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**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
THE RUSSIAN NATIONAL ORCHESTRA LED BY CONDUCTOR
MIKHAIL PLETNEV WITH VIOLINIST STEFAN JACKIW AND
SOPRANO LISA DELAN FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19 AT 7:30 P.M.**

BERKELEY, January 8, 2010—The **Russian National Orchestra** (RNO) returns to Cal Performances **Friday, February 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Zellerbach Hall**. Under the direction of RNO founder **Mikhail Pletnev**, the orchestra is celebrating its 20th anniversary and has been praised for “refinement [that] has opened a new chapter in Russian orchestral playing” (*Gramophone*). Last in Berkeley in 2004, this season two artists join the ensemble: Twenty-four-year-old violinist **Stefan Jackiw**, who “plays with the incisiveness and exquisite taste of an Old World, long-seasoned fiddler” (*The Baltimore Sun*), will perform **Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky**’s Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35; and American soprano **Lisa Delan** will sing *Yeats Song Cycle*, based on three poems by William Butler Yeats and composed by Pletnev. **Dmitri Shostakovich**’s Symphony No. 9 rounds out the concert. The Russian National Orchestra “played with such captivating beauty that the audience gave an involuntary sigh of pleasure” (*Evening Standard*).

RUSSIAN NATIONAL ORCHESTRA

Since its founding in 1990 during the tumultuous collapse of the Soviet Union, the **Russian National Orchestra** has grown from its fragile beginnings into a highly celebrated and revered orchestra. Attracted by the reputation of founder **Mikhail Pletnev** and his vision of a new model for the performing arts in Russia, many of the finest musicians in the country joined in the launching of the RNO 19 years ago. The success of the RNO’s Moscow debut put them in immediate demand. The RNO was the first Russian orchestra to play at the Vatican and to tour Israel, in addition to engagements around the world. Over the years, the orchestra has evolved from a Russian orchestra defined by a single conductor—Pletnev—into an international ensemble that is a magnet for today’s top guest conductors and instrumentalists, among them the San Francisco Symphony’s Michael Tilson Thomas.

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An extensive discography recorded for Deutsche Grammophon and PentaTone Classics, with conductors that include Mikhail Pletnev, Mstislav Rostropovich, Kent Nagano and Alexander Vedernikov, has garnered exceptional praise. Of the RNO's recording of Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*, *Gramophone* writes: "Hardly a minute passes without one's ear being enchanted by an effective gesture of the utmost precision, poise and sensitivity."

Unique among the principal Russian ensembles, the RNO is independent of the government and has developed its own groundbreaking organization. It is perhaps the only orchestra in the world to establish a Conductor Collegium, a group of internationally renowned conductors who have developed a special rapport with the RNO and its musicians, and whose vision guides tour and recording strategies. Another RNO innovation is Cultural Allies, created in 2001 and facilitating exchanges between artists in Russia and the West. Prominent RNO partners in Cultural Allies' performances and commissions include Dave Brubeck, Bill Clinton, Mikhail Gorbachev, H el ene Grimaud, Sophia Loren, Wynton Marsalis, Jessye Norman, Leonard Slatkin and Michael Tilson Thomas. The RNO's recording of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and Beintus's *Wolf Tracks*, narrated by Sophia Loren, Bill Clinton and Mikhail Gorbachev, received a 2004 Grammy Award, making the ensemble the first Russian orchestra to win the American recording industry's highest honor. A Spanish language edition of the album, narrated by Antonio Banderas, was released in 2007, with Mandarin and other versions to follow.

MIKHAIL PLETNEV

Mikhail Pletnev studied music at the Moscow Conservatory as a teenager and has since become one of Russia's most influential and respected artists. Founder and Artistic Director of RNO, Pletnev is recognized around the world for his accomplishments as conductor, composer and pianist. Pletnev garnered worldwide acclaim early on when he won the Gold Medal and First Prize at the 1978 Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition at only 21. Since then, he has gone on to earn numerous prizes, including a 2005 Grammy Award for his two-piano arrangement of Prokofiev's *Cinderella*, recorded with Martha Argerich. In 2007, Tokyo Record Academy named his recording of Beethoven's piano Concertos Nos. 2 and 4 "Best Concerto Recording of 2007." His album *Schumann Symphonic Etudes* (2004) and recordings of Rachmaninoff and the Prokofiev Piano Concerto No. 3 were also nominated for Grammy

Awards. Pletnev received a Gramophone Award in 1996 for his album of Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas.

Pletnev regularly appears as guest conductor for such leading orchestras as the London Philharmonic, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic, London Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic and City of Birmingham Symphony. The Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano, Switzerland, named him their first guest conductor in 2008.

STEFAN JACKIW

Violinist **Stefan Jackiw** is recognized as one of the most significant artists of his generation. In 2000, at only 14, Jackiw made his European debut in London; the performance was featured on the front page of *The Times*. Jackiw has since performed with such renowned ensembles as the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra and New York Philharmonic, among many others. The poetry and purity of his impeccable technique has captured audiences across the United States.

Jackiw is an active recitalist and chamber musician. He has appeared at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Louvre Recital Series in Paris, the Boston Celebrity Series and the Mostly Mozart Festival. He is a regular participant at the Seattle Chamber Music Festival. On the opening night of Zankel Hall in New York, Jackiw was the only young musician invited to perform alongside Emanuel Ax, Renée Fleming, Evgeny Kissin and James Levine. Jackiw is also a founding member of the emerging New York-based Tessera Quartet.

LISA DELAN

American soprano **Lisa Delan**, a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, sang the title role in the world premiere of Gordon Getty's *Joan and the Bells* in 1998, a role she has since reprised in France, Germany, Russia (including a 2004 concert at Cal Performances with the Russian National Orchestra) and throughout the United States, and in a 2002 recording for PentaTone Classics. Critics have praised her depiction of Joan of Arc as "beautifully sung" (*International Record Review*), "refreshingly unpretentious" (*Gramophone* magazine) and "a role she has made her own, with the kind of pure tone one expects of a saint-to-be and the

passion one expects from a 19-year-old girl going to her death. Miss Delan is exceptional” (*Nevada Events*). Delan’s interpretive and technical skill in art song brought her to the finals of the 1999 Naumburg International Vocal Competition and has performed on some of the world’s leading stages, including Lincoln Center, the Auditorio Nacional in Madrid and the Moscow Conservatory.

A committed recital artist, her repertoire encompasses Rachmaninoff, including his seldom-performed Op. 38 songs for high soprano, Strauss, Poulenc, Wolf, Bellini, Canteloube, Arne and Scarlatti, as well as Ives, Copland, Niles and Gershwin. Her performances have often featured the music of living composers including Norman Dello Joio, Jake Heggie, William Bolcom, Andrew Imbrie, David Garner and Gordon Getty.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Russian National Orchestra**, on **Friday, February 19, 2010** at **7:30 p.m.** in **Zellerbach Hall** are priced at **\$28.00, \$40.00** and **\$60.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced three hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20 for all other community members. Information is available at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, February 19 at 7:30 p.m.

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

Orchestra

Russian National Orchestra

Mikhail Pletnev, conductor

Stefan Jackiw, violin

Lisa Delan, soprano

Program:

Pletnev/Yeats Song Cycle

Tchaikovsky/Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35

Shostakovich/Symphony No. 9

Tickets: \$28.00, \$40.00 and \$60.00 are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

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