

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 28, 2007
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**MUSIC DIRECTOR LORIN MAAZEL TO LEAD THE
NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC IN WORKS BY BERLIOZ AND PROKOFIEV,
JANUARY 10–12, 2008**

**Mezzo-Soprano Susan Graham To Perform Berlioz's Dramatic Cantata,
*La Mort de Cléopâtre***

Music Director Lorin Maazel will conduct the New York Philharmonic in works by Berlioz and Prokofiev, with mezzo-soprano Susan Graham as soloist, Thursday, January 10, at 7:30 p.m., Friday, January 11, at 8:00 p.m., and Saturday, January 12, 2008, at 8:00 p.m. Berlioz will be represented by the Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini* and the dramatic cantata, *La Mort de Cléopâtre*, with Ms. Graham as soloist. The Prokofiev works will be the Symphony No. 7 and the *Scythian Suite*.

Related Events

- **Pre-Concert Talk**
New York Philharmonic Program Annotator James M. Keller will introduce the program one hour before each performance. Tickets are \$5 in addition to the concert ticket. Attendance is limited to 90 people. Information: nyphil.org or (212) 875-5656
- **National Radio Broadcast**
This concert will be broadcast the week of February 4, 2007,* on *The New York Philharmonic This Week*, a radio concert series syndicated nationally to more than 250 stations by the WFMT Radio Network. The 52-week series, hosted by WFMT's Kerry Frumkin, is generously underwritten by The Kaplen Foundation, the Audrey Love Charitable Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Philharmonic's corporate partner, MetLife Foundation. The broadcast will be available on the Philharmonic's Website, nyphil.org. The program is broadcast locally in the New York metropolitan area on 96.3 FM WQXR on Thursdays at 9:00 p.m.
*Check local listings for broadcast and program information.

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- New York Philharmonic Offstage at Barnes & Noble
Mezzo-soprano Susan Graham will discuss music and her life with Jeff Spurgeon of 96.3 FM WQXR on Wednesday, January 9, 2008, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, Lincoln Triangle (Broadway at 66th Street), third floor performance space. Free.

- *New York Philharmonic Podcast*
The producers and hosts of the *New York Philharmonic Podcast* are Elliott Forrest, Peabody Award-winning broadcaster, producer, and afternoon host of 96.3 FM WQXR, and Mark Travis, a producer for the WFMT Radio Network since 1999 and the producer for the 52-week-per-year nationally syndicated radio series, *The New York Philharmonic This Week*. These previews of upcoming programs, through musical selections as well as interviews with guest artists, conductors, and Orchestra musicians, are available at nyphil.org/podcast or from iTunes.

Artists

Lorin Maazel, who has led more than 150 orchestras in more than 5,000 opera and concert performances, became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in September 2002. His appointment came 60 years after his debut with the Orchestra at Lewisohn Stadium, then the Orchestra's summer venue. As Music Director he has conducted seven World Premiere–New York Philharmonic Commissions, including the Pulitzer Prize- and Grammy Award-winning *On the Transmigration of Souls* by John Adams; Stephen Hartke's Symphony No. 3; and Melinda Wagner's Trombone Concerto. He has led cycles of works by Brahms and Beethoven. He also conducted the Orchestra's inaugural performances in the DG Concerts series — a groundbreaking initiative to offer downloadable New York Philharmonic concerts exclusively on iTunes.

Mr. Maazel has taken the Orchestra on numerous international tours, including the May 2007 Tour of Europe; the November 2006 visit to Japan and Korea; the June 2006 Philharmonic Tour of Italy, sponsored by Generali; and in autumn 2005, the two-part 75th Anniversary European Tour to thirteen cities in five countries. Previously, he conducted the Philharmonic on tours to Asia, three southern U.S. states, the American Midwest, and in residencies in Sardinia and the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival in Colorado.

In addition to the New York Philharmonic, Mr. Maazel is Music Director of the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, Spain, and Italy's Symphonica Toscanini. He has served as music director of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra (1993–2002), and has held positions as music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (1988–96); general manager and chief conductor of the Vienna Staatsoper (1982–84 — the first American to hold that position); music director of The Cleveland Orchestra (1972–82); and artistic director and chief conductor of the Deutsche Oper Berlin (1965–71).

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Mezzo-soprano **Susan Graham** has sung leading roles in the great opera houses of the world, including The Metropolitan Opera; Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Teatro alla Scala; Vienna Staatsoper; Opéra National de Paris; Dresden Semperoper; and at the Salzburg Festival; and with numerous international orchestras. Her 2007–08 season will be devoted almost exclusively to French repertoire. Engagements include the title role in Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* at the Royal Opera House, and in a new production at The Metropolitan Opera mounted especially for her; Sesto in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, also at the Met; the title role in Handel's *Ariodante* at the San Francisco Opera; Ravel's *Shéhérazade* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and James Levine; and three works of Berlioz: *Les Nuits d'été* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre de Paris; and *L'Enfance du Christ* with the Tonhalle-Orchestra Zurich; and *La Mort de Cléopâtre* with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and the Berlin Philharmonic. She will also sing solo recitals at London's Wigmore Hall, Madrid's Auditorio Nacional, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, all with pianist Malcolm Martineau.

Ms. Graham's most recent solo recording, *Poèmes de l'amour*, includes Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and Chausson's *Poème de l'amour et de la mer*. Her extensive discography of solo recitals and complete opera recordings includes her Grammy Award-winning disc of Charles Ives songs with pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard, and her recording of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, in which she sings Dido, which received a Grammy nomination and France's Maria Callas award. Born in New Mexico and raised in Texas, Susan Graham studied at Texas Tech University and the Manhattan School of Music. She last appeared with the New York Philharmonic in March 1997, performing *Les Nuits d'été* conducted by Sir Colin Davis.

Repertoire

Strongly influenced by a 15-month trip to Italy, **Hector Berlioz** selected the *Vita* (*Memoirs*) of Renaissance sculptor and goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini as the basis for an opera libretto. The reaction to the opera was fairly dismal when it premiered at the Paris Opera in September 1838, and to this day, it is still rarely performed. The **Overture to Benvenuto Cellini**, however, remains an audience favorite. Like its composer, the work is brilliant, extroverted, and expressive. Its first New York Philharmonic performance came in January 1885, conducted by Theodore Thomas. It was most recently performed by the Orchestra in October 2001 under Christoph Eschenbach.

Sergei Prokofiev's lyric **Symphony No. 7** was finished barely eight months before his death, and the work is his last completed score. Late in 1951, the composer announced his intention to write a simple symphony for the Children's Radio Division of the State Radio. Although planned in close collaboration with the staff of the Children's Radio, the symphony grew beyond Prokofiev's original intention, and by the time he completed the

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draft score, it was a very different work. The full orchestral score was completed in July 1952, and the premiere took place in October of that year in the Hall of Columns at the House of the Trade Unions in Moscow — the last performance of his own works that Prokofiev would attend. The New York Philharmonic has programmed the Symphony No. 7 only three times previously: in February 1962, conducted by Alfred Wallenstein; in March 1992 with André Previn; and most recently in April 2005, conducted by Mstislav Rostropovich.

Berlioz composed *La Mort de Cléopâtre* (*The Death of Cleopatra*) as his third annual entry in the Prix de Rome composing competition. Unfortunately for him, his vivid, unapologetically theatrical scene for soprano and orchestra was a bit too strong for the conservative panel of judges. One of them reportedly asked Berlioz, “My dear fellow, why did you do it? We *wanted* to give you the prize, thinking you would be a better boy next year.” Writing to a friend, Berlioz asked, “If we are supposed to write music for pastry cooks and dressmakers, why do they give us a text involving the passions of the Queen of Egypt and her solemn meditations upon death?” The Philharmonic first performed *La Mort de Cléopâtre* in September 1961, with Leonard Bernstein conducting and Jennie Tourel as soprano soloist. Most recently it was performed in March 1989, with Erich Leinsdorf conducting and mezzo-soprano Maria Ewing as soloist.

Prokofiev’s *Scythian Suite* calls upon the imagery of barbaric primitivism that had become popular in some artistic circles just prior to World War I. It was the composer’s first work for large orchestra, conceived after he received a commission from Serge Diaghilev for a folkloric ballet score. In collaboration with the Russian poet Sergei Gorodetsky, Prokofiev imagined a gruesome world inhabited by the ancient Scythians, as described by Herodotus. The work centered on the sun god Veles and his daughter, Ala; the god of darkness, Chuzhbog, and his seven monsters; and a Scythian warrior named Lolli. In the end, Diaghilev rejected Prokofiev’s ballet, but the composer decided to recast the score as a four-movement orchestral suite, and conducted the work’s premiere in St. Petersburg in 1916. Fritz Reiner led the Philharmonic’s first performance in 1929; the most recent performance was in January 2006, led by Kurt Masur.

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Programs of the New York Philharmonic are supported, in part, by public funds from the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts,** and the **National Endowment for the Arts.**

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Single tickets for these performances are \$29 to \$102. Tickets for Pre-Concert Talks are \$5. Tickets for Open Rehearsals are \$16. All tickets may be purchased online at **nyphil.org** or by calling **(212) 875-5656**, 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily. Tickets may also be purchased at the **Avery Fisher Hall Box Office**, Lincoln Center, Broadway at 65th Street. The Box Office opens at 10:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and at noon on Sunday. On performance evenings, the Box Office closes one-half hour after performance time; other evenings it closes at 6:00 p.m. A limited number of \$12 tickets for select concerts may be available through the Internet for students within 10 days of the performance, or in person the day of. Valid identification is required. To determine ticket availability, call the Philharmonic's Customer Relations Department at **(212) 875-5656**.

The Philharmonic's **24-hour hotline, (212) 875-5709**, provides information on this and other New York Philharmonic programs. For press tickets, call Lanore Carr in the New York Philharmonic Public Relations Department at (212) 875-5714, or e-mail her at carrl@nyphil.org.

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New York Philharmonic

Avery Fisher Hall

Thursday, January 10, 2008, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, January 11, 2008, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 12, 2008, 8:00 p.m.

Pre-Concert Talk (one hour before each concert) with New York Philharmonic Program Annotator James M. Keller

Lorin Maazel, conductor
Susan Graham, mezzo-soprano

BERLIOZ	Overture to <i>Benvenuto Cellini</i>
PROKOFIEV	Symphony No. 7
BERLIOZ	<i>La Mort de Cléopâtre</i>
PROKOFIEV	<i>Scythian Suite</i>

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<i>Photography is available in the New York Philharmonic online newsroom, nyphil.org/newsroom, or by contacting the Public Relations Department: (212) 875-5700; PR@nyphil.org.</i>
