

Cal Performances Presents

Sunday, October 8, 2006, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Maxim Vengerov, *violin* Lilya Zilberstein, *piano*

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Adagio in E major, K. 261 (1776)
arr. Rostal

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) Sonata No. 7 for Piano and Violin in C minor,
Op. 30, No. 2 (1802)
Allegro con brio
Adagio cantabile
Scherzo: Allegro
Finale: Allegro

INTERMISSION

Serge Prokofiev (1891–1953) Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano in F minor,
Op. 80 (1938, 1946)
Andante assai
Allegro brusco
Andante
Allegro—Andante assai, come prima

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975) Ten Selections from the 24 Preludes, Op. 34
arr. Tziganov (1932–1933)
2. Allegretto
6. Allegretto
12. Allegro non troppo
13. Moderato
17. Largo
18. Allegretto
19. Andantino
21. Allegretto poco moderato
22. Adagio
20. Allegretto furioso

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Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) **Adagio in E major, K. 261 (1776)**

Arranged by Max Rostal.

It was for Antonio Brunetti, principal violinist of the archiepiscopal orchestra in Salzburg from March 1, 1776, that Mozart wrote the E major Adagio, K. 261. It was composed late in 1776 as a substitute slow movement for the Concerto No. 5 in A major, K. 219, since, according to a remark by the composer's father the following year, Brunetti found the original second movement “*zu studiert*”—“too studied”—and asked Mozart to create something more simple and attuned to the popular style. (Actually, the Concerto's beautiful original Adagio is crystal clear and immediately appealing. Abraham Veinus thought that “Brunetti certainly had peculiar taste.”) The replacement movement is also a lovely creation, with the music's sustained melody for the soloist make it almost an aria without words. The arrangement for violin and piano is by the Austrian-born English violinist and teacher Max Rostal (1906–1991).

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) **Sonata No. 7 for Violin and Piano in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2 (1802)**

In the summer of 1802, Beethoven's physician ordered him to leave Vienna and take rooms in Heiligenstadt, today a friendly suburb at the northern terminus of the city's subway system, but two centuries ago a quiet village with a view of the Danube across the river's rich flood plain. It was three years earlier, in 1799, that Beethoven first noticed a disturbing ringing and buzzing in his ears, and he sought medical attention for the problem soon thereafter. He tried numerous cures for his malady, as well as for his chronic colic, including oil of almonds, hot and cold baths, soaking in the Danube, pills and herbs. For a short time he even considered the modish treatment of electric shock. On the advice of his latest doctor, Beethoven left the noisy city for

the quiet countryside with the assurance that the lack of stimulation would be beneficial to his hearing and his general health.

In Heiligenstadt, Beethoven virtually lived the life of a hermit, seeing only his doctor and a young student named Ferdinand Ries. In 1802, he was still a full decade from being totally deaf. The acuity of his hearing varied from day to day (sometimes governed by his interest—or lack thereof—in the surrounding conversation), but he had largely lost his ability to hear soft sounds by that time, and loud noises caused him pain. Of one of their walks in the country, Ries reported, “I called his attention to a shepherd who was piping very agreeably in the woods on a flute made from a twig of elder. For half an hour, Beethoven could hear nothing, and though I assured him that it was the same with me (which was not the case), he became extremely quiet and morose. When he occasionally seemed to be merry, it was generally to the extreme of boisterousness; but this happens seldom.” In addition to the distress over his health, Beethoven was also wounded in 1802 by the wreck of an affair of the heart. He had proposed marriage to Giulietta Guicciardi (the thought of Beethoven as a husband threatens the moorings of one's presence of mind!), but had been denied permission by the girl's father for the then perfectly valid reason that the young composer was without rank, position or fortune. Faced with the extinction of a musician's most precious faculty, fighting a constant digestive distress, and unsuccessful in love, it is little wonder that Beethoven was sorely vexed.

On October 6, 1802, following several months of wrestling with his misfortunes, Beethoven penned the most famous letter ever written by a musician—the “Heiligenstadt Testament.” Intended as a will written to his brothers (it was never sent, though he kept it in his papers to be found after his death), it is a cry of despair over his fate, perhaps a necessary and self-induced soul-cleansing in those pre-Freudian days. “O Providence—grant me at last but one day of pure joy—it is so long since real

joy echoed in my heart,” he lamented. But—and this is the miracle—he not only poured his energy into self-pity, he also channeled it into music. “I shall grapple with fate; it shall never pull me down,” he resolved. The next five years were the most productive he ever knew. “I live only in my music,” Beethoven wrote, “and I have scarcely begun one thing when I start another.” The Symphonies Nos. 2–5, a dozen piano sonatas, the Fourth Piano Concerto and the Triple Concerto, *Fidelio*, three violin and piano sonatas (Op. 30), and many songs, chamber works and keyboard compositions were all composed between 1802 and 1806.

The Op. 30 Sonatas for Piano and Violin that Beethoven completed by the time he returned from Heiligenstadt to Vienna in the middle of October 1802 stand at the threshold of a new creative language, the dynamic and dramatic musical speech that characterizes the creations of his so-called “second period.” The C minor Sonata, the second of the Op. 30 set, shares its impassioned key with several other epochal creations of those years, notably the Fifth Symphony, the Third Piano Concerto, the “Pathétique” Sonata, the *Coriolan* Overture and the Op. 18, No. 4 String Quartet. The work opens with a pregnant main theme, announced by the piano and echoed by the violin, which, according to British musicologist Samuel Midgley, “is like a taut spring about to snap.” This motive returns throughout the movement both as the pillar of its structural support and as the engine of its tempestuous expression. The second theme is a tiny military march in dotted rhythms. The development section, which commences with bold slashing chords separated by silences (the exposition is not repeated), encompasses powerful mutations of the two principal themes. A full recapitulation and a large coda round out the movement.

The Adagio, one of those inimitable slow movements by Beethoven that seem rapt out of quotidian time, is based on a hymnal melody presented first by the piano and reiterated by the violin. A passage in long notes for the violin

above harmonically unsettled arpeggios in the keyboard constitutes the movement’s central section before the opening theme is recalled in an elaborated setting. The coda is dressed with ribbons of scales by the piano. The Scherzo, with its rhythmic surprises and nimble figurations, presents a playful contrast to the surrounding movements. The Finale, which mixes elements of rondo (the frequent returns of the halting motive heard at the beginning) and sonata (the extensive development of the themes), renews the troubled mood of the opening movement to close the expressive and formal cycle of this excellent Sonata.

Serge Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano in F minor, Op. 80 (1938, 1946)

Premiered on October 23, 1946 in Moscow by violinist David Oistrakh and pianist Lev Oborin.

Israel Nestyev headed the chapter of his biography of Prokofiev dealing with the composer’s life from 1945 to 1948, “The Difficult Years.” In January 1945, Prokofiev conducted the premiere of his Fifth Symphony with great success, and it seemed that, at age 53, he had many years of untroubled service to Soviet music in his future. Such was not to be the case. Only two weeks after the Fifth Symphony was introduced, Prokofiev was leaving a friend’s Moscow flat when he was suddenly stricken with a minor heart attack. He lost consciousness, fell down a flight of stairs, and was taken to the hospital, where his heart condition and a concussion were diagnosed. From that moment, his vigorous life style and busy social and musical schedules had to be abandoned. “Almost everything that made his life worth living was taken away,” wrote Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson in their study of the composer. “He was forbidden to smoke, drink wine, play chess, drive a car, walk fast or far, play the piano in public, conduct, stay up late, excite himself by much conversation, travel more than a few miles.” He spent

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the rest of his life—he died in 1953, on the same day as Joseph Stalin—in and out of hospitals, constantly taking precautions against a relapse.

Late in the spring of 1945, Prokofiev went to the country retreat at Ivanova provided by the government for Russia's professional composers, and he spent the summer there working on his Sixth Symphony. He returned to Moscow in the fall, but was too ill to participate in the bustling artistic and social life of the capital or to attend the premiere of his opera *Betrothal* in a Monastery at the Kirov Theater or a production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Bolshoi. The commotion of Moscow proved too much for his fragile health, and early in 1946, he acquired a country house in Nikolina Gora, a village some forty miles west of Moscow. The dacha was hidden away in trees and thick underbrush a short distance from the Moscow River, with Prokofiev's studio facing a dense patch of forest. He loved the place, and left it only for the most pressing appearances and appointments, preferring to meet his colleagues on his glassed-in back porch so that he could show off the flower garden and the large yard and perhaps engage them in a proscribed game of chess. During the summer of 1946, Prokofiev completed a sonata for violin and piano that he had begun eight years before and then laid aside to work on Alexander Nevsky, the opera Semyon Kotko and other projects. The violinist David Oistrakh continued the story: "I remember the day in the summer of 1946 when I drove out to Prokofiev's country house at Nikolina Gora to hear a new violin sonata he had written.... Before long, [the composer Nikolai] Miaskovsky, who lived nearby, joined us, and we sat down to listen to Prokofiev's Sonata. Before beginning to play, Prokofiev enumerated all the movements, after which he played the whole Sonata through without pausing. It made a powerful impression. One felt that this was truly great music, and indeed for sheer beauty and depth nothing to equal it had been written for the violin for many a decade. Miaskovsky had only one word for it: 'A masterpiece.'" Oistrakh agreed to premiere

the new Sonata with pianist Lev Oborin, and reported that they "visited the composer many times and he gave us a great deal of invaluable advice. One could see that this composition was very dear to him, and he took obvious pleasure in working at it with us.... Never have I been so completely absorbed in a piece of music. Until the first public performance, I could play nothing else, think of nothing else." Oistrakh and Oborin gave the Sonata's premiere in Moscow on October 23, 1946 to much acclaim, and the work was immediately recognized as one of Prokofiev's most masterful chamber creations.

"The Violin Sonata No. 1," Prokofiev wrote, "is more serious in mood than the Second Sonata [Op. 94-bis, a reworking of the Flute Sonata]. The first movement, *Andante assai*, is severe in character and is a kind of extended introduction to the second movement, a *sonata-allegro*, which is vigorous and turbulent, but has a broad second theme. The third movement is slow, gentle and tender. The finale is fast, and is written in complicated rhythms." Though Prokofiev gave no hint of any extra-musical associations in his brief description, his biographer Israel Nestyev believed that "the Sonata has something of the quality of a narrative poem and seems to contain a hidden program.... The four movements present four sharply contrasting scenes, which might have been inspired by Russian epic poetry. The first movement is a compact byline-like melody, suggesting the meditation of an ancient bard on the fate of the motherland; the second presents a scene of brutal encounter between warring forces; the third creates a poetic image of a young girl's lament; and the finale is a hymn to the might of Russia in arms, a paean to the people's freedom and strength. At the very end of the finale, material from the opening *Andante* returns, underscoring the basic epic-narrative quality of the work.... Prokofiev here succeeded in filling the modest framework of a violin sonata with epic content of truly symphonic proportions."

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)
Ten Selections from the 24 Preludes,
Op. 34 (1932–1933)

Premiered on May 24, 1933 in Moscow by the composer. Arranged by Dmitri Tziganov.

Shostakovich's mother, Sofia Vasilievna, was a skilled pianist who studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory and taught the instrument professionally. She passed her talent onto her offspring—her oldest child, Maria, followed in her footsteps, and Sofia began Dmitri's lessons when he was nine. (Her third and last child, a daughter, Zoya, became a veterinarian.) Dmitri displayed a quick affinity for the piano, and he was placed in Glyaser's Music School after only a year of study at home. Three years later, in 1919 (and just two years after the Revolution, which his family supported wholeheartedly), Shostakovich entered the Petrograd Conservatory as a piano student of Leonid Nikolayev; he graduated in 1924 as a highly accomplished performer. Despite his visions of a career in the concert hall, his first job after graduation was as pianist in a movie house, which Victor Seroff described in his biography of the composer: "The little theater was old, drafty, and smelly. It had not seen fresh paint or a scrubbing for years, the walls were peeling, and the dirt lay thick in every corner. Three times a day a new crowd packed the small house; they carried the snow in with them on their shoes and overcoats. They munched food that they brought with them, apples and sunflower seeds that they spat on the floor. The heat of the packed bodies in their damp clothes, added to the warmth of two small stoves, made the bad air stifling hot by the end of the performance. Then the doors were flung open to let the crowd out and to air the hall before the next show, and cold damp drafts swept through the house. Down in front below the screen sat Dmitri, his back soaked with perspiration, his near-sighted eyes in their horn-rimmed glasses peering upwards to follow the story, his fingers pounding away on the raucous upright piano. Late at night he trudged

home in a thin coat and summer cap, with no warm gloves or galoshes, and arrived exhausted around one o'clock in the morning." The taxing job not only sapped his strength and health, but also made composing and concertizing virtually impossible, so his family decided in the spring of 1925 that he would leave this musical purgatory to devote himself to higher pursuits. His First Symphony, completed at the beginning of the following year, elevated him overnight to a leading position in Soviet music.

Shostakovich always retained his love of the piano, and he played throughout his life whenever he could, but the lack of practice time—in addition to his creative work, in the 1930s he also became the elected deputy to the Oktyabrsky District in Leningrad and was one of the organizers of the Leningrad Union of Soviet Composers—prevented him from performing much music other than his own. The composer's student Samari Savshinsky described him as "an outstanding artist and performer. The crystalline clarity and precision of thought, the almost ascetic absence of embellishment, the precise rhythm, technical perfection, and very personal timbre he produced at the piano made all Shostakovich's piano playing individual in the highest degree.... Those who remember his performance of Beethoven's mighty 'Hammerklavier' Sonata, followed by a number of Chopin pieces, can only regret that his talent as a pianist was never fully developed or applied."

Among Shostakovich's early important contributions to the piano literature is his collection of 24 Preludes, Op. 34, composed immediately after he had completed the powerfully lurid opera *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk* at the end of 1932. While he was negotiating during the following winter for the opera's premiere (which was given with enormous success early in 1934 in Leningrad), he turned to the more intimate form of the piano prelude, creating the two-dozen numbers of the set between December 30, 1932 and March 2, 1933. (He meticulously footnoted each piece with its date and place of

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composition—all in Leningrad, except for one movement [No. 8] jotted down on a quick trip to Moscow.) He played the work's first performance on May 24th in Moscow. Shostakovich's Preludes are modeled on the eponymous cycles by Chopin, Scriabin and Rachmaninoff, and, like Scriabin's, follow Chopin in their arrangement around the "circle of fifths" (C major, A minor, G major, E minor, etc.). Also like Chopin, Shostakovich's Preludes circumscribe a wide variety of musical idioms, though they are frequently touched with a nose-thumbing insouciance unknown to the 19th-century master. (According to his Soviet biographer Ivan Mortynov, Shostakovich said that these miniatures were a series of psychological sketches, to which the later British scholar Ian Macdonald responded, "He must have been in a caustic frame of mind that winter.") Though they only

occasionally hint at a deep emotional content, the Preludes are a digest of the enormous range of musical styles encompassed by the music of Shostakovich during the 1930s, "from majestic concentration, through intimate lyricism and the pathos of sorrow, down to juggling with the vulgar," according to David Rabinovich in his official 1959 Soviet study of the composer.

During the 1930s, violinist Dmitri Tziganov, a close friend of Shostakovich and the leader of the Beethoven Quartet, the ensemble that introduced all of his quartets except the first and the last of the 15, arranged 19 of the 24 Preludes for violin and piano. "When I heard Tziganov's arrangements of the Preludes," Shostakovich said, "I forgot they were originally written for solo piano, so naturally did they sound."

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photo: Sheila Rock

At just 32 years of age, **Maxim Vengerov** is recognised as one of the world's most exciting violinists. Since he started playing at the age of four-and-a-half, he has evolved from a precociously talented child into an assured virtuoso. After his first recital in his hometown of Novosibirsk, Siberia, at the age of five, then studying with Galina Tourchaninova and Professor Zakhar Bron, he went on to win the First Prize in the Junior Wieniawski Competition in Poland when he was just 10 years old. In 1990, aged 15, he took top honors at the Carl Flesch International Violin Competition, which confirmed his reputation as a musician of the very highest order.

Mr. Vengerov recorded exclusively for Teldec Classics for 10 years, during which time awards and accolades were plentiful, including both Gramophone Young Artist of the Year, and Ritmo (Spain) Artist of the Year in 1994. In 1996, he was awarded the Gramophone Record of the Year and received Grammy nominations for Classical Album of the Year and Best Instrumental Soloist with Orchestra for his recording of the first Shostakovich and

Prokofiev concertos. Mr. Vengerov received the Edison Award in 1997 in the Best Concerto Recording category for his recording of the second Shostakovich and Prokofiev concertos and, in 2003, for his solo CD, *Vengerov Plays Bach, Ysaÿe, Schedrin*, on EMI Classics, with which he signed an exclusive contract in May 2000. In September 2002, Mr. Vengerov was named the Gramophone Artist of the Year and, in 2004, the Edison Award and Grammy Award winner for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance (with Orchestra) for his recording of the Britten and Walton violin concertos.

In 1997, at the age of 23, Mr. Vengerov was appointed Goodwill Ambassador by the United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF), the first classical musician to be appointed in this role. By playing for abducted child soldiers in Uganda, disadvantaged children in Harlem, children suffering from drug addiction in Thailand and children on both sides of the Kosovan ethnic divide, it has afforded him an opportunity to both inspire children worldwide, and inspire others to raise funds for UNICEF-assisted programs. He says: "I understood what miracles you can bring back to children with music; this is a universal language that everyone understands, it goes from heart to heart." Another passion of Mr. Vengerov's is his involvement with young people through giving master classes to aspiring musicians. One such event was recorded by Channel Four Television in the UK as part of a documentary about Mr. Vengerov, *Playing by Heart*, which was shown at the Cannes Television Festival in 1999.

Since October 2000, Mr. Vengerov has been a Professor of Violin at the Musikhochschule des Saarlandes. His pupils have appeared regularly not only as soloists, but also in ensemble with Mr. Vengerov, at many festivals, including Young Euro Classic in Berlin in 2002.

Maxim Vengerov performs regularly with all the major orchestras and the most eminent conductors. In the past three years, he has taken up different projects in addition to the usual concerto and recital repertoire. On a tour with

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the English Chamber Orchestra he performed as both soloist and conductor for the first time, after studying conducting for two years in the class of Vag Papian, who in turn studied with the legendary Ilya Musin. He performed recitals on the Baroque violin with Trevor Pinnock, went on a solo recital tour performing Bach, Shchedrin and Ysaÿe sonatas using both his Strad and the Baroque violin in a single concert, and took up the viola for another tour with the English Chamber Orchestra and to record the Walton Viola Concerto for EMI.

The 2003–2004 season started with an extensive tour in Europe and the United States with Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* and Saint-Saëns's Violin Concerto No. 3, another major release on EMI Classics and a Carte Blanche at the Concertgebouw. Mr. Vengerov opened the 2004–2005 season with the New York Philharmonic and the London Symphony Orchestra. He toured the Far East and Europe until the end of 2004 with a new program of virtuoso pieces, which were recorded and released by EMI that autumn. The year 2005 was a sabbatical year in which Mr. Vengerov studied improvisation with Didier Lockwood and tango dance and prepared for an explosive new viola concerto that Benjamin Yusupov has written for Mr. Vengerov, who gave the work its world premiere with the NDR Orchestra in Hannover in May 2005. Plans to tour this concerto worldwide have been made for 2007. In 2006, Mr. Vengerov resumed his usual concert work with tours worldwide of the Mozart concertos with the UBS Verbier Chamber Orchestra and a recital tour of works by Mozart, Beethoven, Prokofiev and Shostakovich.

Mr. Vengerov wishes to express his gratitude to Mrs. Yoko Nagae Ceschina for all her continued support, advice and great help, which made possible the purchase of his unique "Kreutzer" Stradivarius violin.



Since winning First Prize in the 1987 Busoni International Piano Competition, **Lilya Zilberstein** has established herself as one of the finest pianists in the world. In North America, she has appeared with the Chicago

Symphony at Ravinia, the Colorado Symphony, the Dallas Symphony, the Florida Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony, the Jacksonville Symphony, the Milwaukee Symphony, the Montreal Symphony, the Omaha Symphony, the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, the Oregon Symphony, the Pacific Symphony and the Saint Louis Symphony, to name a few. In Europe and Asia, she has performed with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Czech Philharmonic, the Dresden Staatskapelle, the Helsinki Philharmonic, the Leipzig Gewandhaus, the London Symphony, the Moscow Philharmonic, the NHK Symphony (Tokyo), the RAI Symphony (Torino), the Royal Philharmonic, the La Scala Orchestra, the Taipei Symphony and the Vienna Symphony. She recently concluded a Rachmaninoff concerto cycle with the Stuttgart Philharmonic, during which she played all four concertos and the *Paganini Variations* in three evenings. Her festival engagements include Lugano, Peninsula, Chautauqua and Mostly Mozart, both in New York and Japan.

A captivating recitalist, Ms. Zilberstein appears regularly in music centers throughout the United States, Europe and Japan. Recent engagements have taken her to Madrid, Berlin, Budapest, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Innsbruck, Luxembourg, Stuttgart and Liverpool. Also a sought-after collaborator, Ms. Zilberstein has been performing duos with Martha Argerich

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for many years. In addition to show-stopping performances in Norway, France, Italy and Germany, a CD of the Brahms Sonata for Two Pianos played by Ms. Zilberstein and Ms. Argerich was released in 2003. Current collaborations include extensive tours in the United States, Canada and Europe with Russian violinist Maxim Vengerov. Featured on the EMI recording *Martha Argerich and Friends: Live from the Lugano Festival*, Mr. Vengerov's and Ms. Zilberstein's performance of the Brahms Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano won a Grammy nomination for best classical album as well as best chamber music performance.

Lilya Zilberstein has also made numerous recordings for Deutsche Grammophon;

these include the Rachmaninoff Concertos Nos. 2 and 3 with Claudio Abbado and the Berlin Philharmonic, the Grieg Concerto with Neeme Järvi and the Göteborg Symphony, and solo works of Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich, Mussorgsky, Liszt, Schubert, Brahms, Debussy, Ravel and Chopin.

A native of Moscow, Ms. Zilberstein is a graduate of the Gnessin Pedagogical Institute. In addition to the Busoni Competition Gold Medal, she was the 1998 Prizewinner of the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy (other recipients include Gidon Kremer, Anne-Sophie Mutter and Esa-Pekka Salonen). She moved to Hamburg in 1990, where she lives with her husband and their two sons.