



APPLETON ART CENTER

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“Take Me Out to the Ballgame” Celebrates 100 Years With New Book—Author Robert Thompson to Appear at Appleton Art Center on Friday Evening

(Appleton, WI)—In conjunction with the exhibition, *Art of the Diamond: Baseball*, Appleton Art Center will host a book signing event on Friday, May 2 from 5-6 p.m. with Robert Thompson, author of the newly released book, *Baseball’s Greatest Hit: The Story of Take Me Out to the Ballgame* (Hal Leonard, 2008). The event is free with admission to Appleton Art Center and copies of Thompson’s book will be available for purchase.

Robert Thompson, Founder, Music Director, and Producer of the Baseball Music Project will be in Appleton to conduct a concert of baseball music with the Fox Valley Symphony on Saturday.

“Take Me Out to the Ball Game” is the third most frequently sung song in America, after “Happy Birthday” and “The Star-Spangled Banner.” With the release of this special edition, full-color, hardcover book, the complete story of the song is presented, taking the reader on a fascinating journey into how “Ball Game” has come to take a unique place in the American cultural landscape. With images of historical newspaper clippings, baseball cards, sheet music, movie stills, ballplayers at the mic, and of course, Harry Caray leading the crowd at Wrigley, *Baseball’s Greatest Hit* also comes packaged with a CD of rare and classic recordings and features an introduction by baseball commissioner Bud Selig and a foreword by Carly Simon.

Robert (Bobby) Thompson grew up in Hawthorne, New York, the resting place of Babe Ruth. Bob’s claim to fame is that he played trumpet at George Steinbrenner’s daughter’s wedding, for which George gave him two crisp one-hundred-dollar bills which Bob in turn blew on Yankees’ tickets. A south-paw, he still sleeps with his left-handed catcher’s mitt under his pillow. For ten years (until he was hit by a nerf baseball) Bob was the President and Director of Universal Edition, one of the world’s largest classical



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music publishing companies, based in Vienna, London and New York. He is currently the Associate Dean in the Conservatory of Music at Purchase College, State University of New York and Director of its Arts Management program. The recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts Grants, Bob is a former Professor of Music at the University of Kentucky and Hope College where he taught Trumpet and Jazz Studies. He holds a Doctorate in Music from the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester. Bob has produced two Grammy nominated recordings, and served as Music Consultant to the Johnny Depp-Cate Blanchett Film, "The Man Who Cried". He recently hosted the XM Radio Show, "Voices of the Game" with singer/songwriter Randy Newman as Bob's guest. The co-author of the best selling book, "Baseball's Greatest Hit: The Story of 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game'", Bob considers himself to be the world's foremost Baseball Musicologist (even though the American Musicological Society has yet to recognize baseball musicology as a legitimate field of study worthy of post-doctoral research).

Thompson co-authored the book with Tim Wiles (director of research at the library of the National Baseball Hall of Fame) and Andy Strasberg (former executive with the San Diego Padres for more than 20 years and founder of ACME (All-Star Corporate Marketing Enterprises), whose clients include the National Baseball Hall of Fame and many retired major leaguers).

Appleton Art Center was established in 1960 to promote, teach, and nourish the creation and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, educational programming, and information resources. From its five-story, 25,000-square-foot gallery and teaching facility in downtown Appleton, Appleton Art Center offers exhibitions, classes, cultural programming, special events, and other initiatives that draw people from throughout the Midwest.

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