

For release:
On receipt

Contact: Robyn Soffera
(919)-667-2565
robyn.soffera@duke.edu

RENOWNED PIANIST TO HOLD CONCERT TO BENEFIT DUKE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

WILMINGTON, N.C. – Renowned concert pianist Roya Weyerhaeuser will play in a special performance to benefit the juvenile rheumatoid arthritis program at Duke Children's Hospital & Health Center at 8 p.m. March 3 in Wilmington's historic Thalian Hall.

Weyerhaeuser selected the juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) program at Duke Children's as the beneficiary of this concert because of her friendship with life-long JRA patient Michelle Gautier. JRA is a childhood disease that causes inflamed, swollen joints that are often stiff and painful and affects 200 in 100,000 children aged 16 and younger. Duke Children's houses the largest center for rheumatology in the Southeast.

Weyerhaeuser was born in Iran and studied at the Tehran Conservatory of Music at the age of six. By nine, she had made her solo recital debut. She moved to the U.S. in 1979 and attended Juilliard. After marrying in 1981, she moved to North Carolina.

She is the first pianist to be awarded the Albert Schweitzer Medal for Artistry in Music and has been granted the "Keys to the City" for her commitment and contribution to artistic life in Wilmington. In March 2004, Roya and Henry Weyerhaeuser were named by the Wilmington StarNews among the top 50 arts community leaders in the Cape Fear region.

Weyerhaeuser's North Carolina appearances have included performances with the North Carolina Symphony, the Wilmington Symphony and at numerous colleges and universities. She has also performed in New York, Boston, Atlanta, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Miami and Chicago. Her European tours have included stops in England, Scotland and Germany.

The March 3 performance will also include a private champagne reception for sponsors. Sponsorships are still available by calling Janis Netherland at (910) 793-8466. Performance-only tickets are available for \$20 and can be purchased by contacting the Thalian Hall box office at (910) 343-3664.

Duke Children's Hospital & Health Center treats more than 1,500 children from the New Hanover area each year. Among the many advanced-care subspecialties at Duke

Children's, the pediatric rheumatology department is recognized as a leader in the care and research of pediatric rheumatic disease, including JRA.

#####