



GREAT PERFORMANCES®

CELEBRATE FOOD

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GREAT PERFORMANCES AND MAE MAE CAFÉ WELCOME JAMES BEARD HOUSE GUEST CHEF

Chef Lorenzo Polegri brings a taste of Italy to European-inspired Mae Mae Café

New York, New York (DATE TK)—Great Performances, New York City's top catering and events company, is delighted to welcome James Beard House chef Lorenzo Polegri to Mae Mae Café where he will present a customized menu on **Thursday, February 19, 2009**. Polegri's authentic dishes feature creative interpretations of classic Italian fare which suit Mae Mae's European-inspired menu and décor.

Chef Polegri, who trained on his family's farm in Umbria, imbues his cooking with knowledge of farming and fresh ingredients. His approach is complimentary to Great Performances – the only New York caterer to own and operate its own farm. He now joins the ranks of top chefs who have participated in Great Performances' program with the James Beard Foundation to bring new culinary talent to its cafes. For his debut at Mae Mae, Chef Polegri will offer *amatriciana pizzette*, *gnocchi fritti with chestnut honey and pine nuts*, and *pear and pecorino ravioloni with fior di latte*, among other Italian delicacies. He will attend an opening day event beginning at 11:30 AM, and his menu will run through Wednesday, February 25, 2009. There will be a prix fixe of \$16.

Lorenzo Polegri is an experienced chef and the founder of three restaurants in Italy as well as the Monini Culinary Center. In 2001, he was named the leading chef at the Italian Food Festival at the United Nations. He has taught at the Culinary Institute of America and The New School in New York and is now the top instructor at the Monini Culinary Center. Polegri is also a collaborator with Restaurant Associates, a catering company based in the United States. He has cooked at the James Beard House four times and is a member of the American Culinary Federation. His recipes have appeared in numerous cookbooks and newspapers and are featured internationally on television.

His final menu is as follows. Appetizer: Savory Potato Leek Flan with Caramelized Cauliflower and Truffled Tallegio Fonduta. Entrée: Pear and Pecorino Ravioli with Radicchio and Walnut Cream garnished with Arugula and Shaved Pecorino. Dessert: Polenta Carrot Cake with Vin Santo Zabaione and Aleatico Red Wine Reduction. The prix fixe price is \$16 for lunch and \$19 for dinner on Wednesday, February 25th.

Mae Mae Café

Mae Mae Café is located at 68 Vandam Street, between Hudson and Varick Streets. The café is open for lunch Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 11:30 AM – 4 PM, and for lunch and dinner on Wednesday from 11:30 AM – 10 PM. Chef Polegri's menu will run from Thursday, February 19th – Wednesday, February 25th. For reservations, please call Danielle Albanese at Great Performances, 212-727-2424.

Great Performances brings consummate culinary skill and originality to the table. The company, founded in 1979 by Liz Neumark, is an acknowledged leader in the high-profile events arena and is the first caterer in the country to own and operate an organic farm as a year-round resource for locally grown produce. In addition to the company's embrace of sustainable agriculture, Great Performances has carved a niche as the foodservice partner to some of the city's most prestigious cultural institutions, including Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Sotheby's. The company signed a 25-year lease in 2007 to reopen and operate the Grand Ballroom at the Plaza Hotel, as well as a new floor of meeting spaces. For more information on Great Performances and Katchkie Farm, visit www.greatperformances.com, www.katchkiefarm.com, or call (212) 727-2424.

James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to preserving, nurturing, and celebrating America's culinary heritage. The Foundation provides scholarships and educational opportunities to culinary students, serves as a resource center for those in the food industry, offers members and the public the opportunity to enjoy the talents of emerging and established chefs, winemakers, cookbook authors, and purveyors, and honors professionals in the food and beverage industry for their achievements with the annual James Beard Foundation Awards. For more information, please visit [.jamesbeard.org](http://jamesbeard.org).