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**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
SOPRANO JESSICA RIVERA IN RECITAL PERFORMING
THE WEST COAST PREMIERE *ĀTASH SORUSHĀN* (“FIRE ANGELS”)
ON SUNDAY, APRIL 3 IN HERTZ HALL**

**The new work by Mark Grey with lyrics by Niloufar Talebi will be conducted by
Donato Cabrera, with pianist Molly Morkoski and Ensemble Meme**

Recital also includes songs by Schumann and Debussy

BERKELEY, March 1, 2011—Soprano **Jessica Rivera**, known for her “stunning blend of tonal warmth, emotional depth and precision” (*San Francisco Chronicle*) will sing a dramatic, wide-ranging recital on **Sunday, April 3**, at **3:00 p.m.** in Hertz Hall. Accompanied by pianist **Molly Morkoski**, Rivera will demonstrate her musical range by singing a mid-19th-century song cycle by **Robert Schumann**, a late 19th century set of songs by **Claude Debussy** and the West Coast premiere of *Ātash Sorushān* (“Fire Angels”), written by composer **Mark Grey** with lyrics by **Niloufar Talebi** to commemorate the tenth anniversary of 9/11. *Ātash Sorushān* was co-commissioned by Cal Performances and Carnegie Hall, and will be conducted by **Donato Cabrera**, the current Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony. **Ensemble Meme**, a recently formed chamber music group, will also be featured in Grey’s composition. “Mark Grey is a composer as well as a sound engineer, and what he is up to has far-reaching implications for the direction that classical music will take this century” (Mark Swed, *Los Angeles Times*).

PROGRAM

Jessica Rivera will open her program with Robert Schumann’s song cycle, *Frauenliebe und -leben* (“Woman’s Love and Life”), Op. 42, written in 1840, the composer’s “Year of Song.” Set to texts by German poet and botanist **Adalbert von Chamisso**, the eight songs in Schumann’s cycle tell the complete, heartfelt story of love from a woman’s point of view, beginning with the first meeting (*Seit ich ihn gesehen*—“Since I Saw Him”), through romance and marriage (*Du Ring an meinem Finger*—“Your Ring Upon My Finger”), all the way to death (*Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan*—“Now You Have Caused Me Pain for the First Time”).

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The next set on the program, *Ariettes oubliées* (“Forgotten Songs”) by Claude Debussy, was composed in the late 1880s using six texts by French poet **Paul Verlaine**. The texts range from literally ecstatic—the first song is *C’est l’extase*—to the dark *L’ombre des arbres* (“Shadows of Trees”), and conclude with two songs with English titles, “Green” and “Spleen.” (Texts for all songs are in French.) The songs in *Ariettes oubliées* are lovely examples of Debussy’s ability to work precisely with a poet’s words, without repetition or rearrangement, to reinforce their emotional meaning.

Written for soprano and chamber orchestra, *Ātash Sorushān* (“Fire Angels”) by American contemporary composer and sound designer Mark Grey will conclude Jessica Rivera’s Berkeley recital. Written to commemorate the tenth anniversary of 9/11, *Ātash Sorushān* was co-commissioned by Cal Performances and Carnegie Hall and will receive its West Coast premiere in Berkeley just five days after its New York world premiere. Grey’s piece reflects on themes of hope and peace in the 21st century. The two “voices” in *Ātash Sorushān* “are not so much characters as they are ideas,” Rivera explained to Cal Performances. “One of them is the oceanic embodiment of existence, and the other is the idea of truth.” The English language libretto, which also includes excerpts from Persian poetry by Sohrab Sepehri and a few lines of scripture from the Avesta, the sacred text of the Zoroastrians, was written by Bay Area native **Niloufar Talebi**. A video element was created by **Catherine Owens**.

THE ARTISTS

Soprano **Jessica Rivera** has been praised as “vocally luminous” and her singing has been lauded as “silvery” by *The New York Times*. With a musical range that spans traditional and contemporary opera, the concert hall and intimate recitals, Rivera is a sought-after global performer just a decade after the *Los Angeles Times*’ veteran reviewer Daniel Cariaga dubbed her a “Promising Young Soprano, On Her Way.” She made her Santa Fe Opera debut in 2005, singing the role of Nuria in the world premiere of the Osvaldo Golijov’s revised version of *Ainadamar*, and reprised the role in a 2007 Grammy-winning recording with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Rivera is perhaps best known for her artistic collaborations with the best-known contemporary composers, including John Adams, Golijov and Nico Muhly, as well as her work with esteemed conductors including Bernard Haitink, Sir Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Robert Spano and Michael Tilson Thomas. In 2006 she premiered the role of Kumudha in John Adams's *A Flowering Tree*, and in 2007 sang the role of Kitty Oppenheimer in the European premiere of Adams's *Doctor Atomic*—a role she also sang at the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Lyric Opera of Chicago. She has also sung numerous traditional opera roles, including Susanna in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* and Musetta in Puccini's *La bohème*.

On the concert stage, Rivera has sung Igor Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in both Atlanta and at Carnegie Hall; Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the Berkeley Symphony; and solos in Francis Poulenc's *Gloria* with Grant Gershon at the Hollywood Bowl, Mozart's Requiem with the San Diego Symphony, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Ravel's *Shéhérazade* with the San Francisco Symphony. In December 2010, she alternated with Dawn Upshaw in the staged concert version of Adams's *El Nino* with the San Francisco Symphony, directed by the composer. Her official website is www.jessicarivera.com, and two videos of her discussing *Ātash Sorushān* are available at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu/learn/watch_listen.

Mark Grey was born in San Francisco and received his musical instruction at San Jose State University. He made his Carnegie Hall debut as a composer with Kronos Quartet in 2003 and was listed in the *Los Angeles Times*'s Faces to Watch 2006, Classical Music Section. After two decades as a sound designer, he has premiered major opera and concert works for John Adams, Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Terry Riley and Kronos Quartet, among others. He was the artistic collaborator, sound designer and soundscape engineer for John Adams's critically acclaimed *On the Transmigration of Souls*, which received the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Music as well as three Grammy Awards in 2005. Grey was the first sound designer in history to design for the New York Philharmonic at Avery Fisher Hall in 2002 and the Lyric Opera in Chicago in 2007, and was the first to design for the Metropolitan Opera in New York, for Adams's *Doctor Atomic* in October 2008. His sound design creations have been seen and heard throughout most major concert halls, theaters and opera houses worldwide.

Writer, theater artist and award-winning translator, **Niloufar Talebi** was born in London to Iranian parents. She is the editor/translator of *BELONGING: New Poetry by Iranians Around the World* (North Atlantic Books, 2008), and the creator of the multimedia projects, *Four Springs* (2004), *Midnight Approaches* (2006), *ICARUS/RISE* (2007) and *The Persian Rite of Spring* (2010). She is the founding director of TheTranslationProject.org, a nonprofit organization dedicated to presenting Iran-inspired projects. For more information, visit www.niloufartalebi.com.

Pianist **Molly Morkoski** has a distinguished international career as a soloist, collaborator/accompanist and educator. Noted by *The New York Times* for her “strong, profiled, nuanced, beautifully etched” playing, Morkoski has performed in Carnegie Hall, inaugurating Zankel Hall under John Adams’s baton; appeared at the Tanglewood, Aspen, Norfolk and Bang-on-a-Can festivals; and collaborated with the New York Philharmonic Chamber Players, the St. Louis Symphony Chamber Players, the New World Symphony, the Brooklyn Chamber Music Society and other ensembles. She has worked with such composers as Adams, Louis Andriessen, Gerald Barry, Lukas Foss, David Lang, Oliver Knussen, Steve Reich and Charles Wuorinen, and has premiered works by such composers as Mark Grey, Martin Kennedy, Dmitri Symoczko and Andrew Waggoner. Morkoski was a Fulbright Scholar and apprenticed with the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris. She holds degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Indiana University in Bloomington, and a doctorate from SUNY Stony Brook. She is associate professor at Lehman College in the Bronx.

Currently the Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, **Donato Cabrera** is an “energetic and genial” (*San Francisco Chronicle*) champion of new music. Mexican-American from Los Angeles, Cabrera was co-founder and music director of the New York–based American Contemporary Music Ensemble, where he conducted works of John Adams, Jacob Druckman, Donald Martino, Frederic Rzewski and Elliott Carter. He joined the San Francisco Symphony conducting staff in 2009 and also currently leads the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. In the San Francisco Symphony’s 2010–2011 season, he has conducted the popular *Dia de los Muertos* family concert and will conduct several more family-friendly programs. Cabrera was associate conductor of the San Francisco Opera from 2005 to 2008 and has assisted in

productions at the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Founded in 2009, **Ensemble Meme** is a new group of accomplished chamber musicians who perform innovative, wide-ranging programs, particularly those pairing contemporary music with music of the past. The ensemble's members are **Barry Crawford**, flute; **Carol McGonnell**, clarinet; **Harumi Rhodes** and **Austin Hartman**, violins; **Liuh-wen Ting**, viola; **Caroline Stinson**, cello; **Molly Morkoski**, piano; and **Alex Lipowski**, percussion. The individual musicians in Ensemble Meme have performed with the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, the Lark Quartet and Ensemble Pi, and at the Lucerne, Aspen, FOCUS! and Vermont Mozart festivals. They have worked with such composers as John Adams, Gerald Barry, George Benjamin, Pierre Boulez, Elliott Carter, John Corigliano, John Harbison, Aaron Jay Kernis, Oliver Knussen, George Perle, Steven Stucky, Andrew Waggoner and Anna Weesner.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for the **Jessica Rivera**, soprano, with **Molly Morkoski**, piano, and **Ensemble Meme**, conducted by **Donato Cabrera**, on **Sunday, April 3**, in Hertz Hall are priced at **\$48.00**. 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 \$20.00 for all other community members. Information

is available on Cal Performances' Facebook page and at 510-642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, three hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, April 3 at 3:00 p.m.

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

Recital

Jessica Rivera, soprano
Donato Cabrera, conductor
Molly Morkoski, piano
Ensemble Meme
Mark Grey, composer
Niloufar Talebi, lyrics
Christine Owen, video

Program:

Schumann/*Frauenliebe und -leben* Op. 42
Debussy/*Ariettes oubliées*
Grey/*Ātash Soroushān*

Tickets: \$48.00, 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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