

**“DEAR FRIENDS - MUSIC FROM FINAL FANTASY-” CONCERT SERIES  
TO KICK OFF FEBRUARY 19, 2005, IN CHICAGO**

*Success of First Stateside FINAL FANTASY Orchestral Performance  
Generates Tour Celebrating Video Game Music*

**LOS ANGELES, Calif., December 14, 2004** – Square Enix, Inc., the publisher of Square Enix™ interactive entertainment products in North America, announced today that a FINAL FANTASY® symphony concert series will kick off on Saturday, February 19, 2005, at the Rosemont Theatre in Rosemont, IL. The concert, to be performed by the Chicagoland Pops Orchestra and the CPO Festival Choir, will be the first in a series of long awaited concerts in North America featuring award-winning music from Square Enix’s world-renowned FINAL FANTASY video game series. Outstanding graphics will tie memorable moments from the video games along with the scores on massive screens during the performance.

“After the fantastic support received at the first concert in Los Angeles, I am thrilled and honored to extend the experience to Chicago,” said series composer Nobuo Uematsu. “I’m looking forward to sharing the moments with those who love the music and games of FINAL FANTASY.”

“The first FINAL FANTASY concert in the U.S. brought fans from far and wide together in Los Angeles to share in an unforgettable musical experience,” said Ichiro Otobe, president and COO of Square Enix, Inc. “We are pleased to announce that, due to the overwhelmingly positive response, a North American tour will soon bring the emotionally moving and powerful scores to fans across the country.”

The 2-hour program produced by Uematsu, will be conducted by Grammy award winning Arnie Roth, music director and principal conductor of the Chicagoland Pops. This concert is presented by the orchestra in association with Jason Michael Paul Productions. VIP tickets will be available for this performance, offering fans a meet and greet opportunity with Uematsu. All tickets including the VIP meet and greet are available at the box office, Ticketmaster locations, by credit card at 312-559-1212 or on the internet at [www.ticketmaster.com/venue/32892](http://www.ticketmaster.com/venue/32892).

Building upon the success of the 2002 FINAL FANTASY concert held in Japan, Square Enix announced a six-city, seven-show tour of Japan titled “Tour de Japon - Music from FINAL FANTASY-,” for 2004. The first stateside concert, “Dear Friends -Music from FINAL FANTASY-,” followed on May 10, 2004 at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, CA and sold out in three days. It featured music from Square Enix’s world-renowned FINAL FANTASY video game series, performed by the acclaimed Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Los Angeles Master Chorale. The positive reception of this performance gave rise to the U.S. concert series beginning next year.

Video game music has grown increasingly popular in the last few years. With the technology available in today’s gaming consoles, video game music has moved beyond the stereotypical blips and bleeps of its predecessors and become far more sophisticated. Music plays an integral role in today’s games, enhancing players’ overall experience. While still a growing market, video game soundtracks are now sold in major outlets and include a variety of genres such as rock, hip-hop, electronica, classical compositions, and songs performed by popular artists. The FINAL FANTASY soundtracks, which are original compositions, have grown so popular that *Time* magazine named series composer Nobuo Uematsu a notable “Innovator” in its recent “Time 100: The Next Wave – Music” feature. Square Enix hopes to pioneer awareness and appreciation of not only its own musical creations, but also video game music throughout the industry.

### **About FINAL FANTASY**

FINAL FANTASY is one of the best-selling video game franchises in the world, with more than 60 million units sold worldwide. Created by Hironobu Sakaguchi, the first FINAL FANTASY was released in 1987 in Japan and 1990 in North America. Spanning multiple platforms, the long-running series has introduced the world of cinematic role-playing games (RPGs) to millions of gamers around the world. FINAL FANTASY XI, the first online title in the series, offers a persistent experience in a brand new universe that contains the award-winning visual content, innovative gameplay, and deep storyline that have become the series’ hallmark. It is also the first cross-platform and cross-continent massively multiplayer online RPG (MMORPG); players from around the globe are connected to the same world regardless of whether they are using the PlayStation® 2 computer entertainment system or a personal computer.

### **About the Chicagoland Pops Orchestra**

The Chicagoland Pops is Chicago’s only resident pop orchestra, a professional symphonic ensemble presenting an innovative blend of popular music, classical works and a variety of contemporary genres – rock, pop and jazz. The orchestra is made up of the area’s finest musicians.

**About Arnie Roth**

Arnie Roth is a Grammy winning artist known for his work with performers including Diana Ross, Charlotte Church, Peter Cetera, Art Garfunkel and Dennis DeYoung. Roth has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, the Hollywood Bowl Philharmonic, the Dallas Symphony, the Houston Symphony, the BBC Symphony and Ravinia Festival Orchestra. Roth has produced dozens of best-selling CDs.

**About Square Enix Co., Ltd. and Square Enix, Inc.**

Headquartered in Tokyo, Japan, Square Enix Co., Ltd. (Square Enix) develops, publishes, and distributes entertainment content including interactive entertainment software and publications in Japan, North America, Europe, and Asia. Square Enix brings two of Japan's best-selling franchises – FINAL FANTASY®<sup>®</sup>, which has sold over 60 million units worldwide, and DRAGON QUEST™, which has sold over 35 million units worldwide – under one roof. Square Enix is one of the most influential providers of digital entertainment content in the world and continues to push the boundaries of creativity and innovation.

Square Enix, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Square Enix Co., Ltd. with offices in Los Angeles, CA and Seattle, WA. It handles operations in North America, including development, localization, marketing, and publishing of Square Enix titles. More information on Square Enix can be found on the Internet at <http://www.square-enix.com>.

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