

CONTACT:
Christina Kellogg 510.643.6714
ckellogg@calperfs.berkeley.edu
Joe Yang 510.642.9121
scyang@calperfs.berkeley.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 18, 2006

**RISEING STAR PIANIST JONATHAN BISS MAKES HIS
CAL PERFORMANCES RECITAL DEBUT
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19 AT 3:00 P.M.**

BERKELEY, January 18, 2006 – 25-year-old American pianist **Jonathan Biss** makes his Bay Area solo recital debut performance as part of Cal Performances' Recital Series on **Sunday, February 19 at 3:00 p.m.** in Hertz Hall. Biss, noted for his sophisticated programs as well as for his artistic maturity and versatility, performs a diverse repertoire ranging from **Beethoven** and **Schumann** to **Schoenberg** as well as works by contemporary composer **Spratlan**. The afternoon begins with Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor, *Pathetique*, and leaps some 200 years ahead to the work of 2000 Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Lewis Spratlan's *Wonderer*, commissioned for Biss by the Borletti-Buitoni Trust. The program continues with Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 30 in E major, a more mature work that reflects Beethoven's profound and deep personal statements followed by Schoenberg's eclectic Six Little Piano Pieces, Op. 19. The performance ends with Schumann's romantic Fantasy in C major, Op. 17, that tells the stories of the love affair between him and his wife, Clara Schumann. The program reflects Biss's profile as a performer, "a serious, accomplished artist who puts the composer before the player" (*Los Angeles Times*).

Jonathan Biss's talent for music comes naturally to him as he represents the third generation in a family of professional musicians that includes his grandmother Raya Garbousova, one of the first well-known female cellists, as well as his parents, violinist Miriam Fried and violist/violinist Paul Biss. Growing up surrounded by music, Biss began his piano studies at age six, and his first musical collaborations were with his parents. He studied with master musician Leon Fleisher at The Curtis Institute of Music. "The most immediately striking thing about Biss's playing is the beauty and refinement of his keyboard touch," says the *San*

-MORE-

San Francisco Chronicle. “Even in the busiest, most intricate passagework, every note and every phrase came sheathed in a light of cushion of sound.”

An enthusiastic recital and chamber musician, Biss made his New York recital debut at the Tisch Center for the Arts at 92nd Street Y, in 2000 and has appeared in many recital series across the United States and increasingly in major cities and venues across Europe. Biss has been a member of Chamber Music Society Two at Lincoln Center, a frequent participant at the Marlboro Music Festival and has toured with Musicians from Marlboro on several occasions. He has worked with such eminent conductors as Marin Alsop, Daniel Barenboim, Herbert Blomstedt, James Conlon, Michael Tilson Thomas, Neville Marriner, and Pinchas Zukerman. Biss has also performed with major North American orchestras including the Boston, Cincinnati, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco Symphony orchestras.

Biss was an artist-in-residence on NPR’s radio program, *Performance Today*, and has been recognized with numerous awards, including the 2002 Gilmore Young Artist Award, Lincoln Center’s Martin E. Segal Award, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, the Andrew Wolf Memorial Chamber Music Award, and the 2003 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award. He was the first and only American chosen to participate in the BBC’s New Generation Artist program, and most recently received the 2005 Leonard Bernstein Award presented to him at the Schleswig-Holstein Festival in Germany.

Released in May 2004, Biss’s first debut recording, *Beethoven, Schumann: Piano Works*, is a CD on the EMI label comprising Schumann’s *Davidsbündlertänze*, Op. 6 and Beethoven’s *Fantasy in G minor*, Op. 77 and Piano Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 (*Appassionata*). The record has since won wide acclaim as the *San Francisco Chronicle* declared the CD “brilliant” and the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* remarked that this “recording is a clear signal that a master is emerging.”

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Jonathan Biss** on **Sunday, February 19 at 3:00 p.m.** in Hertz Hall are priced at **\$42.00**. 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 and 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 Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu.

#

Cal Performances' 2005/2006 Centennial Season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

The *Contra Costa Times* and Classical 102.1 KDFC are season media sponsors of the 2005/06 performing arts season.

Cal Performances gratefully acknowledges The Shenson Foundation for its generous support of the 2005/06 Recital Series.

#

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, February 19 at 3:00 p.m.

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

Recital

Jonathan Biss, piano

Program:

Beethoven/Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13, *Pathetique*

Spatatlan/*Wonderer*

Beethoven/Sonata No. 30 in E major, Op. 109

Schoenberg/Six Little Pieces, Op. 19

Schumann/Fantasy in C major, Op. 17

Tickets: \$42.00, 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.