

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 7, 2005

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**FAMED KIROV ORCHESTRA OF THE MARIINSKY THEATRE, CONDUCTED BY
VALERY GERGIEV PERFORMS AN ALL-RUSSIAN PROGRAM,
SATURDAY, APRIL 9 AT 8:00 P.M. AT CAL PERFORMANCES**

**CONCERT IS CENTERPIECE OF WEEKEND-LONG CELEBRATION OF CLASSICAL MUSIC
IN RUSSIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE ON THE UC BERKELEY CAMPUS**

BERKELEY, March 7, 2005—The Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre, from St. Petersburg, Russia, comes to Cal Performances on **Saturday, April 9 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. Charismatic director **Valery Gergiev** leads the orchestra in a “Russian Spectacular,” presenting Alexander Borodin’s evocative, undulating song *In the Steppes of Central Asia*; Sergei Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 1; Mily Balakirev’s fast Caucasian dance *Islamey*; and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s Moorish *Capriccio Espagnol* and Arabian Nights-themed *Scheherazade*. Pianist **Daria Rabotkina**, recently named one of the 35 participants in the 2005 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, will perform Prokofiev's Piano Concerto with the orchestra.

In conjunction with the concert, UC Berkeley will host a conference illuminating **Classical Music in Russian History and Culture** on **Friday, April 8 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.** in Hertz Hall. Featured speakers include musicologists **Richard Taruskin** and **William Quillen** of UC Berkeley, **Caryl Emerson** of Princeton University, and **Marina Frolova-Walker** of Cambridge University. Additionally, scholars and performers will focus on Russian identity and music over the past two centuries in the symposium **Glinka and His Legacies** on **Saturday, April 9 from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.** and **Sunday, April 10 from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**, also in Hertz Hall. These events commemorate the bicentennial of Russian composer **Mikhail Glinka's** birth. These free events are organized by the Institute of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies, the Department of Music, and Cal Performances.

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Professor Taruskin also provides commentary on the Kirov Orchestra's April 9 program in Cal Performances' new web series *Video Program Notes*. The segment will be available for viewing at calperfs.berkeley.edu mid-March.

PROGRAM

The Kirov Orchestra's Russian Spectacular concert will include a broad cross-section of evocative Russian music from the mid-19th century into the early 20th, with an emphasis on exotic themes. "Of the five pieces on the program, three of them have oriental or Asian subtexts," explains Richard Taruskin, Professor of Music at UC Berkeley. "The Russians were very interested in musical exotica, and the thing that makes it interesting to us is that Russian music is exotic. So when we hear Russian music about oriental themes, we're actually hearing two levels of exoticism at once."

Much of the music commemorates Russia's imperialist expansion in the mid-19th century. Alexander Borodin's masterly *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, commemorating the 25th anniversary of Czar Alexander II's reign and completed in 1880, evokes the expansive deserts of central Asia, and pits a folk-like Russian theme against an undulating song that Borodin's audiences would have recognized as oriental (although it doesn't resemble actual folk music of the period or area).

Sergei Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 1, which Prokofiev called his first mature composition and performed by Daria Rabotkina, departs from this oriental theme. It was "written with astounding *chutzpah* by the young Prokofiev as his graduation [composition] from the St. Petersburg Conservatory," in 1914, according to Dr. Taruskin. "In his later memoirs, [Prokofiev] said the reason why he wrote his own concerto to perform was that no one would know he's making mistakes, so they'd have to give him a gold medal. Well, in fact they gave him a gold medal, and I think they would have known if he had made mistakes."

Islamey, composed by Mily Balakirev in 1869, returns to the Asian theme. Sometimes called *Oriental Fantasy*, it's a setting of a fast Caucasian dance, called a *vizgingka*, heard in Georgia. Its original piano form is considered one of the most difficult of all virtuoso show pieces of the 19th century, but today it is usually performed in an orchestration.

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* (1887) plays on Spanish dance themes, invoking the influence of North African Islamic culture on Spanish culture and music. The final piece on the program, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* (1888), is more plainly Asian in its roots, taking the name from and evoking the tale of the story-telling concubine in the *Tales of the Arabian Nights*.

VALERY GERGIEV

Valery Gergiev became artistic and general director of St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre in 1988, overseeing the Kirov Orchestra, Ballet, and Opera. Under his leadership the Kirov Orchestra has forged relationships with opera houses in London, San Francisco, Paris, and New York. "[H]is best performances are charged with a bristling, manic, electrical energy that carries all before it," says the *Washington Post*.

Mr. Gergiev is also Principal Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic in the Netherlands and Principal Guest Conductor of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. He was born in Moscow and studied conducting with Ilya Musin at the Leningrad Conservatory. He made his Kirov Opera debut in 1978 with Prokofiev's *War and Peace* and was appointed artistic director and principal conductor in 1988. His awards include the Dmitri Shostakovich Award and the Golden Mask Award, the most prestigious theatre prize in Russia. He was named Conductor of the Year in 1996 by Musical America.

Since 1989, Mr. Gergiev has recorded exclusively for Universal (Philips) Classics. His dozens of recordings with the Kirov Orchestra include operas, ballets, symphonies, and concertos. Mr. Gergiev has been called "indefatigable" (*Chicago Tribune*), "the most talked-about figure in international opera today" (*New York Times Magazine*), a "Russian firebrand" (*Washington Post*), and "king of the conducting mountain, at least in Russia" (*Arizona Daily Star*).

DARIA RABOTKINA

On March 1, 2005, pianist **Daria Rabotkina**, was named to participate in the 2005 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, held in Fort Worth, Texas in May and June. Only 35 young musicians out of 270 applicants were selected. Ms. Rabotkina has received prizes in the

Young Virtuoso Competition in the Czech Republic, the Tbilisi Competition in Georgia, and the Sendai Competition in Japan, and has performed in Russia, France, Switzerland, Germany, and the United States. She was born in Russia and holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Mannes College of Music in New York City.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **The Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre** on **Saturday, April 9 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$36.00, \$56.00, and \$72.00**. 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.

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(Calendar information for Kirov Orchestra on next page)

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Saturday, April 9 at 8:00 p.m.

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

Concert

The Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre

Valery Gergiev, conductor

Daria Rabotkina, piano

Program:

Russian Spectacular

Borodin/*In the Steppes of Central Asia*

Prokofiev/Piano Concerto No. 1 in D-flat major, Op. 10

Balakirev/*Islamey – Oriental Fantasy*

Rimsky-Korsakov/*Capriccio espagnol*, Op. 34; *Scheherazade*, Op. 35

Tickets: \$36.00, \$56.00, and \$72.00, 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.

Friday, April 8 at 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at College Avenue, Berkeley

Conference

Celebration of Classical Music in Russian History and Culture

- **Richard Taruskin** (UC Berkeley): “Entoiling the Falconet”: Russian Musical Exoticism in Perspective
- **William Quillen** (UC Berkeley): Russian *Simfonizm*
- **Caryl Emerson** (Princeton): *Ruslan and Liudmila*, Pushkin and Glinka on Eros in Magic Opera
- **Marina Frolova-Walker** (Cambridge) “More Alive than the Living”: Glinka in the Soviet Union

Tickets: Admission is free; no tickets required.

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Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus

Sunday, April 10, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Bancroft Way at College Avenue, Berkeley

Conference

Glinka and His Legacies

A symposium sponsored by the Department of Music to commemorate the bicentennial of Russian composer, Mikhail Glinka. Scholars and performers will focus on Russian identity and music over the past two centuries.

Tickets: Admission is free; no tickets required.