

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

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CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
CHRISTOPHER O'RILEY'S RADIOHEAD
IN ZELLERBACH HALL SEPTEMBER 17, 2003 AT 8:00 P.M.

**INNOVATIVE PIANIST CHRISTOPHER O'RILEY PERFORMS SONGS BY BRITISH ROCK GROUP
RADIOHEAD, TRANSCRIBED BY O'RILEY FOR SOLO PIANO**

BERKELEY, August 6, 2003 – Cal Performances presents acclaimed pianist **Christopher O'Riley** in a program entitled *Christopher O'Riley's Radiohead*, **Wednesday, September 17, 2003 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. The evening features O'Riley's transcriptions of material by famed alternative rock band Radiohead. O'Riley, whose ambitious work in the classical realm over the past two decades has made him one of the most important and versatile American pianists before the public today, admits that the music of Radiohead has been "the music in my head" ever since he discovered the band's Grammy Award-winning album *OK Computer* in 1997. His passion for the group's lush guitar-driven sound and complex songcraft led him to create piano versions of his favorite songs, captured on the new Sony recording *True Love Waits: Christopher O'Riley Plays Radiohead*. *Rolling Stone* magazine calls the compositions "melodically vivid" and performed "with unblinking virtuosity." O'Riley takes the program on tour for the first time this year; Cal Performances' presentation September 17 is the only Bay Area engagement.

CHRISTOPHER O'RILEY'S RADIOHEAD

Ever the adventurer, **Christopher O'Riley** has proven uninhibited in programming his recitals and concerts, and his enthusiasm for the alternative rock band **Radiohead**—a group formed by five friends in 1987 in Oxford, England—is typical of his wide-ranging interests. In the pop music world, Radiohead has risen to the level of cult status and its popularity extends to music enthusiasts of all stripes. In a *New Yorker* magazine profile, Alex Ross wrote that the band's "interplay was as engaging to the mind as anything that's been done in classical music recently. But you could jump up and down to it." Because the band's music is not published, O'Riley's only recourse in performing the songs was

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to create his own transcriptions. The pianist listened to everything he could, including b-sides and rare live tracks, and became “obsessed” with Radiohead’s complex sonic textures: “The band has the opportunity to have three guitar players at the same time, so it’s really a contrapuntal, orchestral sound,” O’Riley said in an interview on National Public Radio’s *Performance Today*. “There are so many layers; this is what really appeals to me, and what gives me so much to cull from as far as what to use on the piano.” He began playing the Radiohead songs as concert recital encores, as station-break filler for Public Radio International’s *From the Top*, the weekly show he hosts for young musicians (the 5th highest rated public radio show in the U.S.), and in May 2002 performed them on *Performance Today*. “That’s what got the message out,” the pianist says. “My performances lived on the [radio] show’s web site, and all the Radiohead fan sites linked to them. By then it had become clear that this was a record.”

The album *True Love Waits* features 15 songs written by Radiohead’s five members: Thom Yorke, Jonathan Greenwood, Colin Greenwood, Philip Selway, and Edward O’Brien. Selections were drawn from five of the band’s studio albums: *Pablo Honey*, *The Bends*, *OK Computer*, *Kid A*, and *Amnesiac*. Songs include the title track, *Everything in its Right Place*, *Knives Out*, *Black Star*, *Karma Police*, *Let Down*, *Airbag*, *Subterranean Homesick Alien*, *Thinking About You*, *Exit Music (For a Film)*, *You*, *Bulletproof*, *Fake Plastic Trees*, *I Can’t*, and *Motion Picture Soundtrack*.

CHRISTOPHER O’RILEY

Christopher O’Riley enjoys a thriving concert career that includes solo recitals, chamber music and orchestral performances of the standard piano literature, as well as other keyboard works reaching from the English Renaissance to the modern tango. He has won top prizes at the Van Cliburn, Leeds, Busoni and Montreal piano competitions, and is the recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant and the Andrew Wolf Memorial Chamber Music Prize. O’Riley’s performance schedule regularly takes him to major cities throughout the United States and his talents have been spotlighted by frequent engagements at both Lincoln Center and the Kennedy Center. Internationally, he has appeared in cultural capitals worldwide, from London, Paris and Vienna to Hong Kong and Melbourne, Australia.

O’Riley’s recordings also reflect the originality and diversity of his repertoire. Among his highly acclaimed solo releases are a Scriabin disc for Image Recordings and an all-Stravinsky recording on

Nonesuch, featuring *Three Movements from Petrouchka* and O'Riley's own transcriptions of *Apollo* and *Histoire du Soldat*. He is also heard on the RCA Victor Red Seal release of French repertoire for piano and flute with James Galway. His discography is further highlighted by a Busoni album (including the rarely-heard *Fantasia Contrappuntistica*), a disc of Ravel's solo works, a recording of Beethoven Piano Sonatas, a collaboration with cellist Carter Brey entitled *Le Grand Tango* and a recording of *The Short-Tempered Clavier* by P.D.Q. Bach.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for *Christopher O'Riley's Radiohead* on **Wednesday, September 17 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$18.00, \$24.00, and \$28.00**. 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, 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 the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu.

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The San Francisco Chronicle and *San Francisco* magazine are season sponsors of Cal Performances' 2003/04 performing arts season.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

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CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Wednesday, September 17 at 8:00 p.m.

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

Furthermore

Christopher O'Riley's Radiohead

Christopher O'Riley, piano

Program:

Pianist Christopher O'Riley brings his transcriptions of music by famed alternative rock band Radiohead to Zellerbach Hall in a program featuring music from O'Riley's Sony release, *True Love Waits*.

Tickets: \$18.00, \$24.00 and \$28.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; online at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door.

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