

RAF NEWS

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Clinton, Loren Record With RNO



Former US President Bill Clinton and actress Sophia Loren record the narration of *Wolf Tracks* last December with conductor Kent Nagano.

Former US President Bill Clinton and legendary actress Sophia Loren met in Geneva in mid-December to record the narration for a Russian National Orchestra CD to be released in 2003 by PentaTone Classics. The music is Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and a new piece, *Wolf Tracks*, by French composer Jean-Pascal Beintus. The RNO completed the orchestral tracks earlier this year under the baton of American conductor Kent Nagano. Mikhail Gorbachev recorded an introduction for the CD in Moscow in February.

Wolf Tracks is a joint RNO-Russian Arts Foundation commission that puts a contemporary spin on the classic story of a boy and a wolf. Emphasizing sensitivity to the environment and the need for balance between man and nature, *Wolf Tracks* was developed under the artistic direction of Maestro Nagano, who conducted the debut performance at the Stern



Grove Festival in San Francisco, California in August 2002. The text is by award-winning broadcast writer and producer Walt Kraemer, with contributions by Linda Whitaker and Martha Bredon.

All three narrators will donate their royalties to charity: Clinton to the International AIDS Trust, whose advisory committee he co-chairs with Nelson Mandela, Loren to the Magic of Music, an arts therapy program for youth sponsored by the RNO, and Gorbachev to Green Cross International, which he founded in 1993. Proceeds will also be shared with wildlife organizations, including the

New York-based Wolf Conservation Center.

More photos and information are available on the websites of the Russian National Orchestra: www.rno.ru, the Russian Arts Foundation: www.russianarts.org and PentaTone Classics: www.pentatonemusic.com.

Cultural Allies Plans Set for 2003 and Beyond

Cultural Allies is a comprehensive program of arts exchange involving American and Russian musicians, performing arts organizations, arts professionals and audiences. Conceived, designed and managed by the Russian Arts Foundation (RAF) in partnership with the Russian National Orchestra (RNO), Cultural Allies seeks to further understanding between the peoples of America and Russia through the arts, specifically music. The relationships fostered by Cultural Allies are based on an artistic and intellectual commitment to excellence, integrity and innovation that supersedes borders and musical genre.

Accomplishments to date include:

- ◆ Initiating and nurturing an artistic and organizational partnership between Dave Brubeck and the RNO, in Russia and the US (1997-current).
- ◆ The collaboration of Wynton Marsalis, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra (LCJO) and the RNO on the highly successful Ellington Centennial in 1999.
- ◆ The Russian debuts of American conductors Kent Nagano, Michael Tilson Thomas, James Judd, Carlo Ponti, Jr. and Charles Ketcham, and of soprano Jessye Norman (2000-2002). While in Moscow, most of these artists also conducted workshops or master classes.
- ◆ Musician exchanges and residencies with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. (Mikhail Pletnev, April 2002) and the San Francisco Symphony (Maxim Rubtsov, June 2002).

- ◆ The participation of Americans Janice Chandler (soprano), Kenneth Cox (bass) and Robert Lee (tenor) in a performance of Mozart's *Requiem* in Kiev. Held on the anniversary of last year's attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the concert was a deeply moving experience for the RNO, the international cast and an audience that included dignitaries from Ukraine, other former Soviet republics and the US.

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The RUSSIAN ARTS FOUNDATION is a non-profit, US 501(c)(3) organization. Founded in 1990, the RUSSIAN ARTS FOUNDATION supports Russian arts and culture through exchanges and education, building lasting bridges between East and West.

MEMBERSHIP in the RUSSIAN ARTS FOUNDATION is \$60 per year and includes a subscription to *Russian Life* magazine, special discounts and offers for events sponsored by the RUSSIAN ARTS FOUNDATION, and the RAF NEWS, a complimentary newsletter describing the work of the RUSSIAN ARTS FOUNDATION and reviewing and listing important Russian-related arts events.

FIREBIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP is \$150 per year and includes all of the above, plus invitations to private receptions and events, special limited edition gifts, and recognition in the RAF NEWS.

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Chamber Ensembles To Tour US in 2004

The Russian National Orchestra, supported by the Russian Arts Foundation, will tour the eastern United States in January and February 2004. At the conclusion of the orchestral tour, two of the RNO's acclaimed chamber ensembles will set out on tours of their own. Both ensembles are recording this year with PentaTone Classics, with the CD to be released in advance of the tour.

Wind Quintet

The RNO Wind Quintet is known for its unique artistic vision and musical innovation. The Quintet's extensive repertoire ranges from Beethoven and Mozart to Schonberg, Poulenc and Ligeti.

Acclaimed for championing new music and musical experimentation, the RNO Wind Quintet tour will include performances with the trombonist and composer Christopher Brubeck. The Quintet is also developing a cycle of works written by its resident composer, Andrey Rubtsov.



The musicians of the RNO Wind Quintet. Back row from left: Maxim Rubtsov (flute), Andrey Rubtsov (oboe), Andrey Shuty (clarinet), Alexey Serov (horn). Seated: Andrey Snegirev (bassoon).

Double Basses

The RNO's double bassists are superb artists individually and, together, comprise an incomparable orchestral section. They are also highly inventive musicians who have transferred their virtuosity to the ensemble format. The first performance of the RNO Double Bass Ensemble (Moscow, 1992) was a sensation that led to immediate bookings. In full octet complement, and as a septet or quintet, the group has toured in Russia and California, and made regular appearances on Russian radio and television.

The RNO Double Bass Ensemble is visually stunning and produces a vibrant and exciting sound. The musicians themselves create for their instrument transcriptions of popular classical and modern works. New pieces commissioned specifically for the Ensemble include *Adagio* by RNO founder and Artistic Director Mikhail Pletnev, and *Who's on First?* by American composer David Jaffe.

Full concert information for all 2004 RNO tours will be announced in the next edition of RAF News, and even sooner on the RAF website:

www.russianarts.org.



A double bass performance at Villa Montalvo.



Rustem Gabdullin,
Principal



Nikolai Gorbunov,
Associate Principal



Vassily Zatsepin



Mikhail Kekshoev



Vyacheslav Mikhailov



Miroslav Maksimyyuk



Gennady Krutikov



Sergei Kornienko

Cultural Allies

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Speaking in Kiev via video, Mayor Michael Bloomberg underscored one of Cultural Allies' central themes: "...tonight's requiem concert in memory of the events of September 11th is another powerful testament to our renewed sense of international solidarity. What better way to express this than through our common language – music."

Upcoming Cultural Allies activities include:

- ◆ A recording will be released in 2003 entitled *Beyond Borders*, with music by American and Russian composers including Dave Brubeck, Christopher Brubeck, David Jaffe, Andrey Rubtsov and Mikhail Pletnev.

- ◆ Kent Nagano will conduct concerts in Moscow in February and March 2003 under the auspices of Cultural Allies.
- ◆ Leonard Slatkin will conduct in Moscow in October 2003 as a continuation of the exchange between the National Symphony Orchestra and the RNO. This will be Maestro Slatkin's Russian debut.

For the latest information on Cultural Allies, please visit the RAF website (www.russianarts.org).



Former US President Bill Clinton and Sophia Loren met in Geneva in December to record a Russian National Orchestra CD. See story on page 1.

Pictured from left to right: Rick Walker (President, Russian Arts Foundation), Giel Bessels (Managing Director PentaTone Music BV), Bill Clinton, Sophia Loren, Edoardo Ponti (son of Sophia Loren), Kent Nagano.

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