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**VALERY GERGIEV CONDUCTS THE KIROV ORCHESTRA OF THE MARIINSKY THEATRE IN TWO HISTORIC RUSSIAN WORKS ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 16 AT 7:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

**BERKELEY, September 8, 2006** — Russia's beloved **Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre**, a perennial favorite of Cal Performances audiences, makes its 2006 appearance on **Monday, October 16 at 7:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. Led by dynamic conductor **Valery Gergiev** and featuring pianist **Alexander Toradze**, the Kirov will present **Tchaikovsky's** Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor for Piano and Orchestra, a technically challenging piece whose genesis is shrouded in controversy; and the Symphony No. 11 in G minor by **Shostakovich**, a powerfully emotional work that evokes the failed Russian revolution of 1905 and, perhaps, more recent abortive revolutionary events. The orchestra is based in St. Petersburg and is one of the oldest and most highly acclaimed musical institutions in all of Russia. When Gergiev conducted the orchestra in New York this spring, he "demonstrated a powerfully intuitive connection to these works [by Shostakovich] and a keen ear for the intricacies of Shostakovich's musical voice," stated *The New York Times*. The orchestra has "uncommonly rich string tone and extraordinarily precise woodwind and brass playing."

**PROGRAM**

The Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor for Piano and Orchestra by Tchaikovsky is famous for having been rejected by its original dedicatee, Tchaikovsky's friend and teacher Nikolai Rubinstein. Written in the latter months of 1874, the piece was presented by Tchaikovsky in preliminary form to Rubinstein in January of 1875; according to the composer, Rubinstein declared it "worthless and unplayable," "trivial" and "vulgar." Tchaikovsky would not change the work for Rubinstein and instead rededicated it to Hans von Bülow, who declared it "lofty, strong, and original." Von Bülow took the concerto on an American tour in the fall of 1875, where it had its premiere in Boston. From its grand opening theme to its spectacular cadence featuring technical workouts for both the orchestra and the pianist, the piece is now considered an important and challenging addition to the piano concerto repertoire.

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The second work on the program, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 11 in G minor, was composed for the 40th anniversary of the 1917 Revolution, and was introduced in Moscow on October 30, 1957. Although it officially commemorates the tragic, abortive Russian revolution in 1905, the piece is often considered as Shostakovich's response to the Hungarian uprising of 1956. (Considerable anecdotal evidence supports this thesis, but official utterances from Shostakovich do not.) The symphony's four movements—"Palace Square," "Ninth of January," "Eternal Memory" and "Tocsin"—are played without pause, quoting themes from Russian and Polish folk songs as well as Shostakovich's own *Ten Choral Poems on Revolutionary Texts* (Op. 88). Regardless of the composer's motivation, the emotional Symphony No. 11 stands as one of history's great tragic symphonies.

### **VALERY GERGIEV**

As Artistic and General Director of the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia, **Valery Gergiev** has brought universal acclaim to this legendary institution. A tireless traveler on the world's musical stage, Gergiev is also Principal Conductor Designate of the London Symphony (beginning in January 2007), Principal Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic in the Netherlands, Principal Guest Conductor of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and a sought-after guest and festival conductor.

Born in Moscow to Ossetian parents, Gergiev studied conducting with Ilya Musin at the Leningrad Conservatory and won the Herbert von Karajan Conductors' Competition in Berlin at the age of 24. He made his Kirov Opera debut in 1978 with Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, was appointed Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Kirov Opera a decade later, and named Artistic and General Director in 1996. The year 2003 saw his 50th birthday, his 25th anniversary with the Mariinsky Theatre and the 300th anniversary of the city of St. Petersburg, for which Gergiev produced an unprecedented three-month "Stars of the White Nights" festival. The festival has become a yearly event, and one at which Cal Performances Director Robert Cole has appeared as a conductor. This musical partnership has further strengthened the longstanding bond between Cal Performances and Gergiev.

In March 2006, Gergiev began a seven-concert series at Avery Fisher Hall in Lincoln Center presenting the complete set of 15 symphonies by Shostakovich to mark the composer's centenary, using both the Kirov and Rotterdam orchestras; the series concludes October 2006. Of the spring concerts *The New York Times* raved, "the performances were blazing, beautiful, ferocious, poignant, pushed to the hilt — sometimes all at once." Also in 2006, Gergiev received the Polar Music Prize of the Swedish Royal Academy of Music, considered the art world's equivalent of the Nobel Prize, and was awarded the Herbert von Karajan Prize for outstanding living musician.

### **ALEXANDER TORADZE**

Internationally recognized as a piano virtuoso in the grand Romantic tradition, **Alexander Toradze** is known for his unorthodox interpretive conceptions, deeply poetic lyricism and visceral excitement. "Toradze's big-boned, energized playing grabbed listeners by the scruff of the neck" (*Cincinnati Post*). Born in Tbilisi, Georgia, Toradze graduated from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in 1978 and requested asylum in the west in 1983. In addition to maintaining a busy performance career, Toradze has served on the music faculty of Indiana University, South Bend, since 1991. There, he established the multinational Toradze Piano Studio, a touring ensemble that has appeared in Salzburg, New York City, Rome, Florence, the Ravenna Festival, the Ruhr Festival and at many other prestigious venues. Toradze has recorded all five Prokofiev concerti for the Philips Classics label with Valery Gergiev and the Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre, as well as Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and Stravinsky's *Three Scenes from Petrushka* for Angel/EMI.

### **THE KIROV ORCHESTRA OF THE MARIINSKY THEATRE**

Founded in the 18th century during the reign of Peter the Great, the Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre was originally known as the Russian Imperial Opera Orchestra. Since 1860, its home has been St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, center of famed Russian opera and ballet companies and birthplace of dozens of theatrical masterpieces (including Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Snow Maiden* and Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*) and musical territory of Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Stravinsky and many other notable Russian

composers and musicians. St. Petersburg became Leningrad in the Soviet era, and the Mariinsky Theatre was renamed the Kirov Opera. Soon after Leningrad again became St. Petersburg in 1991, the Kirov Opera once again became the Mariinsky Theatre and the orchestra took the name The Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre, reflecting its long and intrepid history. The orchestra came under the baton of Valery Gergiev in 1988.

Besides performing at home and touring with the Kirov Opera and Ballet companies, the Kirov Orchestra performs throughout the world and has been dubbed by one journalist “the world’s first global orchestra.” It completed a tour of China in 1998, the first Russian orchestra to visit China in 40 years. In the 2004–2005 season, the Kirov performed a worldwide series of charity concerts entitled “Beslan, Music for Life” with concerts in New York, Paris, London, Tokyo, Rome and Moscow. Its spring 2006 visit to New York City was timed to coincide with the Shostakovich Centennial Celebration at Lincoln Center.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for the **Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre** on **Monday, October 16** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$38.00, \$58.00** and **\$86.00**. 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](http://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](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu).

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**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Monday, October 16 at 7:00 p.m.**

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

*Concert*

**The Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre**

**Valery Gergiev, conductor**

**Alexander Toradze, piano**

**Program:**

Tchaikovsky/Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 23

Shostakovich/Symphony No. 11 in G minor, Op. 103

**Tickets: \$38.00, \$58.00 and \$86.00**, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu); and at the door.

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