

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
ONE OF THE GREAT VOICES OF OUR TIME
SOPRANO RENÉE FLEMING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 23 AT 3:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL

BERKELEY, December 1, 2004 – Cal Performances is pleased to welcome beloved American soprano **Renée Fleming** back to Zellerbach Hall on **Sunday, January 23 at 3:00 p.m.** Blessed with one of the most beautiful voices of her generation, Renée Fleming is among the most highly regarded and celebrated singers in the world. A fearless performer and musical risk-taker with a range from Handel to contemporary music, Ms. Fleming is in her vocal prime and consistently dazzles standing-room-only crowds throughout the world. She will be accompanied by pianist Hartmut Hoell. Her program is yet to be announced.

Renée Fleming

Renée Fleming's vocal artistry is acclaimed worldwide as the gold standard of soprano sound. The two-time Grammy Award winner's sensuous voice, interpretive skills and stylistic versatility are sought after on stage and in recordings. A champion of new music as well as the standard repertoire, the American soprano performs throughout the world's most distinguished venues with today's foremost orchestras and conductors. Ms. Fleming has created many roles for the operatic stage and has premiered numerous songs written for her, earning her the respect of her colleagues and praise from the press as one of the great artists of our day.

Renée Fleming's 2004-2005 season is marked by a notable milestone, the November release of her first book, *The Inner Voice*. Also this fall, Decca released her latest recording, a CD of Handel arias. Highlights of her 2004 summer season included her first-ever production of *Capriccio* with the Paris Opera at the Palais Garnier and appearances at music festivals including Tanglewood, the Hollywood Bowl, Ravinia and Lucerne. Engagements of special note this season include her role debut of Handel's *Rodelinda* in the Metropolitan Opera's company premiere of this work (December 2004/January 2005); and three performances at Carnegie Hall – at the 114th Opening Night Gala with The Philadelphia Orchestra and Christoph Eschenbach

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on October 6 (which was taped for a nationwide PBS telecast), in solo recital on February 21, 2005, and in duo-recital at Zankel Hall on May 15, 2005 with jazz pianist Brad Mehldau (featuring the world premiere of Mehldau's new work written especially for Ms. Fleming and commissioned by Carnegie Hall). Ms. Fleming performed at numerous galas this season, including the opening night galas of the San Francisco Opera, The Philadelphia Orchestra and the symphony orchestras of Nova Scotia, Virginia, Charlotte and Toronto, as well as at the 50th anniversary galas for both the Lyric Opera of Chicago (October) and the Houston Grand Opera (April). In early 2005, Ms. Fleming commences a three month, 12-city recital tour that includes January performances at Santa Barbara's Arlington Theatre, Los Angeles' Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Seattle's Benaroya Hall, Vancouver's Orpheum Theatre, Cal Performances at UC Berkeley; at Washington, DC's Kennedy Center, Boston's Symphony Hall, New York's Carnegie Hall and St. Paul's Ordway Music Theatre in February; and in April at Fort Worth's Bass Performance Hall and Austin's University of Texas Performing Arts Center. Internationally, Ms. Fleming can be heard in performances in Spain with the Orquesta Teatro Real at Madrid's Teatro Real and Barcelona's Palau de la Musica and with the Gulbenkian Foundation Orchestra at Lisbon's Coliseu dos Recreios in October, and in April with the Berlin Philharmonic and Claudio Abbado. Summer 2005 engagements include a performance with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican for André Previn's 75th Birthday Gala, a concert version of *Thaïs* with Thomas Hampson and the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra at Vienna's Konzerthaus, and performances of *Otello* with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden.

A celebrated artist in the recording arena with numerous award-winning discs to her credit including two Grammys and eight Grammy nominations, Ms. Fleming has been an exclusive recording artist with Decca since 1995. Her fall 2004 release is a collection of arias entitled *Renée Fleming: Handel*. Recent CDs include *Renée Fleming By Request*, a collection of selected works from her recording catalog plus a few new additions, and the Grammy Award winning *Bel Canto*, a collection of works by Bellini, Donizetti and Rossini, which also received the 2003 Edison Vocal Soloist Award and a 2003 Echo award. Additionally, Ms. Fleming can be heard in three tracks on the Warner Bros. Records original 2003 movie soundtrack to *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*.

An avid reader since childhood, Ms. Fleming is an advocate for literacy. The 125 year-old American Library Association (ALA), the oldest, largest, and most influential non-profit

library association in the world, features Ms. Fleming in their 2004-2005 READ poster campaign. In November, Ms. Fleming was honored by The New York Public Library as a "Library Lion," an annual award given to individuals in recognition of their contributions through their work. On November 8, 2004, Ms. Fleming's first book, *The Inner Voice*, published by Viking Penguin, made its debut; in an intimate account of her career and the creative process, Ms. Fleming shares personal experiences learned throughout the course of her career.

Ms. Fleming's achievements within the classical music industry have been recognized with many honors, the most recent being the 2004 Classical Brits Award for Outstanding Contribution to Music. In 2003, she was bestowed with Honorary Membership by the Royal Academy of Music; she received the 2003 Female Artist of the Year from the Classical Brits Awards, and an honorary doctorate from The Juilliard School (where she was also the commencement speaker). Among earlier awards are the Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from the Republic of France (summer 2002); the 2000 Gift of Music Award from the Orchestra of St. Luke's, given to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the world of classical music; the 1997 Musical America Vocalist of the Year, and in 1996, the first Solti Prize of l'Académie du Disque Lyrique for her outstanding recording artistry.

Outside of the classical music world, Ms. Fleming's excellence has been acknowledged as well, from appearing in advertising campaigns to serving as an inspiration for award-winning novelists. In May 2004, at Pacifica Flora, Japan's international horticultural exhibition, the "Renée Fleming" iris was unveiled, and can also be seen at the Friendship Garden in Rochester, New York. She has represented Rolex's timepieces since 2001. People Magazine named her one of the "25 Most Intriguing People" of 2000, and in 1999, master chef Daniel Boulud paid homage to her with the creation of "La Diva Renée," placing her in a legendary pantheon. The novelist Ann Patchett referred to her as the inspiration for the main character in her best-selling book, *Bel Canto* (2002). Couturier Gianfranco Ferre has designed Ms. Fleming's stage gowns since 1998, and Issey Miyake and Oscar de la Renta have created gowns for her as well.

Renée Fleming studied at The Juilliard School and holds degrees from the State University of New York at Potsdam and the Eastman School of Music. Early recognition in Ms. Fleming's career included the 1988 Metropolitan Opera National Auditions, the Richard Tucker Award, the

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George London Prize, the Grand Prix at the International Singing Competition in Belgium, and a Fulbright Scholarship to Germany.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Renée Fleming** on **Sunday, January 23 at 3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$34.00, \$48.00, and \$72.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens and other students receive a \$2 discount, and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$3 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, January 23 at 3:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Recital

Renée Fleming, soprano

Program:

To be announced

Tickets: \$34.00, \$48.00, and \$72.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door.

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