

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS PRIZE FOR NEW MUSIC
AT THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**

**ANNA THORVALDSDOTTIR NAMED
NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC KRAVIS EMERGING COMPOSER
New York Philharmonic To Commission Work by Ms. Thorvaldsdottir and
Perform Her Music in Upcoming Seasons**

The New York Philharmonic has named Anna Thorvaldsdottir the second Kravis Emerging Composer, bestowed on an up-and-coming composer as part of The Marie-Josée Kravis Prize for New Music. Ms. Thorvaldsdottir will receive a \$50,000 stipend, including a commission to compose a work for the Philharmonic to premiere in a future season. In addition, the Orchestra will perform other music by Ms. Thorvaldsdottir in upcoming Philharmonic seasons. She succeeds Sean Shepherd, who was named the inaugural Kravis Emerging Composer in June 2012.

“Anna Thorvaldsdottir has one of the most unique and expressive voices in the compositional scene today,” said Music Director Alan Gilbert. “Her uncompromising approach to building soundscapes creates a visceral, pictorial aesthetic that is deeply connected to her Icelandic heritage. It is thrilling to be able to present her with this platform that will allow her music to be even better known in New York. This is the very purpose for which we created the position of the Kravis Emerging Composer.”

“I am grateful for the vision and generosity of Henry and Marie-Josée Kravis in helping us create the position of the Kravis Emerging Composer, as well as The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence, and to establish the Kravis Prize for New Music,” said President Matthew VanBesien. “They have made it possible for the New York Philharmonic to sustain a core aspect of our mission: to support the music of our time, a crucial element of what it means to be a 21st-century orchestra.”

“I am incredibly honored and grateful to be named the New York Philharmonic’s Kravis Emerging Composer,” said Anna Thorvaldsdottir. “Writing for orchestra constitutes such a fundamental part of my voice as a composer and I am deeply looking forward to working on this commission for them. It is a wonderful privilege to take part in this way in the New York Philharmonic’s important contribution to new music.”

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The Kravis Emerging Composer award was established in conjunction with The Marie-Josée Kravis Prize for New Music. Awarded every two seasons, the recipient of the Kravis Prize for New Music receives \$200,000 and a commission to write a work for the New York Philharmonic. In the years when no prize is given, the Orchestra names the Kravis Emerging Composer, who receives a \$50,000 stipend including a commission. The total award of \$250,000 is among the largest new-music prizes in the world. In December 2011 the inaugural Kravis Prize for New Music was awarded to Henri Dutilleux (1916–2013), who shared the proceeds with three composers — Anthony Cheung, Franck Krawczyk, and Peter Eötvös — each of whom was commissioned to write a work for the Orchestra. Sean Shepherd was named the inaugural Kravis Emerging Composer in June 2012; Alan Gilbert led the Philharmonic in the premiere of Sean Shepherd’s commission, *Songs*, in June 2014. The second Kravis Prize for New Music was awarded to Per Nørgård in June 2014; Alan Gilbert will conduct the Philharmonic in the U.S. Premiere of Per Nørgård’s Symphony No. 3 during the second NY PHIL BIENNIAL, in June 2016.

Funding for the Kravis Prize, the Kravis Emerging Composer, and the position of the Philharmonic’s Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence comes from a \$10 million gift given to the New York Philharmonic in 2009 by Henry R. Kravis in honor of his wife, Marie-Josée, for whom the prize is named.

Composer **Anna Thorvaldsdottir** frequently works with large sonic structures that tend to reveal the presence of a vast variety of sustained sound materials, reflecting her sense of imaginative listening to landscapes and nature. Her music portrays a flowing world of sounds with an enigmatic lyrical atmosphere. Ms. Thorvaldsdottir’s compositions are performed internationally, including at major venues and music festivals such as Lincoln Center’s Mostly Mozart Festival, the Composer Portraits Series at the Miller Theatre at Columbia University, ISCM World Music Days, Nordic Music Days, Ultima Festival, Klangspuren Festival, Beijing Modern Music Festival, Reykjavik Arts Festival, Tectonics, and the Kennedy Center. Many of her works have been nominated for and received honors; most notably, she is the recipient of the prestigious Nordic Council Music Prize 2012 for her work *Dreaming*. Some of the orchestras and ensembles that Ms. Thorvaldsdottir has worked with include International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), BIT20, Musiques Nouvelles, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Yarn/Wire, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, CAPUT Ensemble, Oslo Philharmonic, and Either/Or Ensemble. Her well-received debut album, *Rhízōma*, was released in October 2011 through Innova Recordings and appeared on a number of “Best of 2011” lists, including in *Time Out New York* and *Time Out Chicago*. Ms. Thorvaldsdottir’s new album, *Aerial*, was released by Deutsche Grammophon / Universal Music Classics in November 2014 and appeared on a number of year-end lists, including *The New Yorker*, *Boston Globe*, iTunes Classical, and WQXR’s Q2. She received a Ph.D. from the University of California in San Diego. When not engaged in music-related activities, she may be found doing yoga or walking in nature, seeking inspiration for music and life. Anna Thorvaldsdottir is married to Hrafn Ásgeirsson, Ph.D. in philosophy, avant-garde saxophone player, and recreational photographer.

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Henry and Marie-Josée Kravis have long been generous supporters of new music at the New York Philharmonic. In 2009 they made a gift of \$10 million to the Orchestra, endowing The Marie-Josée Kravis Prize for New Music at the New York Philharmonic, the complementary position of the Kravis Emerging Composer, and The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence position. Throughout their decade-long relationship with the Philharmonic, they have commissioned 17 new compositions including a new work by Franck Krawczyk (to be premiered in April 2016); Peter Eötvös's *Senza sangue* (May 2015); Christopher Rouse's *Thunderstuck* (October 2014); Sean Shepherd's *Songs* (June 2014); Anthony Cheung's *Lyra* (June 2014); Christopher Rouse's Symphony No. 4 (June 2014) and *Prospero's Rooms* (April 2013); Magnus Lindberg's Piano Concerto No. 2, written for Yefim Bronfman (May 2012), *Al Largo* (June 2010), *Souvenir (in memorium Gérard Grisey)* (November 2010), and *EXPO* (September 2009); Peter Lieberon's *The World in Flower* (May 2009); Marc Neikrug's *Quintessence* (March 2008); Bernard Rands *Chains Like the Sea* (October 2008); Esa-Pekka Salonen's Piano Concerto (February 2007); Augusta Read Thomas's *Gathering Paradise*, Emily Dickinson Settings for Soprano and Orchestra (September 2004); and Stephen Hartke's Symphony No. 3 (September 2003).

The **New York Philharmonic** plays a leading cultural role in New York City, the United States, and the world. This season's projects will connect the Philharmonic with up to 50 million music lovers through live concerts in New York City and on its worldwide tours; digital downloads; international broadcasts on television, radio, and online; and as a resource through its wide range of education programs. Having commissioned and/or premiered works by leading composers from every era, the Orchestra now champions contemporary music through *CONTACT!* and the NY PHIL BIENNIAL. A resource for its community and the world, the Philharmonic complements its annual free citywide Concerts in the Parks with wide-ranging education programs, including the famed Young People's Concerts and the New York Philharmonic Global Academy, partnerships at home and abroad that combine performance with intensive training by Philharmonic musicians to cultivate tomorrow's leading orchestral musicians. Renowned around the world, having appeared in 432 cities in 63 countries, America's oldest symphony orchestra has long been a media pioneer, releasing almost 2,000 recordings since 1917 and today sharing live performances through downloads and online. Alan Gilbert became Music Director in 2009, succeeding 20th-century musical giants including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler.

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