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Mondavi Center's 2011-12 Season Features U.S. Premiere

10th season Features U.S. Premiere of Ballet Preljocaj's *Blanche Neige*,
Mondavi Center Debut of New York Philharmonic
Subscriptions on Sale April 9, 2011

April 1, 2011; Davis, Calif.—The Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, UC Davis recently announced a 2011-12 season filled with an eclectic mix of music, dance and more. The Center's 10th season runs from September 30, 2011 to May 19, 2012, and includes a U.S. Premiere. Subscriptions go on sale Saturday, April 9 at the Mondavi Center Ticket Office, 866-754-2787 and online at www.MondaviArts.org.

“Our goal is to give audiences in the Sacramento region a very rewarding challenge—having to choose from among the amazing musicians, dancers, speakers and thinkers we are presenting in our 10th season,” said Mondavi Center Executive Director Don Roth. “The U.S. premiere of the greatest story ballet of our new century; a first appearance on our stage by the nation's oldest symphony orchestra, the New York Philharmonic; musical and dance artists from around our country, our continent and our world; talks by leading cultural figures of our day in film, literature and rock and roll; Mozart and Motown; jazz legends and newcomers; artists who work between cultures and genres. We believe we have created an abundance of riches for our audience to experience.”

The highlight of the 2011-12 season is the first U.S. performances of *Blanche Neige (Snow White)* presented by Ballet Preljocaj on March 17 and 18. *Blanche Neige* is the first full length story ballet by French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj. This amazing contemporary ballet, based on Grimm's fairy tale, is set to music by Gustav Mahler, with costumes by Jean-Paul Gaultier, and a set design by Thierry Leproust. (This production may not be appropriate for small children. Parents should use discretion.)

The season also includes the Mondavi Center debut of the country's oldest symphony orchestra the **New York Philharmonic**. The performance will be conducted by the Philharmonic's music director, **Alan Gilbert**, and will feature acclaimed pianist **Yefim Bronfman**.

In addition to these debuts, the season also features a broad selection of Mondavi Center favorites, including the Wayne Shorter Quartet, k.d. lang and The Siss Boom Bang, The Chieftains, Anoushka Shankar, Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, the San Francisco Symphony, Yamato, Alexander String Quartet and many more.

Buying early guarantees the lowest ticket prices, with subscriptions starting as low as \$44. Series subscribers receive a 20% discount off regular ticket prices and an additional 15% off Add-On tickets throughout the season. Choose-Your-Own subscribers who purchase tickets to five or more events save 15%, and continue to save 10% throughout the season.

Patrons who would like in-person assistance with ticket orders are invited to attend an open house on **Saturday, April 9, 2011 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Mondavi Center's Yocha Dehe Grand Lobby.** Mondavi Center staff members will be on hand to help with orders.

Series Descriptions

The **Director's Choice** Series is a selection of artists and programs that the Mondavi Center's Executive Director Don Roth thinks are worthy of wider attention. "Sometimes I have an artistic experience so special that I want to make sure our audience takes special notice," said Roth. This season, his choices range from exotic flamenco to classic opera: Spain's **Soledad Barrio and Noche Flamenca**, recognized as the most authentic flamenco company touring today; **Eric Owens**, bass-baritone, who has brought his poise, expansive voice and natural acting abilities to stages around the world; and **Ballet Preljocaj's *Blanche Neige***, the U.S. premiere of the contemporary French ballet based on the Grimm fairy tale.

The Mondavi Center's **Hallmark Inn Davis Dance** Series has presented many of the world's greatest companies. The upcoming season includes the **Scottish National Ballet** performing Kenneth MacMillan's classic *Song of the Earth* (set to Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*); the Mondavi Center debut of the **Trey McIntyre Project** joined onstage by the **Preservation Hall Jazz Band** to perform two works drenched in the lore of New Orleans; as well as the U.S. premiere of **Ballet Preljocaj's *Blanche Neige***.

Always one of the Mondavi Center's most popular attractions, the **Western Health Advantage Orchestra** Series presents three of the world's greatest orchestras led by four of the industry's most distinguished conductors. The **San Francisco Symphony** kicks off the series with a thrilling program featuring Maurice Ravel's arrangement of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* conducted by **James Conlon** with soprano **Olga Guryakova** and baritone **Sergei Leiferkus**. The symphony returns for a second engagement to perform a wide-ranging program featuring Tchaikovsky's first symphony and Ligeti's violin concerto conducted by **Michael Tilson Thomas** with violinist **Christian Tetzlaff**. The series continues with the **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Charles Dutoit** featuring **Jean-Yves Thibaudet** playing Saint-Saëns' final piano concerto; and the Mondavi Center Debut of the **New York Philharmonic**.

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The **Distinguished Speakers** Series, a perennial favorite of Mondavi Center audiences, features the National Book Award-winning author of the international bestseller *The Corrections*, **Jonathan Franzen**; one of the most provocative, interesting and knowledgeable filmmakers of our time, **Oliver Stone**; and musician **Patti Smith**, who holds the distinction of being both a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and a National Book Award winner for her memoir *Just Kids*.

The **Concert** Series annually presents some of the greatest artists in classical music in a recital setting. Celebrated for her searching interpretations, technical brilliance and spellbinding stage presence, **Hilary Hahn** comes to the Mondavi Center with a rousing recital program featuring beloved works by Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Violinist **Rachel Barton Pine** and the ensemble musicians in the **Chamber Soloists Orchestra of New York** offer the rare chance to hear all of Mozart's violin concertos in one evening. **Garrick Ohlsson**, a pianist who has established himself as a commanding interpreter, will display his enormous repertoire in an intriguing all-Liszt program. Finally, San Francisco Symphony concertmaster **Alexander Barantschik** leads the **San Francisco Symphony's Chamber Ensemble** for some of the finest works from the baroque era, including a selection of Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*.

The **Capital Public Radio Jackson Hall Jazz** Series kicks off with the **Wayne Shorter Quartet**, whose leader is counted among a small handful of true living legends, having worked with everyone from Art Blakey, to Miles Davis, to his groundbreaking band Weather Report. Also included is one of the most exhilarating jazz ensembles of our time, the **Overtone Quartet**, featuring an all-star cast of musicians including Dave Holland, Chris Potter, Jason Moran and Eric Harland. The eight wonders of the **SFJAZZ Collective** return with their exploratory spirit intact to tackle the beloved music of pop music icon Stevie Wonder, plus their own original compositions.

The **American Heritage** Series explores the roots of American music with three programs demonstrating the breadth of the genre. The series includes 14-time Grammy Award-winner **Ricky Skaggs**, who brings his profound passion for American music to the stage backed by the all-star bluegrass musicians in **Kentucky Thunder**; the double bill of singer-songwriter **Loudon Wainwright III**, who has delivered a consistently wry and tuneful take on American life, and the acoustic guitar virtuoso **Leo Kottke**, whose live performances are legendary for astounding musicianship and equally prodigious storytelling skills; and the soul-singing great **Bettye Lavette** makes her Mondavi Center debut re-imagining songs by The Beatles, The Who, Eric Clapton and more.

The **Crossings** Series focuses on music that reflects today's global society by freely crossing stylistic and cultural boundaries. The series includes the return of **Zakir Hussain**, this time with the **Masters of Percussion** showcasing Indian ragas, rhythms and traditional dance; **Anoushka Shankar** who breaks new ground with her *Flamenco Gypsy Journey*, which brings together the passionate and diverse music of Spain with the vibrant ancient forms of the Indian classical tradition; and **Maya Beiser's Provenance**, which features live music and original text in Ladino, Arabic, Hebrew and Latin woven together into an all-encompassing musical tapestry.

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The **Chevron World Stage** Series, the Mondavi Center's showcase for the best in music from around the globe, presents **Chucho Valdés** and the **Afro-Cuban Messengers**, a group that brings fiery energy and forward-thinking spirit to every performance; **Angelique Kidjo**, whose work has cross-pollinated the West African traditions of her childhood in Benin with elements of American R&B, funk and jazz; and **Supergenerous** with Cyro Baptista, one of the foremost percussionist in the country, and the stringed instrument guru Kevin Breit.

Returning this year, **With a Twist** Series combines high-level artistry with madcap hijinks. The series includes **Cinematic Titanic**, a feature-length movie-riffing show from the creator of *Mystery Science Theatre 3000*; the return of **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo**, a comedic male dance troupe that performs the full range of the ballet and modern dance repertoire, and **The Improvised Shakespeare Company**, which creates a fully improvised play in Elizabethan style with audience members seated on the Jackson Hall stage with the performers.

Family-oriented entertainment is a big part of the Mondavi Center season, with two series deserving special mention. The **Marvels** Series includes one returning favorite and two new circus adventures straight from the outback. **Yamato Japanese Taiko Drum Ensemble**, returns for another thrilling, high-energy production; and two Mondavi Center debuts, **CIRCA**, which offers utterly new ways of experiencing the awe-inspiring world of circus (recommended for audiences 12 and up), and **Circus Oz**, a rock-n-roll, animal-free circus that adults and children can enjoy together. The **Children's Stage** Series offers its own brand of magic with two adaptations of two beloved children's books. **Lara Downes Family Concert** presents Rob Kamilow's take on Dr. Seuss's classic *Green Eggs and Ham*; and **ODC Dance** returns with their treasured production of Margery Williams *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

The **Studio Classics: Replay** Series features forward-thinking artists reshuffling the deck with inspiration from masterworks of the past. This series includes **So Percussion's** *We Are All Going in Different Directions: A John Cage Celebration*; **Lara Downes' 13 Ways of Looking at the Goldbergs**, a set of new variations on Bach's magnificent opening theme of the Goldbergs ("Aria"); and Phil Kline's **Zippo Songs: Poems from the Front** featuring vocalist Theo Bleckmann, sets the haiku-like texts that American GIs engraved on their Zippo lighters in Vietnam to music.

The **Capital Public Radio Studio Jazz** Series kicks off with the **Tia Fuller Quartet**, whose new CD, *Decisive Steps*, received the number one *JazzWeek* rating. The series also includes the **Alfredo Rodriguez Trio**, a protégé of Quincy Jones, whose riveting artistry is informed as much by Bach and Stravinsky as by his Cuban and jazz roots; and the ground breaking piano trio, **The Bad Plus**, whose latest album, *Never Stop*, is tied together by a group sound that embraces diversity as strength.

Mondavi Center mainstay, the **Alexander String Quartet**, celebrates its 30th anniversary with a focus on Czech composer Antonin Dvořák spanning three performances during the 2011-12 season. A fixture in the major music capitals of four continents, the Quartet has secured its place among the world's premier ensembles while maintaining a major artistic presence in its home base of San Francisco. The afternoon performances feature musicologist Robert Greenberg providing commentary throughout the concert.

The **Debut** Series catches the next generation of compelling artists during the early stages of their careers. This year's series features **Jennifer Johnson Cano**, a mezzo-soprano who won the first prize in the 2009 Young Concert Artists International Auditions; the 2010 Young Artists Competition Grand Prize Winners, violinist **Alexi Kenney** and pianist **Hilda Huang**; and the incredibly talented students from Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music in their annual **Curtis on Tour** program. This year's program features new faculty members Jason Vieaux and David Starobin to honor the Institute's new Classical Guitar department.

New this year are the Spirit of New Orleans and the Focus on India themes. The Spirit of New Orleans includes a group of artists who celebrate the resilient spirit of New Orleans with a week-long meditation on how the storied American city has coped after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Tickets to these events can be purchased as single Choose-Your-Own events or as Add-On events, and include the film *If God is Willing and Da Creek Don't Rise*, the Hot 8 Brass Band, and the Trey McIntyre Project with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

Focus on India is presented in collaboration with the UC Davis Middle East/South Asia Studies program, and highlights the multi-layered and diverse cultures found in India. It includes a film series and a photographic exhibition as well as highlighting three Indian artists found in our season.

And finally, an eclectic group of Mondavi Center **Special Events** includes author, poet and screenwriter **Sherman Alexie**, whose book *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* is the focus of the UC Davis Campus Community Book Project; three holiday-focused shows including the **American Bach Soloists'** annual performance of Handel's Messiah; the **Blind Boys of Alabama Christmas Show**; and a **Mexican Christmas with Mariachi Sol de Mexico de José Hernández**; the popular **Focus on Film** series; and **Focus on Opera**, featuring high-definition film screenings of the **San Francisco Opera** performing Puccini's *Tosca*, and Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* and *Lucia Di Lammermoor*. Both Focus on Film and Focus on Opera can only be purchased as a package through August 12.

Complete information about the Mondavi Center's 2011-12 season of performances, including dates, times, ticket prices, venues, high-resolution images, audio samples, and more, will be available on April 9 at www.MondaviArts.org.

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