

FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE

**CONTACT:**  
Lisle Peterson (510) 643-6714  
lisle@calperfs.berkeley.edu  
Stefanie Scott (510) 642-9121  
sscott@calperfs.berkeley.edu

**JUST ADDED!**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS THE EXTRAORDINARY  
RUSSIAN NATIONAL ORCHESTRA, LED BY CONDUCTOR CHARLES KETCHAM  
SUNDAY, JULY 25, 2004 IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

**PROGRAM INCLUDES *THE CHAIRMAN DANCES* BY JOHN ADAMS; GORDON GETTY'S *JOAN AND THE BELLS*; AND SHOSTAKOVICH'S FIFTH SYMPHONY**

**BERKELEY, December 2, 2003** – Cal Performances today announced the addition of the **Russian National Orchestra (RNO)** to its 2003/04 chamber music and orchestra series, to perform **Sunday, July 25, 2004 at 3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. Since its founding in 1990, the tumultuous time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the RNO has grown from its fragile beginnings into a highly celebrated and revered orchestra. “The RNO is now a global orchestra of the first rank, one endowed with abundant resources, an undeniable grandeur and a fiery spirit” proclaimed the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The RNO’s July 25 Berkeley concert program will be lead by **Charles Ketcham** and includes **John Adams’ *The Chairman Dances***; **Gordon Getty’s *Joan and the Bells***, featuring soprano **Lisa Delan** and baritone **Vladimir Chernov**; and **Dmitri Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony**.

**RUSSIAN NATIONAL ORCHESTRA**

Attracted by Pletnev’s reputation and his vision of a new model for the performing arts in Russia, many of the finest musicians in the country joined him in launching the **Russian National Orchestra (RNO)** in 1990. The success of the RNO’s Moscow debut put them in immediate demand. The RNO was the first Russian orchestra to play at the Vatican and tour Israel, in addition to touring engagements all over the world. Of the Orchestra’s 1996 debut at the BBC Proms in London *The Evening Standard* wrote: “They played with such captivating beauty that the audience gave an involuntary sigh of pleasure.” Over the years, the orchestra has evolved from a Russian orchestra defined by a single conductor—Pletnev—into an international ensemble that is a magnet for today’s top guest conductors and instrumentalists.

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An extensive discography recorded for Deutsche Grammophon and PentaTone Classics, with conductors that include Mikhail Pletnev, Mstislav Rostropovich, Kent Nagano and Alexander Vedernikov, has garnered terrific praise. Of RNO's recording of Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*, *Gramophone* writes: "Hardly a minute passes without one's ear being enchanted by an effective gesture of the utmost precision, poise and sensitivity."

Unique among the principal Russian ensembles, the RNO is independent of the government and has developed its own ground-breaking structure. It is perhaps the only orchestra in the world to establish a Conductor Collegium, a group of internationally renowned conductors who have developed a special rapport with the RNO and its musicians, and whose vision guides tour and recording strategies. Another RNO innovation is Cultural Allies, created in 2001 and encompassing exchanges between artists in Russia and the West. Prominent RNO partners in Cultural Allies' performances and commissions include Dave Brubeck, Bill Clinton, Mikhail Gorbachev, Hélène Grimaud, Sophia Loren, Wynton Marsalis, Jessye Norman, Leonard Slatkin and Michael Tilson Thomas.

### **CHARLES KETCHAM**

Charles Ketcham began his conducting career under Eric Leinsdorf, studying at the Tanglewood Institute. In 1969, a Fullbright Fellowship enabled Ketcham to study in Vienna with the renowned Wolfgang Sawallisch. During that period, Ketcham also served as music director of the American Opera Workshop in Vienna and was subsequently appointed associate conductor of Portugal's Gulbenkian Orchestra, conducting tours throughout Portugal, Spain and Africa.

Ketcham later returned to the United States to assume the post of resident conductor of the San Diego Symphony. At that time he became one the first recipients of the prestigious Exxon Arts Endowment Conductors Award. As artistic director of the San Diego Symphony's summer concerts and Young People's concerts, he more than doubled attendance with innovative programming and establishment of audience rapport.

Charles Ketcham has conducted orchestras in France (the Radio Orchestra of Lille), Italy, Holland, and Denmark (Alborg). His most recent appearances have been with world-renowned Philharmonia of London, the Russian National Orchestra at Tschaikowsky Hall in Moscow, the Park

City International Music Festival, the Julliard Orchestra at Lincoln Center where he conducted Gordon Getty's *Joan and the Bells*, and the Munich Symphony Orchestra where he made recordings for several episodes of the *Indiana Jones* film series. Ketcham has recorded with the Utah Symphony for RCA Red Label, Pro Arte and Varase Saraband as well as Wergo Schallplatten.

### **MIKHAIL PLETNEV**

Russian National Orchestra founder and artistic director **Mikhail Pletnev** is a renowned artist who defies classification, whose technique as a pianist, conductor and composer continue to enchant and amaze. At the age of 21 he was the Gold Medal and First Prize winner of the 1978 Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in Moscow. This prize earned him early international attention. In 1988 he was offered an invitation by Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev to perform at the superpower summit in Washington D.C.

The resulting friendship between the two gave Pletnev the historic opportunity to realize his long-held dream of forming an orchestra independent of the Russian government. Although Pletnev initially wagered his life savings to buy instruments for the orchestra, and sometimes pay for airfare, one-by-one funders began to provide support. Under his artistic leadership, the RNO has become known as one of the world's leading orchestras.

While leading the RNO, Mikhail Pletnev also makes appearances as guest conductor with such prestigious orchestras as the Philharmonia Orchestra, London Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Pletnev continues a thriving soloist career having performed with Kent Nagano, Valery Gergiev, Kurk Sanderling, the San Francisco Symphony, and the Israel Philharmonic. As a composer, Pletnev's works include Classical Symphony, Triptych for Symphony Orchestra, Fantasy on Kazakh Themes for Violin and Orchestra and Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra. He appeared as a piano soloist with, Kent Nagano, Valery Gergiev, and the San Francisco Symphony. His stature in Russia was formally recognized in 1995 when he was awarded the first State Prize of the Russian Federation by President Yeltsin. In September 1999 he became the RNO's conductor laureate and continues his collaboration with the orchestra in many of its recordings and concerts at home and on tour.

### **JOHN ADAMS**

One of America's most admired and frequently performed composers, John Adams was born in Worcester, MA. After graduating from Harvard University in 1971, he moved to California,

where he taught and conducted at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music for ten years. His innovative concerts led to his appointment first as contemporary music adviser to the San Francisco Symphony, and then as the orchestra's composer-in-residence between 1979 and 1985, the period in which his reputation became established with the success of such works as *Harmonium* and *Harmonielehre*.

In 1985 Adams began a collaboration with the poet Alice Goodman and stage director Peter Sellars that resulted in two operas, *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*, worldwide performances of which made them among the most performed operas in recent history. A third stage work, *I Was Looking At The Ceiling And Then I Saw The Sky*, a "song play" with libretto by the poet June Jordan, was also staged in more than 50 performances in both the US and Europe, including its world premiere at Cal Performances in 1995. His most recent stage project, *El Niño*, a further collaboration with Peter Sellars, was premiered in Paris in December 2000 and further performed in San Francisco in January 2001.

In 2002 Adams composed *On the Transmigration of Souls* for the New York Philharmonic, a work written in commemoration of the first anniversary of the World Trade Center attacks. This work received the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Music. In June 2003, Adams' conducted his piece *Christian Zeal and Activity*, performed by the young musicians of the Crowden School Ensemble, at Cal Performances as part of the inaugural Berkeley Edge Fest. This September Adams succeeded Pierre Boulez as Composer-in-Residence at Carnegie Hall.

Recordings of Adams' early works on the New Albion and ECM labels were followed in 1986 by an exclusive contract with Nonesuch Records. In celebration of their fifteen year partnership, in 1999 Nonesuch Records released *The John Adams Earbox*, a 10-CD compilation comprising almost all of the composer's music over a twenty year period.

### **GORDON GETTY**

**Gordon Getty's** 1998 work, *Joan and the Bells*, was given its world premiere by the RNO, and recorded with the orchestra for PentaTone Classics in 2003. "With his 21-minute cantata *Joan and the Bells*, Gordon Getty has created a highly dramatic masterwork," raves *American Record Guide*. The work opens in the last moments of Joan's final trial for heresy and witchcraft, and builds to a startling climax as she faces death at the stake. "[*Joan and the Bells*] is dramatically assured,

structurally sound, and likable without being obvious...eminently recommendable”(Opera News). In the composer’s words, “It is a tale of a child’s faith in an age without childhood, of a valor undeflected, and of the redemption these qualities commend.” Soprano **Lisa Delan** sings the title role while baritone **Vladimir Chernov** sings the role of the Prosecutor.

Born in Los Angeles in 1933, Gordon Getty has lived in San Francisco since 1945. He graduated from the University of San Francisco with a degree in English literature, having meanwhile studied piano with Robert Vetleson and voice with Easton Kent. Following six months of active duty in the army and four years in family businesses, Getty studied music theory at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

His works include *Plump Jack*, which has had a number of performances as a work in progress and in semi-staged concert versions, by such distinguished orchestras as the San Francisco Symphony, the L.A. Chamber Orchestra, and the BBC Philharmonic, among others. Concert performances of Getty’s Emily Dickinson song cycle, *The White Election*, were presented by the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the Morgan Library and Alice Tully Hall in New York, the Herbst Theater in San Francisco, Harvard, Yale, Universities of California, Berkeley and Santa Barbara, the University of Texas, Austin, Indiana Opera Theater, and the Kennedy Center. *Victorian Scenes*, the composer’s choral settings of poems by Tennyson and Housman, and a setting for men’s voices of Poe’s *Annabel Lee*, had their first performance by the Los Angeles Master Chorale and Sinfonia in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion at the Los Angeles Music Center. *Three Waltzes for Piano and Orchestra - Tiefer und Tiefer, Madeline, and Ehemals* were performed by André Previn and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. In 1991, orchestral arrangements of the *Three Waltzes* were performed both at Tanglewood under Zuohang Chen, and by the California Symphony conducted by Barry Jekowsky.

Today, Getty is a frequent visiting composer at colleges and universities across the country and holds honorary doctorates from the University of Maryland, Pepperdine University, the University of California San Francisco, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and the Mannes College of Music.

### TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for the **Russian National Orchestra** on **Sunday, July 25** at **3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at \$32.00, \$48.00 and \$60.00. Cal Performances donors of \$250.00 and above have the first opportunity to purchase tickets now through December 8th. 2003/04 season subscribers have the opportunity to purchase tickets December 9th – 15th, before they go on sale to the general public January 5th, 2004. Please note that the Ticket Office will be closed for the holidays December 22 - January 2 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](http://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 Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu).

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*San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco* magazine, and KDFC Classical 102.1 FM are season media sponsors of Cal Performances' 2003/04 performing arts season.

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### CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

### CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

**Sunday, July 25 at 3:00 p.m.**

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

*Chamber Music and Orchestra*  
**Russian National Orchestra**  
**Charles Ketcham**, conductor  
**Lisa Delan**, soprano  
**Vladimir Chernov**, baritone

#### **Program:**

Adams/*The Chairman Dances*, foxtrot for orchestra  
Getty/*Joan and the Bells*  
Shostakovich/Symphony No. 5

**Tickets:** \$32.00, \$48.00 and \$60.00, available to Cal Performances donors of \$250.00 and above through Dec. 8; after Dec. 8, tickets will be offered to 2003/04 season subscribers through Dec. 15. Single tickets go on sale to the general public January 5th, 2004. Please note that the Ticket Office will be closed for the holidays December 22 - January 2. Tickets may be purchased through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; online at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu); and at the door.

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