

Monday, October 16, 2006, 7pm
Zellerbach Hall

Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre

Valery Gergiev, *music director and conductor*

with

Alexander Toradze, *pianist*

PROGRAM

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor,
Op. 23 (1874–1875; rev. 1889)

Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso
Andantino semplice
Allegro con fuoco

INTERMISSION

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975) Symphony No. 11 in G minor, Op. 103,
“The Year 1905” (1957)

The Palace Square (Adagio)
The Ninth of January (Allegro—Adagio—
Allegro—Adagio)
In Memoriam (Adagio)
The Tocsin (Allegro non troppo—Allegro—
Adagio—Moderato—Adagio—Allegro)

Program subject to change.

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Valery Gergiev and the Kirov Orchestra record for Universal.

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Orchestra Roster

Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre

Valery Gergiev, *music director and conductor*

First Violin

Ilya Kononov, *Guest Principal*
Kirill Terentyev, *Principal*
Leonid Veksler, *Principal*
Pavel Faynberg
Elena Berdnikova
Tatiana Frenkel
Khristian Artamonov
Anton Kozmin
Vsevolod Vasilyev
Boris Vasilyev
Nina Pirogova
Anna Glukhova
Irina Sukhorukova
Mikhail Tatarnikov
Marina Serebro
Viktoria Kakicheva

Second Violin

Zumrad Ilyeva, *Principal*
Maria Safarova
Viktoria Schukina
Tatiana Moroz
Elena Khaytova
Svetlana Zhuravkova
Marcel Bezhenaru
Sergey Letyagin
Nadezda Prudnikova
Alexey Krashennnikov
Irina Vasilyeva
Mikhail Zatin

Viola

Yury Afonkin, *Principal*
Vladimir Litvinov
Oleg Larionov
Lina Golovina
Alexander Shelkovnikov
Karine Barsegian
Evgeny Barsov
Alevtina Alexeva
Olga Neverova
Andrey Petushkov

Cello

Zenon Zalitsailo, *Principal*
Oleg Sendetsky, *Principal*
Alexander Ponomarenko
Nikolai Vasilyev
Tamara Sakar
Oksana Moroz
Anton Valner
Ekaterina Travkina
Nikolay Oginets
Alexander Peresyppkin

Double Bass

Kirill Karikov, *Principal*
Sergei Akopov, *Principal*
Vladimir Shostak, *Principal*
Igor Eliseev
Evgeny Mamontov
Sergei Trafimovich
Maria Shilo

Flute

Valentin Cherenkov
Dennis Lupachev
Nikolay Mokhov
Margarita Maystrova

Oboe

Sergei Bliznetsov
Pavel Kundyanok
Victor Ukhalin
Ilya Ilin

Clarinet

Viktor Kulyk
Dmitri Kharitonov
Anatoly Shoka
Yuri Zuryaev
Ivan Stolbov

Bassoon

Igor Gorbunov
Rodion Tolmachev
Valentin Kapustin
Alexander Sharykin

Orchestra Roster

Horn

Dmitri Vorontsov
Stanislav Tses
Stanislav Avik
Vladislav Kuznetsov
Yuri Akimkin
Valery Papyrin

Trumpet

Vasily Kan
Konstantin Baryshev
Gennady Nikonov
Sergei Kryuchkov
Vitaly Zaitsev

Trombone

Andrey Smirnov
Igor Iakovlev
Mikhail Seliverstov
Nikolai Timofeev
Alexander Ponomarev

Tuba

Nikolay Slepnev

Percussion

Andrey Khotin
Yuri Alexeev
Yuri Mischenko
Vladislav Ivanov
Evgeny Zhikalov
Arseny Shuplyakov

Harp

Liudmila Rokhlina

Piano

Valeria Romyantseva

Orchestra Manager

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Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born May 7, 1840, in Votkinsk, Russia
Died November 6, 1893, in St. Petersburg

Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23

Composed in 1874–1875; revised in 1889.
Premiered on October 25, 1875 in Boston, with
Hans von Bülow as soloist.

“In December 1874 I had written a Piano Concerto! Not being a pianist, I considered it necessary to consult a virtuoso as to any points in my Concerto that might be technically impracticable, ungrateful or ineffective. I had need of a severe critic, but at the same time one friendly disposed towards me.” Thus wrote Tchaikovsky to his patroness Nadezhda von Meck, describing the circumstances in which he presented his newly written First Piano Concerto—one of the best-loved in the repertoire today—to his much admired and trusted senior colleague at the Moscow Conservatory, Nikolay Rubinstein. Tchaikovsky suffered one of the biggest disappointments of his career when, on Christmas Eve, Rubinstein—who had been so supportive of the composer in the past—rejected the concerto with a rush of scathing criticism, summarily declaring the work ill-composed and unperformable. “I played the first movement. Not a single word, not a single remark.... Oh for one word, for friendly attack, but for God’s sake, one word of sympathy, even if not of praise. Rubinstein was amassing his storm.... Above all I did not want sentence on the artistic aspect. My need was for remarks about the virtuoso piano technique. R’s eloquent silence was of the greatest significance.... I fortified myself with patience and played through to the end. Still silence. I stood up and asked ‘Well?’ Then a torrent poured from Nikolay Grigorievich’s mouth.... It turned out that my concerto was worthless and unplayable; passages were so fragmented, so clumsy, so badly written that they were beyond rescue; the work itself was bad, vulgar; in places

I had stolen from other composers; only two or three pages were worth preserving; the rest must be thrown away or completely rewritten.... a disinterested person in the room might had thought I was a maniac, a talentless, senseless hack who had come to submit his rubbish to an eminent musician....” This unexpected reaction from Rubinstein left the composer totally devastated and sank him into a severe state of depression.

However, so sure was the composer about his creation that upon Rubinstein’s gentler admonitions to completely revise the concerto, Tchaikovsky yelled, “I shall not alter a single note. I shall publish the work exactly as it is.”—which he did. The determined composer then sent his concerto to Hans von Bülow, who found it “original, noble and powerful.” On October 25, 1875, under the direction of Benjamin Johnson Lang, Bülow took the concert world by storm when he presented the work in Boston with unprecedented success. Tchaikovsky conducted the Russian premiere just a few weeks later. After this, Rubinstein reconsidered his position, recognizing the concerto for the masterpiece it is, and added it to his repertoire, playing it quite often throughout Russia. The rift that had ensued between Tchaikovsky and Rubinstein was eventually repaired and, later on, the composer did make a few revisions to the score, primarily in the solo passages. The first movement begins with a lengthy—106 measure long—introduction marked *Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso*. At the outset, the horns present a four-note descending motif, punctuated by sharp chords from the rest of the orchestra. The piano then enters with a long series of chords, as the violins play an impassioned theme based on the opening motif. Eventually, the first movement proper, *Allegro con spirito*, arrives as the piano introduces the main theme with minimal support from the orchestra. One of Rubinstein’s criticisms was that he found this an unseemly theme to ennoble by incorporating it into a piano concerto; the theme is derived from a Ukrainian folksong commonly sung by

blind beggars. The somewhat more relaxed and stately second theme begins with an ascending scalar motif and ends with descending leaps. Both themes are subjected to a brilliant double exposition, with the exchange of virtuoso and expressive elements and argumentative tension between soloist and orchestra. The soloist has plentiful occasion to shine with its many ornate and rhapsodic passages and several demanding cadenzas.

The contrasting second movement, *Andantino semplice*, takes the form of a scherzo, but in reverse—instead of the normal fast-slower-fast pattern, a soulful episode surrounds a jaunty middle section. It begins with a tender love theme played by a solo flute against pizzicato strings, and then taken over by the piano. After a contrasting phrase is heard, the oboe once again takes the main melody. Then the piano embarks on a frolicsome scherzando episode marked *Allegro vivace assai*. Although it does so at first by itself, soon the violas and cellos join in with a melody of their own—the French song *Il faut s’amuser, danser et rire* (“One must have fun, dance and laugh”) which was a favorite of Désirée Artôt, to whom the composer was briefly engaged. After an ingenious reference to the first movement’s second theme, the soloist plays a short cadenza that leads into the main love theme once again to conclude the movement.

The last movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, is built upon a rondo structure with elements of sonata form. After a few introductory measures from the orchestra, the piano presents the main recurring theme; this assertive mazurka-like theme is derived from yet another Ukrainian folksong. Two other subjects come into play here: one is of great significance and bears a syncopated dance rhythm; the other is of a subsidiary nature and gentler in character. The two principal themes are freshly emphasized within a different context each time they are repeated. At the coda, now in the major key, the subsidiary theme finally attains its full import. Then, with minimal intervention from the orchestra and in

a flurry of virtuoso playing, the piano rushes to the work’s exhilarating conclusion.

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Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)

Born September 25, 1906, in St. Petersburg

Died August 9, 1975, in Moscow

Symphony No. 11 in G minor, Op. 103, “The Year 1905”

Composed in 1957.

Premiered on October 30, 1957 in Moscow,

conducted by Nathan Rakhlin.

Discussions of Shostakovich and his music have always revolved around politics. The Soviets used to maintain that the composer was loyal to the regime, while more recent literature suggests that he was deeply disillusioned with Communism. Yet if we ask whether Shostakovich was for or against the regime, we also must ask the opposite question: was the regime for or against Shostakovich? Surely, the Party’s treatment of the country’s greatest composer, with a seesaw of denunciations and rehabilitations, severe criticism and highest honors, is no less ambiguous than Shostakovich’s own highly contradictory attitudes toward Communism.

Eleven years old at the time of the October Revolution, Shostakovich spent his entire adult life under the Soviet regime, which was the only political reality he had ever experienced firsthand. In the early years of the regime, it was easy to be swept up in the euphoria of building a new society the world had never seen before, and many were prepared to bear economic hardship as a necessary price to pay for a brighter future. In the late 1930s, as Stalin’s political terror reached unbelievable levels of atrocity, it became more and more difficult to maintain that original belief in the building of a better world. Yet right until the collapse of communism in the late 1980s, it remained a much-debated question throughout Eastern Europe whether

Communism was essentially a good idea gone awry, or a concept fundamentally flawed from the start.

The question to ask about Shostakovich's Symphony No. 11—a work that bears its political program in its title—is not whether it is an homage to officialdom or a work with a hidden dissident message. It has been called both, allowing the symphony to be exploited by exponents of both pro- and anti-Soviet political agendas. The real questions are how Shostakovich treated his ostensible theme, the Russian Revolution of 1905, and what elements in the music have called, again and again, for an interpretation along political lines. Before examining these questions, however, it might be helpful to summarize the events of the year 1905 (the year before Shostakovich was born).

On January 9, 1905 (according to the old style; January 22 by the Gregorian calendar), a peaceful demonstration of workers and peasants, led by Father Gapon, appeared in front of the Winter Palace, the Czar's residence in St. Petersburg. They wished to hand Nicholas II a petition, asking the monarch for help to alleviate their economic conditions, which had become unbearable. The Czar's guards began to shoot at the crowd, killing hundreds of people. The event, which became known as "Bloody Sunday," set off widespread strikes and protests all over the country (including the mutiny aboard the battleship *Potemkin*, which is immortalized in Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 film, *Battleship Potemkin*). The massive unrests led to a certain liberalization in Czarist rule, bringing the empire closer to a constitutional monarchy for the last decade of its existence.

The events of 1905 were widely regarded as a prelude to the two revolutions of 1917 (February and October), the first of which put an end to the Czarist regime and the second which brought the Bolsheviks to power. For this reason, writing a symphony about the 1905 revolution may seem to have been a politically expedient thing to do. But the truth is that the brutality of the Bloody Sunday shootings must

arouse the deepest revulsion in every sensitive human being, and the program of the symphony expresses not merely Communist self-righteousness but a belief in human dignity in general. Some writers have alleged that, while Shostakovich was ostensibly concerned with the events of 1905, what he was really thinking about was the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, crushed by Soviet tanks shortly before the symphony was written. The composer himself was heard to comment on the fact that he wrote the Eleventh in the aftermath of the Budapest uprising. But why limit the music's message by narrowly and exclusively linking it to one political event or another? To my mind, this music is a denunciation of all tyrants, and a requiem for victims of injustice everywhere.

In this symphony, Shostakovich took special pains to make sure his message was clear to every listener. He adapted many of the symphony's principal themes from songs of the workers' movement—songs that every resident of the Soviet Union learned to sing in school, as well as from his own work for mixed chorus, *Ten Songs of Nineteenth-Century Revolutionary Poets*, Op. 88 (1951). He then wove these themes together in a complex tapestry, having them undergo substantial transformations and return, sometimes in their original form and sometimes with important changes, in the course of the symphony's four movements (played without pause).

The song themes Shostakovich used, either in their original form or modified, include the following, in the order of their first appearance:

1. *Listen*, a prisoner's song ("Like an act of betrayal, like a tyrant's conscience, the night is dark").
2. *The Prisoner* is another prisoner's song ("...but the walls of the prison are strong, fastened at the gate by two iron locks").
3. *Worker's Funeral March* ("You fell a victim in the fateful battle, with selfless love for the people...").
4. *Hail the Free World of Liberty*
5. *Rage, Tyrants* ("Rage, tyrants, mock at

Program Notes

us,...although our bodies are trampled, we are stronger in spirit—shame, shame, shame to you, tyrants!”).

6. *Varshavianka* (“Hostile whirlwinds swirl around us.... We have entered into fateful battle with our enemies, our destinies are still unknown”).

7. *Bright Lights*: A quote from the then-popular Soviet operetta by Georgi Sviridov, combined with the famous revolutionary march, *Boldly, Comrades, Keep Step*.

The two themes from Shostakovich’s own revolutionary choruses are:

8. Oh, Czar, our little father.

9. *Bare Your Heads* on this sorrowful day.

With these characteristic building blocks, Shostakovich created what often resembles a veritable opera without words. It portrays not just emotions and musical characters but definite places and actions. (It is no coincidence that the symphony was later choreographed with great success in Russia.) The eerie opening where a slow-moving melody is played in five simultaneous octaves by the muted strings, is a striking depiction of the motionless Palace Square on an ice-cold January day. This frozen image will return several times as a powerful contrast to the intense drama unfolding in the second movement. The contrast between motion and immobility is one of Shostakovich’s main dramatic strategies in this work: the delirious activity in the second and fourth movements is offset by the calm, yet extremely tense, music in the first and third.

The slow first movement (“The Palace Square”) sets the stage for the drama, with the glacial string theme, a trumpet call that turns into a wail, a hint at the Orthodox response “Lord have mercy on us,” and the two prison songs (Nos. 1–2). It clearly represents “silence before a storm,” and the storm indeed breaks out in the second movement (“The Ninth of January”). Against an agitated accompaniment in the lower strings, we hear the first of

the two self-quotes, a melody usually described as Mussorgskyan, first softly and then gradually rising in volume until a full orchestral fortissimo is reached. During a momentary respite, No. 9 is heard briefly, played by the first trumpet, but then No. 8 returns, building to an even more powerful climax than the first time. All of this is, however, only a prelude to what follows. After a brief recall of the “frozen” opening of “The Palace Square,” the most violent section of the symphony begins: a ferocious fugue, started by cellos and basses, and rapidly escalating into what must be seen as a graphic depiction of sheer horror—the entire orchestra pounding on a single rhythm of equal triplet notes, at top volume and (for most instruments) in a high register. This is certainly the moment where the Czarist guards open fire. The first-movement image of the empty Palace Square now returns (complete with string theme, trumpet fanfare, the song Listen and the timpani motto).

The Russian title of the third movement, “Vechnaia pamiat” (“In Memoriam”), alludes to a funeral chant of the Orthodox church. But its actual melodic basis is the *Worker’s Funeral March* (No. 3), played by the violas to the sparsest of accompaniments. A second, less subdued section develops No. 4 and leads to an impassioned passage where the entire orchestra shrieks out the *Bare Your Heads* theme (No. 9) in what seems a flashback of the past atrocities, and the violins take over the timpani motto in great anguish and agitation. No. 3 returns and the mood becomes calmer, but soon we hear the “The Tocsin” (the alarm bells) with a new call to battle. The relentless march rhythms of No. 5 and No. 6 grow more and more furious until, finally, they are swept aside by another memory of the horrors and a recall of No. 8, the plea to the Czar, played with great fervor by the full orchestra. The glacial string music of the first movement returns, complemented by a long English horn solo based on No. 9, before the final upsurge that, with its musical material taken from the second movement, seems to suggest that the struggle is not over.

Program Notes

It is hardly the optimistic conclusion that one would associate with a piece celebrating Soviet political ideas. Then again, according to Soviet history books, the 1905 revolution had been unsuccessful because it failed to overthrow the Czar. That historic moment was not to arrive until 1917, and it was perhaps inevitable that Shostakovich should devote his next symphony, No. 12 (1961), to the Great Socialist October Revolution, as it used to be called. The finale of that work, “The Dawn of Humanity,” delivered the triumphant ending everyone had been waiting for.

In the Eleventh, Shostakovich created a large-scale symphony on an official theme, using plenty of songs officially sanctioned by the regime. (It was enough to make some people comment at the premiere: Shostakovich had

“sold himself down the river.”) But there were enough disturbing overtones in the work for others to perceive a hidden underground meaning. According to one report, Shostakovich’s son Maxim, 19 at the time of the premiere, whispered into his father’s ear during the dress rehearsal: “Papa, what if they hang you for this?” And the great Russian poet, Anna Akhmatova, said, when asked what she thought of all those revolutionary quotations: “[They] were like white birds flying against a terrible black sky.” However we might interpret the work, it is clear that Shostakovich created neither a mere Communist propaganda piece nor a coded anti-Communist tract but a complex, dark score of exceptional dramatic power.

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About the Artists

The **Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre** enjoys a long and distinguished history as one of the oldest musical institutions in Russia. Founded in the 18th century during the reign of Peter the Great, it was known before the Revolution as the Russian Imperial Opera Orchestra. Housed in St. Petersburg's famed Mariinsky Theatre since 1860 (named in honor of Maria, wife of Emperor Alexander II), the Orchestra entered its true "golden age" in the second half of the 19th century under the musical direction of Eduard Napravnik (1839–1916). Napravnik single-handedly ruled the Imperial Theatre for more than half a century (1863–1916) and under his leadership, the Mariinsky Orchestra was recognised as one of the finest in Europe. He also trained a generation of outstanding conductors, developing what came to be known as "the Russian school of conducting."

The Mariinsky Theatre was also the birthplace of numerous operas and ballets which are regarded as masterpieces of the 19th and 20th centuries. World premiere performances include Glinka's *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Maid of Pskov*, *The Snow Maiden* and *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia*, Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*, *Iolanta*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* and *The Sleeping Beauty* and Prokofiev's *Betrothal in a Monastery* ("The Duenna"), as well as operas by Shostakovich and ballets by Khachaturian.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was closely associated with the Mariinsky Theatre, not only conducting the Orchestra but also premiering his Fifth Symphony here, the *Hamlet* fantasy overture and the Sixth Symphony. Sergei Rachmaninoff conducted the Orchestra on numerous occasions, including premieres of his *Spring Cantata* and the symphonic poem *The Bells*. The Orchestra also premiered music by the young Igor Stravinsky, such as his *Scherzo fantastique* and the ballet *The Firebird*.

Throughout its history, the Mariinsky Theatre has presented works by Europe's leading opera composers. In 1862, Verdi's *La forza del*

destino was given its world premiere at the Theatre in the presence of the composer. Wagner came to the Mariinsky Theatre, where his operas were frequently performed from the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, including the first Russian performances of the complete *Ring* cycle, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Parsifal*. The *Ring* cycle was conducted by Hans Richter, who was the first to conduct the complete *Ring* in Bayreuth and at Covent Garden.

The Mariinsky Orchestra also gave the first Russian performances of Richard Strauss's *Elektra*, *Salome* and *Der Rosenkavalier* and Berg's *Wozzeck* in a production that took place two years after its world premiere in Berlin and 20 years before its premiere in Vienna.

By 1917, the Orchestra's name had changed to the Royal Imperial Theatre Orchestra, and it was regarded as St Petersburg's leading symphony orchestra. Its repertoire—operatic and orchestral—has traditionally included not only music by Russian composers, but also of European composers. Numerous internationally famed musicians have conducted the Orchestra, among them Hans von Bülow, Felix Mottl, Felix Weingartner, Alexander von Zemlinsky, Otto Nikisch, Willem Mengelberg, Otto Klemperer, Bruno Walter and Erich Kleiber.

On two occasions, in 1847 and 1867, Hector Berlioz conducted performances of his own works, including *La Damnation de Faust*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Symphonie fantastique* and *Harold en Italie*. Berlioz wrote in his memoirs, "Such an orchestra! Such precision! Such an ensemble!" And in a letter dated December 1867, he stated: "I don't think Beethoven ever had a better performance of his compositions!" In March and April 1863, Richard Wagner visited St. Petersburg and led the Royal Imperial Theatre Orchestra in six programs of Beethoven symphonies and his own compositions, including the world's first concert performance of *Prelude und Liebestod*. Gustav Mahler appeared with the Orchestra in both 1902 and 1907, conducting five concerts, including a performance of his Fifth Symphony. In 1912, Arnold Schoenberg conducted the premiere of his symphonic poem *Pelleas und Melisande*.

About the Artists

Renamed the Kirov Opera during the Soviet era, the Orchestra continued to maintain its high artistic standards under the leadership of Yevgeny Mravinsky and Yuri Temirkanov. In 1988, Valery Gergiev was appointed Artistic Director of the Opera Company and in 1996 the Russian Government named him Artistic and General Director of the Mariinsky Theatre. Soon after the city of Leningrad was renamed St. Petersburg, the Kirov Theatre reverted to its original title of the Mariinsky Theatre, home to the Kirov Opera, the Kirov Ballet and the Kirov Orchestra.

Under the leadership of Valery Gergiev, the Mariinsky Theatre has forged important relationships with the world's greatest opera houses, among them the Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the San Francisco Opera, the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris and La Scala in Milan. Besides extensive touring with the Opera and Ballet Companies, the Kirov Orchestra has performed throughout the world, becoming one of the most outstanding orchestras. The success of the Orchestra's frequent tours has created the reputation of what one journalist referred to as "the world's first global orchestra."

In 1998, the Orchestra made its debut tour of China, a historic first, with a performance in the Great Hall in Beijing, broadcast to 50 million people, in the presence of President Jiang Zemin. It was the first time in 40 years that a Russian orchestra had played in China.

Under the baton of Valery Gergiev, the Orchestra has recorded exclusively for Phillips Classics since 1989. Releases include the complete operas *Khovanshchina*, *War and Peace*, *Sadko*, *Prince Igor*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, *Iolanta*, *The Fiery Angel* (winner of the 1996 Gramophone "Opera of the Year" award), *La forza del destino*, *Boris Godunov* (1869 and 1872 versions), *Mazepa*, *Betrothal in a Monastery*, *The Love for Three Oranges* and *Semyon Kotko*. The Orchestra has also recorded the complete ballets *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*.

In July 2000, the Orchestra and Chorus of the Mariinsky Theatre recorded Verdi's Requiem.

Other releases of orchestral music include symphonies by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev and Shostakovich, as well as Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and *Le Sacre du printemps*, Scriabin's *Le Poème de l'extase* and *Prometheus*, and the complete piano concerti of Prokofiev. In 2004, Mahler's Eighth Symphony was performed for the first time at the Mariinsky Theatre under the baton of Valery Gergiev.

In the 2004–2005 season, Valery Gergiev initiated a worldwide series of charity concerts entitled *Beslan: Music for Life*. Under the Maestro's direction, concerts were held in New York, Paris, London, Tokyo, Rome and Moscow. In March and April 2005, Maestro Gergiev conducted the Mariinsky Orchestra on a tour of the United States. The orchestra visited 17 cities giving 20 concerts, three of which took place at Carnegie Hall. As part of touring programs in 2005 the Mariinsky Orchestra took part in international music festivals in Salzburg, Mikkeli, Istanbul, Baden-Baden and Stockholm.

In 2006, the Orchestra returns to the United States in March and October for the Shostakovich Centennial Celebration.



Joost Van Velsen

Valery Gergiev is internationally recognized as one of the most outstanding musical figures of his generation. His inspired leadership as Artistic and General Director of the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia, where he oversees the Kirov Orchestra, Ballet and Opera, has brought universal acclaim to this legendary institution. Together with the Kirov Opera and Orchestra, Maestro Gergiev has toured extensively in 45 countries in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Middle East.

Principal Conductor Designate of the London Symphony beginning January 2007, he is also the Principal Conductor of the Rotterdam

About the Artists

Philharmonic, Principal Guest Conductor of the Metropolitan Opera, Founder and Artistic Director of “Stars of the White Nights” Festival in St. Petersburg, the Moscow Easter Festival, the Gergiev Rotterdam Festival; the Mikkeli International Festival in Finland, and is inaugurating the Kievskaya Russe Festiva in the Ukraine. Maestro Gergiev guest conducts a select number of orchestras, including the Chicago Symphony and the Vienna Philharmonic.

Born in Moscow to Ossetian parents, Maestro Gergiev studied conducting with Ilya Musin at the Leningrad Conservatory. At age 24, he was the winner of the Herbert von Karajan Conductors Competition in Berlin. 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 in 1988, and named Artistic and General Director of the Mariinsky Theatre in 1996. In 2003, he celebrated his 50th birthday, his 25th anniversary with the Mariinsky Theatre and oversaw a considerable portion of the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg festivities by producing an unprecedented three-month “Stars of the White Nights” Festival. In the same year, he conducted both Season Opening Galas of the Metropolitan Opera and Carnegie Hall Season, the latter with the Kirov Orchestra.

That fall, *The Wall Street Journal* observed, “[t]he Mariinsky Theatre’s artistic agenda under Mr. Gergiev’s leadership has burgeoned into a diplomatic and ultimately a broadly humanistic one, on a global scale not even the few classical musicians of comparable vision approach.”

In the 2004–2005 season, Valery Gergiev initiated a worldwide series of charity concerts entitled *Beslan: Music for Life*. Under the Maestro’s direction, concerts were held in New York, Paris, London, Tokyo, Rome and Moscow. Further highlights included a 17-city Kirov Orchestra tour of North America with a three-concert residency at Carnegie Hall. In November 2005, Valery Gergiev and the legendary French composer and conductor Pierre Boulez conducted the Kirov Orchestra on the stage of Palais Garnier, Opéra National de Paris for a Mariinsky Theatre Gala. Masestro Gergiev conducted the Kirov

(Mariinsky) Opera Company in Shostakovich’s *The Nose* at Opéra Bastille and Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* at the Opéra National de Paris.

In March 2006, Maestro Gergiev began a seven-concert series at Avery Fisher Hall in New York’s Lincoln Center of the complete symphonies of Dmitri Shostakovich to celebrate the composer’s centenary. This festival includes both the Rotterdam Philharmonic and the Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre as well as tour appearances across the United States. This Shostakovich Celebration will continue with concerts in London with the London Symphony, the Kirov Orchestra, the Rotterdam Philharmonic and the Vienna Philharmonic. At the “Stars of the White Nights” Festival this past summer, he presented the 15 Shostakovich symphonies with the Kirov Orchestra, sharing the podium with conductors Christoph Eschenbach, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Paavo Järvi, Mariss Jansons, Maxim Shostakovich and Riccardo Muti. At the same festival, the Kirov Ballet and Opera presented Shostakovich’s *The Young Lady and the Hooligan*, *The Overcoat*, *The Golden Age*, *The Nose* and *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*.

The Kirov Opera’s 2006 performances in North America include its annual appearance at the Kennedy Center and presentations of the Mariinsky Theatre’s production of Wagner’s *Ring* cycle at the Orange County Performing Arts Center, Costa Mesa, California in October 2006 and at the Metropolitan Opera House in July 2007.

Maestro Gergiev is the recipient of many international awards, including the Dmitri Shostakovich Award; the Golden Mask Award, the most prestigious theater prize in Russia; the People’s Artist of Russia, the country’s highest cultural award; the World Economic Forum’s Crystal Award; and the EastWest Institute’s 25th Anniversary Lifetime Achievement Award, in recognition of his leadership and passionate service to humanity. Others presented with the EastWest Award include Tony Blair, Prime Minister of England, and Sanford Weill, Chairman of Citigroup. He has been awarded the 2006 Polar Music Prize of the Swedish Royal Academy of Music, the art world’s equivalent of the Nobel

About the Artists

Prize; the 2006 Distinctive Contribution Award of the American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation in Washington, DC; and, in July 2006, the Herbert von Karajan Prize for outstanding living musicians.

He has recorded exclusively for Universal on the Philips Decca and Deutsche Grammophon labels since 1989. His vast discography includes numerous Russian operas performed by the Kirov Opera, a cycle of the Shostakovich “War” symphonies (Nos. 4–9) with the Kirov and Rotterdam Orchestras and orchestral works by Tchaikovsky, Berlioz and Mussorgsky with the Vienna Philharmonic.



Alexander Toradze is universally recognized as a masterful virtuoso in the grand Romantic tradition. He has enriched the great Russian pianistic heritage with his own unorthodox interpretative conceptions, deeply poetic lyricism and intensely emotional excitement.

Mr. Toradze continually appears with the world's leading orchestras, including, in North America, those of New York, the Metropolitan Opera, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minnesota, Houston, Montréal, Toronto, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Seattle and Washington, DC. Overseas, he appears regularly with the Kirov Orchestra, La Scala Philharmonic, Bayerische Rundfunk Orchester, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, City of Birmingham Symphony, London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic and the orchestras of Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Italy. In June 2003, he made his triumphant debut with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Jurowski.

Upcoming highlights include performances with the Toronto, Pacific, Montréal, Cincinnati

and London symphonies, as well as the BBC Philharmonic and Dresden Philharmonic. In October 2006, he tours the United States with the Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre conducted by Valery Gergiev.

Mr. Toradze's recording of all five Prokofiev piano concerti with Valery Gergiev and the Kirov Orchestra for the Philips label is acclaimed by critics as definitive. His recording of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 was named by *International Piano Quarterly* as “historically the best on record” (from among over 70 recordings). Other highly successful recordings have included Scriabin's *Prometheus: The Poem of Fire* with the Kirov Orchestra and Valery Gergiev, as well as recital albums of the works of Mussorgsky, Stravinsky, Ravel and Prokofiev for EMI/Angel.

Mr. Toradze regularly participates in summer music festivals, including Salzburg, the White Nights in St. Petersburg, London's BBC Proms concerts, Edinburgh, Rotterdam, Mikkeli (Finland), the Hollywood Bowl, Saratoga and Ravinia.

Born in 1952 in Tbilisi, Georgia, Alexander Toradze graduated from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow and soon became a professor there. In 1983, he moved permanently to the United States, and, in 1991, was appointed as the Martin Endowed Chair Professor of Piano at Indiana University South Bend, where he has created a teaching environment that is unparalleled in its unique concept. The members of the multinational Toradze Piano Studio have developed into a worldwide touring ensemble that has gathered great critical acclaim on an international level. In the 2002–2003 season, the Studio appeared in New York performing the complete cycle of Bach solo concerti and Scriabin's complete sonata cycle. The Studio has also performed projects detailing the piano and chamber works of Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Dvořák and Stravinsky, in Rome, Venice and Ravenna in Italy; the Klavier Festival Ruhr and Berlin Festivals in Germany; and in Boston, Chicago and Washington, D.C.

For more information, please visit www.toradzepianostudio.org.