



CutTime Productions®, LLC
PO Box 36120
Detroit, MI 48236
313-680-8104
mrcuttime@gmail.com
www.cutttime.com

CONTACT RICK ROBINSON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CUTTITIME® FOUNDER RICK ROBINSON PREPARES YEAR-LONG LEAVE FROM DSO
SEEKING BROADER AUDIENCES FOR CLASSICAL MUSIC

Detroit, MI September 6, 2011 – One of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s (DSO) most visible faces on the stage and in the Detroit community for 22 years, arranger, composer and African-American bassist **Rick Robinson** will take a one-year Leave of Absence in January to pursue a national schedule of touring, recording and teaching opportunities. Recognized for his artistry by Kresge Arts in Detroit and the DSO, Robinson will positively impact the future of American classical music institutions by helping them court new audiences. A thought-provoking speaker and a bold social entrepreneur, Robinson and his **CutTime Productions®, LLC** (CutTime®) sit atop a rich bank of ideas, three ensembles and a music publishing company with a large library of symphony reductions (**CutTime Players®**) and snappy new compositions for strings (**CutTime Simfonica®**). He won a Kresge Artist Fellowship last year for his compositions, many of which fully integrate classical styles with those of rock, blues, R&B, jazz, tango, Latin and hip hop.

Negotiating directly with American symphony orchestras, schools of music, string quartets and dance companies, Robinson is seeking invitations to perform the music of CutTime® as a guest artist with their musicians. Also known as **Mr. CutTime**, his art is introducing classical to new audiences in effective ways. Time Magazine interviewed him last year on his efforts to diversify classical music in Detroit (July 5, 2010). The famous Eastman School of Music’s Institute for Music Leadership is the first interested in his experiences as a professional major orchestra musician.

Last December Robinson began a series called **Classical Revolution Detroit**, exposing hundreds of people with free weekly informal readings by local volunteer professionals and students in bars, restaurants and coffeehouses. Until his father’s death in April, he organized a dozen events, including monthly “open jams” that invited community musicians to join in. At the time DSO’s musicians were in the middle of a bitter 6-month strike resisting drastic work rule changes and salary cuts. While a 3-year agreement was reached in April, the middle-tier orchestra saw the departure of some leading musicians and a number of regular subscribers. Seen as an archaic

European bastion, the future of DSO and many American orchestras increasingly depends on pulling in both younger and darker audiences. Inspired by the musical symbol for *two beats per bar*, **CutTime®** means it's time to cut some formality out of the concert experience; that this is the crucial bridge orchestras need to cross a very competitive cultural divide. Robinson is surprising everyone with informative performances.

Robinson says, "Playing classical and pops as part of a great orchestra inspired CutTime. And I am grateful to my DSO colleagues who helped me refine CutTime's concerts. My latest dream is to share symphonic music, its musicians, my own music and a vision for a future that will help Americans view classical music as liberating. I want to engage more people, experiment and learn much more... to return home to Detroit with new energy. Working as an independent, African-American artist for progressive orchestras and institutions, I can welcome alienated communities into the classical worldview. So many deserving people are missing out and we are still avoiding them. We should be embracing each other while times are hard because we have more in common than not." Robinson cites the recent passing of his live-in father for the timing of this decision.

After studying at Interlochen, in Cleveland and Boston, Rick Robinson drew national attention in 1989 when he was invited to join the Detroit Symphony Orchestra without formal audition. Two black state legislators had withheld key committee votes for a state appropriation of \$1.27 million to the DSO unless it hired more black musicians as members. DSO had only one at that time; the national average. Taking place during a DSO tour in Europe with Robinson and two other black substitutes on board, DSO musicians voted by a wide margin to hire Robinson and begin a new fellowship program. Robinson's story was picked up by several national news outlets including New York Times (Mar. 5, 1989), NBC Nightly News and 60 Minutes. The percentage of African-Americans as full members of American orchestras has since doubled to around 1.9% as of 2005. DSO currently has 3 black members.

Creating a new string ensemble (**CutTime Simfonica®**) and a new musical style he calls **Classical Soul**, Mr. CutTime recently released two singles available for download at CD Baby, Amazon and iTunes. In 1995 Robinson created the versatile octet called **CutTime Players®** to play his symphonic transcriptions for intimate local concerts, schools and touring. **CutTime Productions®, LLC** is directing inquires, bookings and fans to www.cutttime.com, ReverbNation, Facebook, and Twitter as [@MrCutTime](https://twitter.com/MrCutTime) and [@ClasRevDetroit](https://twitter.com/ClasRevDetroit).