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George Winston Performs in Solo Concert March 28 at the Cohan Center

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Solo pianist George Winston will perform an acoustic evening of classic and original music on Tuesday, March 28, 2006 at 8 p.m. in the Christopher Cohan Center.

Cal Poly Arts presents the return engagement of George Winston, whose signature sound and sweeping melodic stylings have inspired countless fans worldwide.

Showcased in the encore performance will be selections from his latest chart-topping CD, “Montana – A Love Story.”

"With 'Montana – A Love Story,' I have completed a circle, re-visiting the memories of my upbringing in Montana and combining three influences - the changing of the seasons, the different topographies, and secondarily, sociological influences - all coming full circle with my present relationship with Montana," explains Winston.

"I play mainly interpretations of North American songs as well as some of my own compositions on solo piano, solo guitar, and harmonica."

George Winston grew up in Montana. His favorite music was instrumental rock and R&B, jazz, blues and rock and roll (e.g. The Doors.) Winston began playing organ in 1967 and in 1971, he switched to the acoustic piano after hearing recordings from the 1920s and the 1930s by the legendary stride pianists Thomas "Fats" Waller and the late Teddy Wilson.

In addition to stride piano, Winston began working on his own style of melodic instrumental music on solo piano, putting together songs of his own and arranging other pieces. In 1972, he recorded his first solo piano album, “Ballads And Blues 1972.”

Since 1980, George has released eight more solo piano albums: “Autumn” (1980), "Winter Into Spring" (1982), "December" (1982), "Summer" (1991), "Forest" (1994), "Linus & Lucy-The Music Of Vince Guaraldi" (1996) – which features compositions by the late jazz pianist, including “Cast Your Fate to the Wind” and pieces from the Peanuts TV specials – “Plains” (1999), which was inspired by his eastern Montana upbringing, and “Night Divides The Day - The Music Of The Doors” (2002).

Winston is also well-known for his social commitment to community, incorporating food drives into his concert appearances. Accordingly, a portion of all proceeds from merchandise sales at the Cal Poly Arts concert will be donated to our local food bank.

In keeping with his social conscience, in November 2001, Winston released "Remembrance - A Memorial Benefit," a 6-song CD of piano,
guitar and harmonica solos to benefit those affected by 9/11.

In September 2005, Winston started recording an album of piano solos tentatively titled “Gulf Coast Blues & Impressions” to benefit hurricane relief. The CD is expected to be released later this year.

Presently, Winston is concentrating on live performances and is studying the art of the great New Orleans pianists Henry Butler, the late James Booker, Dr. John, and the late Professor Longhair.

He is working on interpreting pieces on solo piano by his favorite composers, including Vince Guaraldi, Professor Longhair, the Doors, Frank Zappa, Randy Newman, Sam Cooke, Al Kooper, the late Ray Charles, Curtis Mayfield, Laura Nyro, Bob Dylan, Dr. John, Henry Butler, James Booker, Jon Cleary, John Hartford, Taj Mahal, Bruce Cockburn, Philip Aaberg, and many others to perform at concerts and at his solo piano dances, where he features R&B, slow dance songs, and more.

Winston is also recording the masters of the Hawaiian slack key guitar -- the beautiful solo finger-style guitar tradition, unique to Hawaii -- for an extensive series of albums for Dancing Cat Records.

Tickets for the performance range from $32 - $44, with student discounts available, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call (805) 756-2787; to order by fax: (805) 756-6088. Order on-line at www.pacslo.org.

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- 30 -