Scranton Community Concerts free of charge to area school students in conjunction with the celebration of Black History Month, and is open to the general public as well.

This project was supported by a Lackawanna County Arts and Cultural Grant, a program of the Lackawanna County Commissioners and the Lackawanna County Council on the Arts. This project is also partially supported by a grant from Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour, a program developed and

funded by the Vira I. Heinz Endowment; the William Penn Foundation; the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency; and the Pew Charitable Trusts; and administered by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. For more information, please call (570) 342-4137 or email info@scrantonconcerts.org.

Tickets are \$30, \$20 and \$15 and can be obtained by calling (570) 342-4137, or in person at Scranton Community Concerts' offices in Lackawanna College's main building located at 501 Vine Street in Downtown Scranton. Substantial group discounts and student and senior rate tickets are also available.

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