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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release, October 28, 2009

Santa Rosa Symphony celebrates holiday season with Beethoven's Ninth at Wells Fargo Center for the Arts Dec. 5-7 *Symphony of Psalms* by Stravinsky also on program

(SANTA ROSA, CA) — The Santa Rosa Symphony presents two profound choral masterpieces on December 5, 6 and 7 at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts. Under the baton of Bruno Ferrandis, the orchestra, the Santa Rosa Symphony Honor Choir and four guest soloists celebrate the holiday season with Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. Symphony Choral Director Robert Worth has honed the 150-voice choir to perform these monumental works for the inspiration of all.

Worth said, "It's a pleasure to be preparing this group of enthusiastic singers of all ages to perform Beethoven's Ninth with Bruno and the Santa Rosa Symphony. We're all eager to see what Bruno will bring to the Beethoven, and we're raring to go! I'm intrigued by the pairing of the Beethoven with Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, a great 20th-century masterwork."

The Honor Choir brings together singers specifically for each SRS choral concert, drawing on a diverse community of singers, including high school students from throughout Sonoma County, college students at Sonoma State University and Santa Rosa Junior College, and community members from all walks of life. For this production, the Sonoma County Bach Choir (directed by Robert Worth) will perform Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony will also feature the Santa Rosa Symphonic Choir (directed by R. Daniel Earl) and the Montgomery High School Chamber Singers (directed by Dana Alexander).

Guest soloists include both familiar vocalists and those who are new to the SRS stage. They are: soprano **Jenni Samuelson**, mezzo soprano **Jennifer Lane**, tenor **Benjamin Brecher** and baritone **Joseph Wiggett**.

Maestro Ferrandis has said, “The modern orchestration of the Stravinsky piece is very sparse, economical, with an element of religious austerity and reverence. It is a perfect pairing with Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with its iconic vocal finale, ‘Ode to Joy’.”

Concert Sponsors

The December performances of the Santa Rosa Symphony Classical Series are underwritten by Ava and Sam Guerrero. Guest artist Benjamin Brecher is underwritten by Mr. Wil Craig.

Get Cued in with Pre-Concert Talks and Online Notes

To hear Maestro Ferrandis’ musings on, and insights about, the program, come to “Conversations with the Conductor,” a pre-concert talk with Q & A, beginning one hour before each performance (excluding the Saturday Discovery Open Rehearsal). This is an open-seating event that is free to ticket holders. Program Notes for this concert are available at the SRS website.

Concert Times

Concert times are Saturday, December 5 and Monday, December 7 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, December 6 at 3 p.m. at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts, 50 Mark West Springs Road, in Santa Rosa. The popular, family-friendly Discovery Series of open rehearsals continues at 2 p.m. on December 5. The Discovery concerts, economically priced at \$10 for adults and \$6 for youth, offer a sneak peek into the final rehearsal process before each concert set.

Tickets

For tickets, call (707) 546-8742, purchase online at santarosasympphony.com, or come in person to the Symphony Patron Services Office at 50 Santa Rosa Avenue (north door entrance, off the elevator lobby), from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, Wednesdays 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Tickets may also be purchased at the door 1½ hours before each performance (based on availability.)
Single tickets are \$28-\$55, with student and senior discounts available. \$10 Student Rush tickets (student I.D. required) can be purchased a half hour prior to curtain.

—Photos of Bruno Ferrandis, Robert Worth and the vocal soloists are available upon request—

CALENDAR LISTING

Heading: Classical

What: Symphony Concert

Who: Santa Rosa Symphony

Bruno Ferrandis, conductor

Santa Rosa Symphony Honor Choir, Robert Worth, director

Date and Time:

Sat., Dec. 5, 2009 at 8 p.m.

(Discovery Rehearsal, Sat., Dec. 5 at 2 p.m.)

Sun., Dec. 6, 2009 at 3 p.m.

Mon., Dec. 7, 2009 at 8 p.m.

Program:

STRAVINSKY: *Symphony of Psalms*

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 9

Pre-concert talk featuring Bruno Ferrandis starts 30 minutes before each performance (except Discovery Rehearsal).

Venue: Wells Fargo Center for the Arts, 50 Mark West Springs Road, Santa Rosa, CA

Cost: Single tickets \$28-\$55, with senior and student discounts available.

Tickets: Online santarosasympphony.com, by phone (707) 54-MUSIC [546-8742], or in person at the SRS Patron Services Office, 50 Santa Rosa Avenue, Santa Rosa, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.

BIOGRAPHIES

Robert Worth, Santa Rosa Symphony Choral Director

Robert Worth is Professor of Music and Choral Director at Sonoma State University, where he has taught since 1983. At SSU, he directs the Sonoma County Bach Choir and the SSU Chamber Singers. Worth is also the founding music director of the Sonoma County Bach Society, a non-profit organization which fosters the performance and appreciation of early music in the northern Bay Area.

In addition to his work in the field of choral music, Worth has a specialty in Kodály musicianship training, and for ten years ran the ear training program at SSU. He is a composer and arranger of both choral music and jazz, and his vocal jazz arrangements have been performed by many groups throughout California and beyond. He has been deeply involved in the Green Music

Center project since its inception, serving as consultant to the architects on such issues as acoustics, choral performance facilities and the Cassin organ.

Worth received his B.A. in music at SSU in 1980, and earned his M.A. in historical musicology at UC Berkeley. He has received numerous community and university honors, including Sonoma State University's Outstanding Professor Award for 1996-97 and Distinguished Alumni Award for 2007-08. After completing numerous collaborative projects with Jeffrey Kahane and the Santa Rosa Symphony, he was named to the position of choral director at the Santa Rosa Symphony in 2002.

Santa Rosa Symphony Honor Choir

The Santa Rosa Symphony Honor Choir, under the direction of SRS Choral Director Robert Worth, was officially formed in the Fall of 2001 to perform Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* in a September 11 memorial concert, under the direction of Jeffrey Kahane. This formal designation came after many years of collaborations between the Santa Rosa Symphony, the Sonoma County Bach Choir, the Santa Rosa High School Concert Choir and other groups. The group serves as the symphony chorus for the Santa Rosa Symphony.

The Honor Choir brings together singers specifically for each SRS choral concert, drawing on a diverse community of singers, including high school students from throughout Sonoma County, college students at Sonoma State University and Santa Rosa Junior College, and community members from all walks of life.

Projects to date have included the Mozart *Requiem* (Fall, 2003), the Brahms *Requiem* (Fall, 2002), Britten's *Spring Symphony* (Spring, 2004), Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, Christopher Rouse's *Karolju* (December, 2004), the Verdi *Requiem* (December, 2007) and Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* (December 2008).

Singers are auditioned at the beginning of each project. Interested singers are invited to contact Honor Choir director Bob Worth at 707-664-2218 (worth@sonoma.edu) for further details on how to join the group.

Jenni Samuelson, Soprano

Jenni Samuelson is one of the most versatile artists performing today. She has performed in over 25 lead roles with companies throughout the country including the San Francisco Opera Center, Western Opera Theater, Eugene Opera, Opera San Jose, Cinnabar Theater, Chicago Light Opera Works and The Skylight in Milwaukee. Her signature roles include: Susanna (*The Marriage of Figaro*); Musetta (*La Boheme*); Rosina (*The Barber of Seville*); Despina (*Così fan tutte*); Adina (*The Elixir of Love*); Nanetta (*Falstaff*); Phyllis (*Iolanthe*) and Johanna (*Sweeney Todd*).

Concert appearances have been equally varied and include: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* by Villa-Lobos; *Dona Nobis Pacem* by Vaughn Williams; Bach's *B minor Mass*, *Magnificat* and *Christmas Oratorio*; Handel's *Messiah*; Mozart's *Requiem* and *C Minor Mass* and Monteverdi's *Vespers*. She has performed with the Carmel Bach Festival, San Francisco Chorale, Sonoma Bach Society, Merced Symphony, and Santa Rosa Symphony.

She is a consummate chamber musician, and has performed the Brahms Liebeslieder Waltzes several times, most recently with Music in the Vineyards in Napa, California, one of the country's leading chamber music festivals. Other performances of chamber works include: Bach's *Coffee Cantata*; Berio's *Folk Songs* and the world premiere of *Return Receipts* by Amanda McTigue and Jeff Langley. Samuelson received her Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Northwestern University in 1997, and was a three-time regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Jennifer Lane (mezzo-soprano)

Jennifer Lane, is recognized internationally for her interpretations of repertoire ranging from the early Baroque to that of contemporary composers. She has appeared at festivals worldwide, including Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Salzburger Bachgesellschaft, National Arts Center in Ottawa, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Tanglewood Festival, the New Getty Center, the Frick Collection in New York, and Cité de la Musique in Paris. An early music specialist, Lane appears frequently the most noted period instrument orchestras. She is also a frequent guest with symphony orchestras and has performed with the Jerusalem Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Honolulu Symphony and the Orchestra della Toscana. She has been seen in opera at Opernhaus Halle, Opernhaus Dessau, Santa Fe Opera, Utah Opera and in New York City Opera, where she has performed over twenty roles. 1999 was her debut season with the Metropolitan Opera.

She has over 45 recordings on Harmonia Mundi USA, Naxos, Opus 111, CBC Records, Koch International, Newport Classic, Arabesque, Centaur, and PGM. Lane is currently Associate Professor of Music at the University of North Texas and has formerly held faculty positions at Stanford University and the University of Kentucky.. She is also on the faculty of the Lake Placid Institute, the International Baroque Institute at Longy, and the San Francisco Early Music Society Medieval/Renaissance and Baroque workshops.

Benjamin Brecher, tenor

The American tenor Benjamin Brecher has performed with numerous opera companies including: New York City Opera, Opera de Montreal, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Central City Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Lyric Opera of Cleveland, the Harrisburg Opera, Toledo Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, Berkshire Opera, Arizona Opera, Anchorage Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Skylight Opera Theatre, the Glimmerglass Opera, the Aspen Opera Theatre and the Ohio Light Opera.

He has performed over ten roles with The New York City Opera since 1997, appearing in their productions of *Il Viaggio a Reims*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Die Zauberflötë*, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, *Carmen*, *Seven Deadly Sins*, and the New York premiere of *Central Park*. Other engagements include: *La Sonnambula*, *I Capuleti e I Montecchi*, and *Otello* with Opera Orchestra of New York; Lindoro in *L'Italiana in Algeri* with Opera de Montreal and Opera de Nice.

On the concert stage, Brecher has performed with the orchestras of Chicago, Chautauqua, Mexico City, Rome, Budapest, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Detroit, Indianapolis, Knoxville, Ft. Worth, Pittsburgh, Virginia, Seattle, Florida, San Antonio, Jacksonville, Detroit, Naples, Toledo, Omaha, Evansville, Baltimore, Seattle, Green Bay, Portland, Toronto, Buffalo, Ft. Wayne, Edmonton, Ft. Myers, Milwaukee, Columbus, Elgin, National Arts Orchestra Ottawa and the National Symphony at Kennedy Center. He has also recorded *The Barber of Seville* with The Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra.

He is a graduate of The Juilliard Opera Center, New England Conservatory of Music and Bowling Green State University. He and his family live in Santa Barbara, California, where he is the Head of the Voice Area at the University of California.

Joseph Wiggett, baritone

Dr. Joseph Wiggett is the former Director of the School of Fine and Performing Arts, Musical Director of Opera Workshop and currently an Associate Professor of Voice at California State University-Stanislaus where he maintains an extremely active Applied Voice studio in addition to his teaching duties in Vocal Pedagogy, Lyric Diction and Vocal Literature.

As a past member of the Juilliard Opera Center, the Lyric Opera of Chicago Center for American Artists, and the Prague Mozart Academy, he has performed over three dozen operatic

roles and brings a wealth of hands-on experience to the studio and stage. He has given recitals throughout the United States, Europe, and the former Soviet Union and is the recipient of numerous awards and honors including three Birgit Nilsson prizes, as well as two grants from the Puccini Foundation.

As a contest singer, Wiggett has ranked among the finest in the country and has taken first place honors in such prestigious competitions as the Metropolitan Opera New England Regional Auditions, the Chicago Union Civic and Arts Leagues Competition, the Center for Contemporary Opera International Competition held in New York City, and he is the only three-time winner of the Lillian Nordica Prize.

Among his major debuts are roles with the New York City Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, a solo recital in the Carnegie Hall Weill Recital Series, and his Lincoln Center debut at Alice Tully Hall as the baritone soloist in Orff's *Carmina Burana*. As a concert performer, Wiggett has appeared with numerous orchestras including the Manhattan, Boulder, Modesto, Bangor, Portland, Milwaukee and Colorado Symphonies.

He holds degrees in Music Education from the University of Maine, a master's degree in Performance from the Manhattan School of Music and a doctorate in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

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