

EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY, APRIL 28

Media Contact: Karen Hershenson
(415) 677-0328 or karen@performances.org

[EDITORS: For a copy of this release and downloadable, high-resolution photos, go to www.performances.org and click on the Press Room link.]

**SAN FRANCISCO PERFORMANCES
ANNOUNCES 30TH ANNIVERSARY, 2009-2010 SEASON**

Subscriptions on sale now; single tickets go on sale August 24

San Francisco, CA — President and Founder Ruth A. Felt today announced details of San Francisco Performances' 30th Anniversary, 2009-2010 season, featuring the return of many outstanding artists along with presentations of emerging talents at venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. The season runs from September 30, 2009 to May 16, 2010. Subscription series are available now, with single tickets on sale August 24.

“When I got the idea to start an independent presenting organization in 1979, there were many who said it wouldn't succeed,” says Felt. “But here we are 30 years later, continuing the mission we had from the start — to present world-renowned and emerging artists in chamber music, recitals, contemporary dance and jazz. During that time we have also developed our highly regarded arts education programs.”

Leading baritone **Thomas Hampson**, an SFP regular, launches the season on September 30 with “Song of America,” a survey of American repertoire from the 1700s to the present. The entire Vocal Series reflects one of the things that San Francisco Performances does best — presenting important singers who have become close friends as well as introducing newcomers in recital. Completing the series are mezzo-sopranos **Joyce DiDonato** and **Alice Coote**, also baritone **Nathan Gunn**, who will perform Schubert's profound *Die schöne Müllerin*. This will be the San Francisco recital debut for both Gunn and Coote.

Dance is especially thrilling this season, thanks in part to collaborations with colleague organizations. Groundbreaking choreographer **Christopher Wheeldon** brings his **Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company** in an engagement that is in partnership between San Francisco Performances, Stanford Lively Arts and the Robert and Magrit Mondavi Center for the Arts, UC Davis. SFP and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts will co-present England's **DV8 Physical Theatre** and **Akram Khan Company/National Ballet of China**, both bringing powerful, topical works. The return of Spain's **Compañía Nacional de Danza** and the debut of classical Indian dancer **Shantala Shivalingappa** complete this not-to-be-missed series.

Another important aspect of San Francisco Performances' mission is to embrace contemporary music, personified this season by pioneering violinist **Midori**, who brings "Music of Her Time," a concert of 20th-century works complemented by a full day of workshops and master classes.

"I feel very sincerely that Midori is one of the most searching and innovative classical superstars of her generation," says Felt.

A true original, Italian pianist **Marino Formenti** returns with "Aspects of the Divine," a pair of meditative concerts presented in sacred spaces. And a special offering is the pairing of *New Yorker* music critic **Alex Ross** with jazz pianist **Ethan Iverson** for "*The Rest is Noise* in Performance," which spins off Ross's best-selling book of the same name.

In response to today's economic challenges, San Francisco Performances has kept ticket prices for the 2009-2010 season the same as last season, ranging from \$24 to \$49. Always a great value, prices for the high-quality Family Matinee Series have been lowered, to \$8 for children and \$15 for adults.

THE 2009-2010 SEASON BY SUBSCRIPTION SERIES

PIANO SERIES

Canadian pianist **Angela Hewitt** opens the series with a program of Bach, her specialty, and Schumann on Tuesday, December 1. Fellow Canadian, the virtuoso **Marc-André Hamelin**, returns with a recital featuring Haydn, Mozart, Liszt, Fauré and Alkan on Tuesday, December 15. Another legend, **Richard Goode**, takes the stage on Friday, January 22, while British composer-pianist **Thomas Adès**, whose 2006 San Francisco debut was a triumph, returns with a program of Prokofiev, Beethoven, Janáček and Brahms on Tuesday, March 16. Completing this high-impact series is the fiery young pianist **Yuja Wang**, who brings works by Scarlatti, Schumann, Scriabin and Prokofiev on Thursday, April 22. All concerts begin at 8 p.m. at the Herbst Theatre.

**** SPECIAL ADD-ON:** Italian pianist **Marino Formenti** offers "Aspects of the Divine," two monumental meditations of the spirit. He will perform Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus* at 5 p.m. Saturday, December 5 at St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley. This is followed by "Seven Last Words," which pairs Haydn with avant-garde Austrian composer Bernhard Lang at 8 p.m. Friday, December 11 at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in San Francisco.

CHAMBER SERIES

The venerable **Juilliard String Quartet** returns to San Francisco Performances for the 12th time with a new first violinist, 36-year-old **Nick Eanet** — most recently a concertmaster of the Metropolitan Opera — at 7 p.m. Sunday, October 18 at the Herbst Theatre. The ensemble will perform works by Mendelssohn, Mario Davidovsky and Schumann.

In honor of SFP's 30th Anniversary, longtime Ensemble-in-Residence the **Alexander String Quartet** performs the world premiere of a new piece by Composer-in-Residence **Jeeyoung Kim** at 8 p.m. Saturday, April 3 at the Herbst. Late masterworks by Mozart and Beethoven complete the program.

Rounding out the series are two young ensembles in their San Francisco debuts. The German **Kuss Quartet** brings works by Haydn, Berg and Beethoven on Thursday, April 15 and Latvian sisters Baiba and Lauma Skride join cellist Jan Vogler as the **Skride/Vogler Trio**, with a program of Beethoven, Shostakovich and Brahms on Tuesday, May 4. Both concerts are 8 p.m. at the Herbst Theatre.

SATURDAY MORNING SERIES

Since 1994, the Saturday Morning Series with the **Alexander String Quartet** and Music Historian-in-Residence **Robert Greenberg** has been an SFP centerpiece. These popular 10 a.m. concerts at the Herbst Theatre continue with a focus on Dvořák that includes not only his mature string quartets, but his Viola Quintet (with guest violist **Andrew Duckles**) and his magnificent Piano Quintet (with guest pianist **Roger Woodward**). The concerts are January 16 and 30, February 20 and March 27.

In Berkeley, the Alexander and Greenberg repeat their celebration of Felix Mendelssohn in three 10 a.m. Saturday concerts at St. John's Presbyterian Church: December 5, 12 and 19. Among the featured works is Mendelssohn's breathtaking Octet, Opus 20.

**** SPECIAL ADD-ON:** *New Yorker* music critic **Alex Ross** and **Ethan Iverson**, pianist for the jazz trio The Bad Plus, recreate a concept they developed for a sold-out New York performance. Ross reads vivid portraits of contemporary composers from his best-selling book *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*, while Iverson illustrates with musical selections; 10 a.m. Saturday, April 24, Herbst Theatre.

VOCAL SERIES

Baritone **Thomas Hampson** launches the series on Wednesday, September 30 with "Song of America," a project with the Library of Congress that features psalm settings, hymns, folksongs, African-American spirituals and other works by our nation's great composers. Next is mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato**, accompanied by **John Churchwell** on Monday, November 16. Baritone **Nathan Gunn** has his San Francisco recital debut on Tuesday, January 12 performing Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*, with his wife **Julie Gunn** at the piano. Also in her San Francisco recital debut, mezzo-soprano **Alice Coote** will be joined by frequent collaborator, pianist **Julius Drake**, on Friday, April 2. All concerts are 8 p.m. at the Herbst Theatre. *The Vocal Series is dedicated to San Francisco Performances' Founding Trustee James H. Schwabacher Jr.*

VIRTUOSI SERIES

Renaissance man (he blogs, he writes children's books), cellist **Steven Isserlis** is joined

by pianist **Kirill Gerstein** for a program of Britten, Schumann and Rachmaninov at 7 p.m. Sunday, January 10. Violinist **Jennifer Koh** and pianist **Reiko Uchida** perform intricate and evocative works by Ysaÿe, Bach and Salonen (with a video component) at 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 9. After dazzling audiences with her recital last season, cellist **Alisa Weilerstein** returns with composer-pianist **Lera Auerbach** on Tuesday, April 6 with an ingenious program: Shostakovich's 24 Preludes for Piano, Opus 34 (arranged for cello and piano by Auerbach), paired with Auerbach's 24 Preludes for Violoncello and Piano, Opus 47.

**** SPECIAL ADD-ON:** Visionary violinist **Midori** offers "Music of Her Time," a showcase of 20th- and 21st-century composers — Huw Watkins, Krzysztof Penderecki, Toshio Hosokawa, James MacMillan and John Adams — at 8 p.m. Saturday, February 6 at the Herbst Theatre, accompanied by **Charles Abramovic**.

Preparation for the recital begins with "**Day of Exploration with Midori**" from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, January 31 at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Midori invites peers, students and the community to learn more about the composers and works on the February 6 program through master classes, discussions and a lecture/demonstration by SFP Music Historian-in-Residence **Robert Greenberg**. A reception with Midori concludes the event, which is co-presented by the Conservatory.

DANCE SERIES

Choreographer **Christopher Wheeldon**, known for stretching the boundaries of ballet, brings **Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company** at 8 p.m. Saturday, January 23 and 7 p.m. Sunday, January 24. The engagement is a partnership between San Francisco Performances, Stanford Lively Arts and the Mondavi Center for the Arts, UC Davis.

Lloyd Newson, Artistic Director of **DV8 Physical Theatre**, brings the Bay Area premiere of *To Be Straight With You*, an unflinching exploration of tolerance, religion and sexuality that includes not only dance, but text, documentary, animation and film. Performances are 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, November 12-14. **Akram Khan Company/National Ballet of China** will perform the Tower of Babel-inspired piece *bahok* at 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, February 18-20. Both of these are co-presentations with Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

Spain's **Compañía Nacional de Danza** returns in its last season under Artistic Director Nacho Duato, who departs after 20 years of innovative dance-making, for performances at 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, April 29-May 1.

All the above dance events are at Novellus Theater at YBCA.

At Herbst Theatre, in her San Francisco debut, classical Indian dancer **Shantala Shivalingappa** performs the traditional *Kuchipudi* solo work *Gamaka*, featuring guest musicians from India at 8 p.m. Thursday, February 4.

A CAPPELLA

Just in time for the holidays, on Thursday, December 3, the all-female **Anonymous 4** presents “*The Cherry Tree: Medieval English Carols and American Christmas Songs.*” The all-male **King’s Singers** will perform selections from their vast repertoire of Renaissance, Romantic, classical and commissioned works on Wednesday, February 17. Both concerts are 8 p.m. at the Herbst Theatre.

YOUNG MASTERS SERIES

San Francisco Performances first presented Naumburg Competition winner violist **David Aaron Carpenter** in 2007. He returns to perform works by York Bowen, Rebecca Clarke, Krzysztof Penderecki, Prokofiev and Piazzolla on Sunday, January 24. Exceptional young Russian pianist **Yevgeny Sudbin** offers a program of Chopin, Liszt, Saint-Saëns and Ronald Stevenson on Sunday, April 25. And to conclude the season on Sunday, May 16, baritone **Eugene Brancoveanu** sings works by Mahler, Loewe and Vaughan Williams, accompanied by **Peter Grunberg**. All recitals are 2 p.m. at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Concert Hall.

JAZZ SERIES

Along with vibraphonist (and former SFP Artist-in-Residence) **Stefon Harris**, the swinging **Imani Winds** perform the local premiere of a new work by Harris, co-commissioned by San Francisco Performances, at 7 p.m. Sunday, October 4. A smash hit last season, singer **Paula West** returns with the **George Mesterhazy Quartet** at 8 p.m. Saturday, October 10. Cerebral pianist **Brad Mehldau** performs solo at 8 p.m. Saturday, January 23, while SFP Jazz Artist-in-Residence Brazilian vocalist Luciana Souza brings the **Luciana Souza Trio** (with guitarist **Romero Lubambo** and percussionist **Cyro Baptista**) at 8 p.m. Saturday, January 30. All concerts are at the Herbst Theatre.

GUITAR SERIES

This series, once again co-presented with Omni Foundation for the Performing Arts, features Chinese virtuoso **Xuefei Yang** on Friday, November 13; the legendary **Pepe Romero** on Saturday, December 12; young Czech artist **Pavel Steidl** on Friday, January 29; and former SFP Guitar Artist-in-Residence **Manuel Barrueco**, who will perform with the **Beijing Duo**, on Thursday, April 29. All concerts are 8 p.m. at the Herbst Theatre.

FAMILY MATINEES

San Francisco Performances’ Family Matinees last about an hour, with plenty of opportunity to interact with the artists. Always reasonably priced, ticket prices this season have been lowered even further, to \$8 children and \$15 adults.

Here is the lineup: SFP Guitar Artists-in-Residence **Peter and Zoltán Katona** with baritone **Christophoren Nomura** at 11 a.m. Saturday, October 10; pianist **Marino Formenti**, 2 p.m. Sunday, December 6; **Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company**, 2 p.m.

Sunday, January 24; **Quartet San Francisco**, 11 a.m. Saturday, March 20; and **Kronos Quartet**, returning with “Around the World With Kronos!” at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 2. All concerts are at the Herbst Theatre with the exception of Morphoses, which is at Novellus Theater at YBCA.

TICKET INFORMATION

Subscription series for San Francisco Performances’ 2009-2010 season are on sale now. Subscribers receive benefits, including savings on single-ticket prices, priority seating, free ticket exchange privileges, e-mail concert reminders, and invitations to two free concerts. To subscribe, call San Francisco Performances at (415) 398-6449 or visit www.performances.org.

Single-event tickets go on sale Monday, August 24 and can also be purchased by calling or visiting the website. (Subscribers will have priority seating.) Note: Make-Your-Own Series subscriptions and single tickets that can be added to subscriptions at a discount are available by phone, mail and/or fax order only, not online.

To request a brochure, call San Francisco Performances at (415) 398-6449, or e-mail info@performances.org.

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO PERFORMANCES

Founded in 1979 by Artistic Director Ruth Felt, San Francisco Performances is the city’s pre-eminent presenter of world-renowned and emerging artists in chamber music, vocal and instrumental recitals, jazz and contemporary dance. Through innovative programming, SFP brings audiences and artists together in unique ways, with more than 100 premieres and San Francisco debuts to its credit, including pianist Thomas Adès, cellist Yo-Yo Ma and violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter; and dance companies Batsheva from Israel and Compáñia Nacional de Danza from Spain.

###