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**Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
Announces Three World Premiere Live Streamed Musical Events
Produced by
HERSHEY FELDER PRESENTS – LIVE FROM FLORENCE
Benefiting The Wallis**

Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in BEFORE FIDDLER – Live from Florence
Sunday, February 7, 2021, 5 pm PST,
and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, February 14

Hershey Felder: PUCCINI – Live from Florence
Sunday, March 14, 2021, 5 pm Pacific
and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, March 21

Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in ANNA & SERGEI – Live from Florence
Sunday, May 16, 2021, 5 pm Pacific
and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, May 23

**Tickets Now on Sale
with a WORLD PREMIERE PASS Featuring a 10% Discount for Purchasing All Three
Events
Plus a BEFORE FIDDLER VIP PACKAGE with Exclusive Benefits**

(BEVERLY HILLS, CA, January 22, 2021) — Wallis Annenberg Center for Performing Arts announces three live streamed World Premiere musical events produced by HERSHEY FELDER PRESENTS – LIVE FROM FLORENCE benefiting The Wallis, including ***Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in BEFORE FIDDLER – Live from Florence***, ***Hershey Felder: PUCCINI – Live from Florence***, and ***Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in ANNA & SERGEI – Live from Florence***. Tickets are now on sale with a **WORLD PREMIERE PASS** featuring a 10% discount for purchasing all three events, plus a **BEFORE FIDDLER VIP PACKAGE** with exclusive benefits at TheWallis.org/HFP

Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in BEFORE FIDDLER – Live from Florence features actor, playwright and virtuoso pianist Hershey Felder as the great Yiddish author Sholem Aleichem,

whose works inspired the classic musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, as well as performances by the Florence-based Klezmer music ensemble, Klezmerata Fiorentina. Filmed on location where events actually took place, This World Premiere production will be streamed live on Sunday, February 7, 2021, 5 pm Pacific, and will also be available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, February 14.

Alechem published his first story, *Tsvey Shteyner* (“Two Stones”), when he was just 24 years old, and by 1890, he had become a central figure in Yiddish literature, known as the “Jewish Mark Twain” for his similar writing style and pen name usage. Decades before the classic musical *Fiddler on the Roof* first delighted worldwide audiences, Sholem Aleichem created Tevye the Milkman, his beloved character. And long before songs like “Tradition,” “If I Were a Rich Man” and “Sunrise, Sunset” first beguiled audiences, there was Klezmer, the music of the Old World that imitated talking, laughing, weeping, and singing, and where musicians spoke in song. In Florence, Italy, one of the oldest artistic centers in the world, a group of virtuoso musicians in the world-famous Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (under the baton of famed conductor Zubin Mehta) by day become the Klezmerata Fiorentina by night. The quartet is comprised of violinist and violist **Igor Polesitsky**; clarinetist **Riccardo Crocilla**; accordionist and bassoonist **Francesco Furlanich**; and double bass player **Riccardo Donati**. *Before Fiddler – Live from Florence* is directed by **Felder & Stefano Decarli**, with associate direction by **Trevor Hay**. Production design is by **Hershey Felder**. Film production and live editing is by the **DeCarli Live** film company. Live broadcast and sound design production are by **Erik Carstensen**. Line producer is **Annette Nixon**. Production and broadcast development is by **Meghan Maiya**. Costumes and Hair are by **Isabelle Gerbe**. Scenic construction is directed by **Pierre Gerbe**.

Hershey Felder: PUCCINI – Live from Florence (premiering Sunday, March 14, 2021, 5 pm Pacific, and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, March 21) is about the scandalous life of Giacomo Puccini, the great Italian composer. With music from *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Turandot* and more, it is the story of Puccini’s deliciously scandalous life, his female characters, and how the real women in his life affected the women he created on stage. The production will be filmed live on location in the places where these events and these compositions and premieres actually took place.

Featuring Rachmaninoff’s most beloved melodies and music, **Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in ANNA & SERGEI – Live from Florence** (Sunday, May 16, 2021, 5 pm Pacific, and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, May 23) takes place as a memory play in the house in which the Russian Rachmaninoff died in Beverly Hills. It is the story of a very strange meeting between Rachmaninoff and Anna Anderson, the woman who claimed to be the sole surviving member of the Romanov Dynasty, the Princess Anastasia.

According to The Wallis’ Artistic Director Paul Crewes, “With these three world premiere productions, tied together by fascinating stories and compelling music, we at The Wallis are pleased to carry on our long running and highly successful collaboration with Hershey Felder.”

Tickets are \$55.00 per program per household for viewing on Smart TV, computer, smartphone or tablet, and a **WORLD PREMIERE PASS** for \$148.50, featuring a 10% discount for the purchase of all three programs. Also available is a **BEFORE FIDDLER VIP PACKAGE** for \$180, which includes the livestream of the **BEFORE FIDDLER** production on Sunday, February 7, 5 pm Pacific (plus a week of on demand viewing access through Sunday, February 14), an exclusive live lunch-time

Zoom Q&A with Hershey Felder on Thursday, February 11, at 12 pm Pacific, and exclusive on demand viewing access to *Hershey Felder Presents: Backstory*, the story behind the making of Felder's three plays about Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, and Leonard Bernstein. Viewing access for *Backstory* begins Friday, February 5, 12 pm Pacific, and ends Sunday, February 21, 11:59 pm Pacific.

Patrons will receive their viewing links on Friday, February 5. Tickets cannot be transferred or shared.

For further information and to purchase tickets, please visit TheWallis.org/HFP

310.746.4000 (Tue.-Fri. 9:30 am – 2:30 pm)

Tickets@TheWallis.org

BIOGRAPHIES

Hershey Felder (*Writer & Performer*). Named to Time Magazine's 2016 Top 10 Plays and Musicals, Hershey Felder has played over 6,000 performances of his self-created solo productions at some of the world's most prestigious theatres, consistently breaking box office records. American Theatre Magazine has said, "Hershey Felder is in a category all his own." His shows include: *George Gershwin Alone* (Broadway's Helen Hayes Theatre, West End's Duchess Theatre); *Monsieur Chopin*; *Beethoven*; *Maestro* (Leonard Bernstein); *Franz Liszt in Musik*; *Lincoln: An American Story*; *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*; *Our Great Tchaikovsky*; and *A Paris Love Story*. His compositions and recordings include *Aliyah*, *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*; *Fairytale*, a musical; *Les Anges de Paris*, *Suite for Violin and Piano*; *Song Settings*; *Saltimbanches for Piano and Orchestra*; *Etudes Thematiques for Piano*; and *An American Story for Actor and Orchestra*. Hershey is the adaptor, director and designer for the internationally performed play-with-music *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* with Steinway artist Mona Golabek; producer and designer for the musical *Louis and Keely: 'Live' at the Sahara*, directed by Taylor Hackford; and writer and director for *Flying Solo*, featuring opera legend Nathan Gunn. Hershey has operated a full-service production company since 2001, and in 2020 created a new brand, Live From Florence, that operates a "theatre at home broadcast company," based in Florence, Italy. Previous broadcasts have included *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*; *Hershey Felder, Beethoven*; *Hershey Felder as George Gershwin Alone*; *Hershey Felder, Backstory – The Story Behind the Creation of Berlin, Gershwin & Bernstein*; and *Cooking French in Florence with Jeff Thickman & Hershey Felder*. The Hershey Felder Presents - Live from Florence 2020-21 Season of broadcasts include: *Hershey Felder as Claude Debussy in A Paris Love Story*; *Hershey Felder, Tchaikovsky*; *Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in Before Fiddler*; *Hershey Felder, Puccini*; and *Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in Anna & Sergei*. Hershey has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University's Department of Music and is married to Kim Campbell, the first female Prime Minister of Canada.

Klezmerata Fiorentina (*Music*) is a quartet comprised of principal players of one of the leading Italian operatic and symphonic orchestras, the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. In 2005, the violinist and violist **Igor Polesitsky**, clarinetist **Riccardo Crocilla**, accordionist and bassoonist **Francesco Furlanich** and double bass player **Riccardo Donati** formed the ensemble to explore new ways of creative, unwritten elaboration of authentic Yiddish folk material, the musical heritage of the group's founder, Igor Polesitsky. Since the group's debut in 2005 at the Progetto Martha Argerich Festival in Lugano, Switzerland, Klezmerata Fiorentina has appeared on some of the world's most prestigious stages. Of special note are their performances at the Quirinale Palace in Rome, the official residence of the President of the Republic of Italy, at the Great Hall of Congresses in the Kremlin, Moscow's Dom Musyki, the Rachmaninov Hall of Tchaikovsky Conservatory, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic society, Società di Quartetto in Milan, Amici della Musica in Florence, the Skirball Center in Los Angeles, the Italian Festival delle Nazioni, the Verbier Festival in Switzerland, Natalia Gutman's Kreuth Festival in Germany, the Ashkenaz Festival in Toronto, the Chutzpah! Festival in Vancouver, the Telavi Festival in the Republic of Georgia, the Summertime Festival in Jurmala (Latvia), etc.

About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:

The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 275 dance, theater, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as “au courant” (LaLa Magazine), The Wallis was lauded by Culture Vulture, which proclaims, “If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis.” Its programming has been nominated for 57 Ovation Awards and seven L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GRoW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by Chairman of the Board Michael Nemeroff, Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer Rachel Fine and Artistic Director Paul Crewes.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org.

For downloadable photos, please visit: TheWallis.org/Press.

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EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**WHAT:*****Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in BEFORE FIDDLER – Live from Florence***

Directed by Hershey Felder & Stefano Decarli

Written and Performed by Hershey Felder and Klezmerata Fiorentina

WHEN:

Sunday, February 7, 2021, 5 pm PST,

and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, February 14

Hershey Felder: PUCCINI – Live from Florence

Written and Performed by Hershey Felder

WHEN:

Sunday, March 14, 2021, 5 pm Pacific

and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, March 21

Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in ANNA & SERGEI – Live from Florence

Written and Performed by Hershey Felder

WHEN:

Sunday, May 16, 2021, 5 pm Pacific

and available for on-demand streaming through Sunday, May 23

RUN TIMES:

Each show runs approximately 90 minutes.

TICKET PRICES AND INFORMATION:

Tickets are \$55.00 per program per household for viewing on Smart TV, computer, smartphone or tablet, and a **WORLD PREMIERE PASS** for \$148.50, featuring a 10% discount for the purchase of all three programs. Also available is a **BEFORE FIDDLER VIP PACKAGE** for \$180, which includes the livestream of the **BEFORE FIDDLER** production on Sunday, February 7, 5 pm Pacific (plus a week of on demand viewing access through Sunday, February 14), an exclusive live lunch-time Zoom Q&A with Hershey Felder on Thursday, February 11, at 12 pm Pacific, and exclusive on demand viewing access to *Hershey Felder Presents: Backstory*, the story behind the making of Felder's three plays about Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, and Leonard Bernstein. Viewing access for *Backstory* begins Friday, February 5, 12 pm Pacific, and ends Sunday, February 21, 11:59 pm Pacific.

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