

For Immediate Release

LONDON'S WIGMORE HALL CELEBRATES 110TH ANNIVERSARY WITH SEASON OF RICH PROGRAMMING

Artists who perform at Wigmore Hall – realizing a rite of passage taken by virtually all of the world's great musicians – often speak of the awe-inspiring sense of place when they step onto the famed stage. It is a feeling reserved not just for them: The audience is also aware of the charged atmosphere -- history imbedded in every corner, magnificent acoustics that allow performers to fully realize their potential, and an intimacy that unifies performers and listeners into a single entity.

This season -- 2010-2011 -- this jewel of the music world will celebrate its 110th anniversary: One hundred ten years of serving the global musical community, of extending a 550-seat venue's reach across oceans and continents, launching careers of the next generation of musicians, presenting a familiar and beloved stage for familiar and beloved artists, and offering repertory not often heard on other stages.

Wigmore Hall's anniversary season will bring to its stage many of the world's most acclaimed musicians, among them Daniel Barenboim, Stephen Kovacevich and Martha Argerich (Mr. Kovacevich's 70th Birthday Concert), Diana Damrau, Jonas Kaufmann (in his first song cycle at the Hall), Jordi Savall (and Hespèrion XXI), András Schiff, Philippe Jaroussky, Maria João Pires, Andreas Scholl, the Takács Quartet, Thomas Hampson, Mitsuko Uchida, Susan Graham, Karita Mattila, who will open the season, and Alfred Brendel, who will present a lecture series throughout the season. John Gilhooly, Wigmore Hall's Director, was responsible for both programming and announcing the anniversary season.

Two special anniversary galas will be held on the actual 110th anniversary dates - 31 May and 1 June 2011 - - when the Hall opened, bearing the name of Bechstein Hall. (The name was changed at the outbreak of World War I, at the same time that the British Royal Family anglicized its name.) The gala concerts will feature the Takács Quartet, Stephen Hough, Steven Isserlis, Joshua Bell, Pamela Frank, Tabea Zimmermann and Jeremy Denk. Contemporary music celebrations will include a focus on the Australian composer Brett Dean, and new works by Mark-Anthony Turnage and Dai Fujikura. Italian pianist Marino Formenti will make his Wigmore Hall debut in a program entitled *Kurtag's Ghosts*, and the New York-based Jack Quartet, a string quartet dedicated to the performance of new music, will also make their London debut, closing the anniversary season in July.

In late November 2010, the Risør Festival of Chamber Music will visit Wigmore Hall for four concerts prior to bringing the tour to Carnegie Hall in early December, with performances by Leif Ove Andsnes, Marc-André Hamelin, Henning Kraggerud, Lars Anders Tomter, Torleif Thedéen, Martin Fröst, Measha Brueggergosman and the Risør Festival Strings. The autumn of 2010 will also feature a special focus on Robert Schumann (celebrating the bicentennial of his birth) with a special emphasis on songs composed during his *annus mirabilis* of 1840. The Florestan Trio will perform Schumann's piano trios and his quartets will be performed by the Elias, Vogler and Doric Quartets, who will each perform one work.

American jazz pianist Brad Mehldau concludes his curatorship of the Wigmore Hall Jazz Series with four concerts, each featuring a different duo. Mr. Mehldau himself performs in two all-American duos - - the first with acclaimed mandolin virtuoso Chris Thile (September 16, 2011), and to close his tenure, a performance with singer Joe Henry (December 2, 2011).

John Gilhooly, now in his fifth year as Artistic Director and his tenth on the Wigmore Hall staff said, "The Hall has achieved much over the past 10 years, and I see this anniversary program very much as a tribute to all of those who have helped us to achieve so much over the past decade. In 2004 we were able to refurbish the Hall for £4 million (approximately \$6 million USD), in 2005 we launched our critically acclaimed record label, Wigmore Hall Live, and in 2006 we acquired a long-term lease of 250 years (for £3.1 million or approximately \$4.7 million USD). Since 2005, when we sold some 110,000 tickets a year, we have now grown our annual audience to over 170,000 attendances. We have expanded our program in traditional and new directions, with record-breaking audiences season after season," said Mr. Gilhooly.

For Wigmore Hall, the grand tradition continues, at a time when its dynamic and energetic presence is needed more than ever. Looking to the future, the Hall continues to strengthen its international relationships with residencies such as "The Chamber Music Society of the Lincoln Center at Wigmore Hall" – a program that will connect two great chamber music institutions across the Atlantic.

About Wigmore Hall

Wigmore Hall has been described by *The Times* of London as "the greatest chamber-music venue in the world." The proportions and acoustics of the 550-seat hall, situated in the heart of London's West End, make it an ideal and welcoming venue for concerts on an intimate scale.

Since it opened in 1901, the Hall has been an essential port of call for the world's most sought-after soloists and chamber musicians. It also fosters the careers of talented young artists, some of them making their first professional appearances in London. Wigmore Hall presents some 400 events a year, attracting discerning, appreciative and exceptionally loyal audiences, and selling some 150,000 tickets each year at an average price of around £16 (approximately \$24USD). Concerts are taken to a national and international audience through a partnership with BBC Radio 3 and through Internet broadcasts; in 2005, the venue's own recording label, Wigmore Hall Live, was launched

to great critical acclaim. A lively and wide-reaching Community and Education program involves schools, nursery schools, other education providers, families, individuals and local hospitals in creative workshops, special concerts and study days.

Since 1992, Wigmore Hall has been run by The Wigmore Hall Trust. The Trust is currently chaired by Sir John Tusa and the management team is headed by the Hall's Artistic and Executive Director, John Gilhooly. The Hall is responsible for generating 90% of its income, which it does through ticket sales, the fundraising activities of The Friends of Wigmore Hall (founded 1992) and the Hall's own fundraising work with private individuals, corporations and charitable organizations.

www.wigmore-hall.org.uk

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