N E W S R E L E A S E

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Philadelphia Orchestra's opening Access Concert explores a modern masterpiece, *The Rite of Spring*

Later Access Concerts feature Haydn's "Military" Symphony, Bernstein's Symphonic Dances from **West Side Story,** *and Musorgsky's* **Pictures at an Exhibition**

(*Philadelphia*, September 20, 2007) – Debussy described it as "savage," Puccini called it "pure cacophony," and a Paris newspaper said it was "astonishing," but **Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*** has survived the test of time as a modern masterpiece. On **Tuesday, October 2, 2007, The Philadelphia Orchestra** opens its **2007-08 Access Concert Series** with **"Riot at the Ballet,"** an exploration of this explosive score. Music Director **Christoph Eschenbach** conducts and Music Animateur **Thomas Cabaniss** serves as host, explaining the sound world Stravinsky created to tell the ballet's story of spring – and a virgin sacrifice – in prehistoric Russia. Below are five great reasons to experience the score that scandalized early audiences and still has the power to shock contemporary ears:

1. **It caused a riot at its premiere in Paris.** Not many pieces of classical music can make that claim, but *The Rite of Spring* had an infamous opening night. Its dissonant harmonies, jarring rhythms, primitive choreography, outrageous costumes, and bizarre story weren't exactly classical ballet fare. Soon the audience's protests smothered the sound of the orchestra, and Stravinsky went back stage to find the choreographer shouting at the dancers while the producer flashed the house lights in an unsuccessful ploy to pacify the patrons.

2. **The opening bassoon part is the classical equivalent of a Van Halen guitar solo.** *The Rite of Spring* opens with sounds that no one had imagined a bassoon could make. Mr. Cabaniss claims that the solo "transformed how bassoonists think of their instrument in much the same way that Eddie Van Halen's 'Eruption' revolutionized solo guitar playing." The Orchestra's principal bassoon, Daniel Matsukawa, used to sing in a punk band, so he's sure to have interesting insights on the comparison. Come to the concert to hear him explain.

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3. **It's a Philadelphia tradition.** Leopold Stokowski was The Philadelphia Orchestra's music director when Stravinsky rose to fame. Stokowski and the Orchestra introduced numerous modern works to the U.S., including Stravinsky's scandalous ballet. Below are some facts about The Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, and *The Rite of Spring*:
   - **U.S. premiere of concert version:** 1922.
   - **First American recording:** 1929, BMG.
   - **U.S. premiere of staged version:** 1930. Modern dance pioneer Martha Graham danced the principal role of the sacrificial virgin. The production was performed in Philadelphia and New York, and it landed Stokowski on the cover of *Time*.
   - **Disney's *Fantasia* soundtrack:** 1938. Disney's creative team took the prehistoric theme literally and set the Orchestra's performance of *Rite* to a sequence depicting evolution up to the time of the dinosaurs.
4. **Stravinsky was the Picasso, the Dali, and the Warhol of classical music.** In other words, he was one of those revolutionary artists whose influence is everywhere—and the revolution began with the riotous *The Rite of Spring*. Some people hated it, others loved it, but pretty much everyone now agrees that it changed the course of classical music.
5. **Finally, as Leonard Bernstein reportedly said, "It's all about sex!"** That may be taking things a little far, but there's definitely something primal in the music's pounding pulse, its harsh harmonies, and the virgins' wild fertility dance that still sounds scandalous today.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's **Access Concert Series** is designed for listeners who are new to or curious about classical music. It is made up of four lower-priced, 75-minute concerts that start at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Cabaniss and the conductor use explanations and excerpts to take listeners on a behind-the-scenes tour of the musical process. Each concert closes with a full performance of the featured work. Afterwards, audiences can get to know the Orchestra's musicians through a free Postlude Recital or at a Meet & Mingle held at the Kimmel Center or a local restaurant or bar.

Additional performances of *The Rite of Spring*: In addition to the Access performance, *The Rite of Spring* is featured on the first two subscription weeks of the 2007-08 season. It is paired with Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 1 ("Winter Daydreams") (September 20-21, 23, 25) first and then with Wolfgang Rihm's *Verwandlung 2* and Reinecke's Flute Concerto, featuring Philadelphia Orchestra Principal Flute Jeffrey Khaner (September 27-28). *For tickets or information on Access Concerts or other Philadelphia Orchestra performances, call 215.893.1999 or visit www.philorch.org.*

What's Up Next for Access Audiences: "Military," Mambo, and Musorgsky

The Philadelphia Orchestra's second Access Concert, on **Thursday, October 25, 2007**, features

Franz Joseph Haydn's **Symphony No. 100 ("Military").** The concert is titled **"Haydn Seek"** – especially appropriate since this composer appreciated a good joke or pun. British conductor **Nicholas McGegan** specializes in music from Haydn's day and brings intelligence and wit to one of the composer's later works. The performance is followed by a free Meet & Mingle with musicians of the Orchestra.

Leonard Bernstein was an inspiration to generations of audiences and musicians. On **Thursday, January 24, 2008**, the Orchestra's third Access Concert, **"Be Cool!"** focuses on this remarkable man and one of his most celebrated works. Mr. Eschenbach leads an exploration of the **Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story***. An interactive post-concert event follows the concert. Details are TBA, but here's a hint: The work has movements titled "Mambo" and "Cha cha." The concert is part of The Philadelphia Orchestra's **Bernstein Festival** (January 10 – February 2, 2008, with additional works in March and April) that celebrates the 90th anniversary of Bernstein's birth.

On **Tuesday, March 26, 2008**, the Orchestra's final Access Concert explores the challenge of "orchestration," or arranging music for orchestra. **Modest Musorgsky's** piano work ***Pictures at an Exhibition*** has been orchestrated about 35 times. Conductor **Leonard Slatkin** knows the nuances of the various versions. Hear the different timbres and decide which option you like best. Then listen to a full performance of Ravel's 1922 orchestration (with some edits by Mr. Slatkin), which, by the way, is most people's favorite. The performance is followed by a free Meet & Mingle with musicians of the Orchestra.

One of today's leading international conductors, **Christoph Eschenbach** continues his creative artistic partnership with The Philadelphia Orchestra in his fifth season as music director. Held in highest esteem by the world's foremost orchestras and opera houses for his commanding presence, versatility, and consummate musicianship, Mr. Eschenbach has been acclaimed for his creative insight and dynamic energy as a conductor, a collaborator, and an ardent champion of young musicians. His 2007-08 Orchestra season celebrates such monumental works as Mahler's Symphony No. 8 ("Symphony of a Thousand") – part of the Orchestra's multi-season first-ever Mahler cycle – and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

In addition to his work with The Philadelphia Orchestra, Mr. Eschenbach continues as music director of the Orchestre de Paris. As a guest conductor, he leads the London Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Hamburg NDR Symphony. A prolific recording artist, Mr. Eschenbach has made numerous recordings, as conductor, pianist, or both. His discography includes works from J.S. Bach to music of our time, and he has been an ardent champion of 20th-century music on disc.

Before turning to conducting, Mr. Eschenbach had earned a distinguished reputation as a concert pianist. He began winning major competitions at age 11, and made his United States debut in 1969 with George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra. Mr. Eschenbach learned the art of conducting under, among

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others, Mr. Szell, who personally took him as his protégé, and with whom he worked for over three years. In addition, Herbert von Karajan was his mentor for nearly 25 years, and Mr. Eschenbach credits him as having had a tremendous influence on his development as a conductor. Mr. Eschenbach's conducting debut was in Hamburg in 1972. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut as a pianist in 1973; his Philadelphia conducting debut was in 1989. He was named principal guest conductor of Zurich's Tonhalle Orchestra in 1981, serving as chief conductor from 1982 to 1986. Additional posts include music director of the Houston Symphony (1988-1999); chief conductor of the Hamburg NDR Symphony (1998-2004); music director of the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival (1999-2002); and music director of the Ravinia Festival, summer home of the Chicago Symphony (1994-2003).

Among Mr. Eschenbach's awards are the title of Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters in France, the Légion d'honneur of France, the Officer's Cross with Star and Ribbon of the German Order of Merit, the Commander's Cross of the German Order of Merit, and the Leonard Bernstein Award, presented to him by the Pacific Music Festival, where he served as co-artistic director from 1992 to 1998. Additional information about Mr. Eschenbach can be found at his website, www.christoph-eschenbach.com.

Music Animateur **Thomas Cabaniss** appears onstage with the Orchestra as host of its Access Concert series, as well as numerous Family and School concerts. He works with Music Director Christoph Eschenbach, Orchestra musicians, and administrative staff to develop ideas and programming that support the goals of the Orchestra's "Raising the Invisible Curtain" initiative, including the development of the Orchestra's Access Concert series, School Partnership Program, Camden Community Partnership, College Performance Program, and additional programs that enrich the concert experience for audiences. Mr. Cabaniss came to The Philadelphia Orchestra from the New York Philharmonic, where he served as director of education following several years as a lead teaching artist on the Philharmonic's education staff. Before his work with the Philharmonic, he was director of education for the New York Chamber Symphony and the Tisch Center for the Arts at the 92nd Street Y. Mr. Cabaniss is a faculty member at the Juilliard School and has also been a guest lecturer at the Manhattan School of Music, New York University, the Yale School of Drama, and Brooklyn College. In 1998, he received the ASCAP Foundation Award for his contributions to arts education in New York City. As a composer, Mr. Cabaniss has written music for theater, dance, film, and the concert stage, and has received various awards for his music.

Founded in 1900, The Philadelphia Orchestra has distinguished itself as one of the leading orchestras in the world through a century of acclaimed performances, historic international tours, best-selling recordings, and its unprecedented record of innovation in recording technologies and outreach. The Orchestra has maintained an unparalleled unity in artistic leadership with only six music directors piloting its first century: Fritz Scheel (1900-07), Carl Pohlig (1907-12), Leopold Stokowski (1912-41), Eugene Ormandy (1936-80), Riccardo Muti (1980-92), and Wolfgang Sawallisch (1993-2003).

This tradition is carried on by Christoph Eschenbach, who became music director in 2003. The 2007-08 season, Mr. Eschenbach's last, focuses on monumental works of the symphonic repertoire,

including Mahler's Symphony No. 8 ("Symphony of a Thousand"), Orff's *Carmina burana*, and Richard Strauss's *An Alpine Symphony*. During his tenure, Mr. Eschenbach has conducted Beethoven's nine symphonies paired with music of our time; led a four-week Late Great Works Festival; launched the Orchestra's first-ever multi-year cycle of Mahler's complete symphonies; and led tours of Europe, Asia, Florida and Puerto Rico, and the United States.

Recent Philadelphia Orchestra highlights include multi-casting a concert to large-screen venues through the Internet2 network; the launch of the Orchestra's Online Music Store, www.thephiladelphiaorchestra.com, in September 2006; regular broadcasts on NPR beginning in April 2006; a series of critically acclaimed recordings led by Mr. Eschenbach and released in partnership with Ondine Records; and a $125 million endowment campaign launched in 2003.

The Philadelphia Orchestra annually touches the lives of more than one million music lovers worldwide through its performances, publications, recordings, and broadcasts. The Orchestra presents a subscription season in Philadelphia each year from September to May, in addition to education and community partnership programs, and appears annually at Carnegie Hall. Its summer schedule includes an outdoor series at Philadelphia's Mann Center for the Performing Arts, free Neighborhood Concerts, and residencies at Saratoga Performing Arts Center in upstate New York, and the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival.

ACCESS CONCERT NO. 1 – RIOT AT THE BALLET – *Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts*

October 2 at 7:00 p.m. – Tuesday evening

The Philadelphia Orchestra
Christoph Eschenbach, *conductor*
Thomas Cabaniss, *music animateur and host*

Stravinsky *The Rite of Spring*

Free Meet & Mingle: This performance is followed by a free Meet & Mingle with musicians of the Orchestra.

Tickets: $10-$33, 215.893.1999 or www.philorch.org

ACCESS CONCERT NO. 2 – "HAYDN" SEEK – *Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts*

October 25 at 7:00 p.m. – Thursday evening

The Philadelphia Orchestra
Nicholas McGegan, *conductor*
Thomas Cabaniss, *music animateur and host*

Haydn Symphony No. 100 ("Military")

Free Meet & Mingle: This performance is followed by a free Meet & Mingle with musicians of the Orchestra.

Tickets: $10-$33, 215.893.1999 or www.philorch.org

ACCESS CONCERT NO. 3 – BE COOL!
Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

January 24 at 7:00 p.m. – Thursday evening

The Philadelphia Orchestra
Christoph Eschenbach, *conductor*
Thomas Cabaniss, *music animateur and host*

Bernstein Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

Free Meet & Mingle: This performance is followed by a free Meet & Mingle with musicians of the Orchestra.

Tickets: $10-$33, 215.893.1999 or www.philorch.org

ACCESS CONCERT NO. 4
Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

March 26 at 7:00 p.m. – Wednesday evening

The Philadelphia Orchestra
Leonard Slatkin, *conductor*
Thomas Cabaniss, *music animateur and host*

Musorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*

Free Meet & Mingle: This performance is followed by a free Meet & Mingle with musicians of the Orchestra.

Tickets: $10-$33, 215.893.1999 or www.philorch.org

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