



NEWS RELEASE

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Be a part of the tradition—celebrate the season with The Philadelphia Orchestra's holiday concerts

Messiah, Handel's beloved oratorio, returns for the 49th consecutive annual performance by the Orchestra

Glorious Sound of Christmas, The Philadelphia Orchestra's best-selling popular holiday album, comes to life in three festive concerts

Broadway and television star Audra McDonald joins Associate Conductor Rossen Milanov and the Fabulous Philadelphians for a special New Year's Eve concert

Tickets for selected holiday concerts start at \$18

(Philadelphia, November 6, 2009)—Generations of music lovers have made The Philadelphia Orchestra part of their holiday celebrations. This December the Orchestra's holiday concerts are once again a destination for listeners who want to experience the sublime sounds of the season performed by the Fabulous Philadelphians. The festivities kick-off with a performance of **Handel's *Messiah***, an audience favorite since the composer's time, which returns for its 49th annual outing by the Orchestra (**December 13**). The **Glorious Sound of Christmas**, first introduced as a best-selling album in 1962, continues to delight today on compact disc and as a trio of exciting concerts (**December 17-19**). The holiday season culminates with the Orchestra's annual **New Year's Eve Concert** featuring Broadway and television star **Audra McDonald (December 31)**. Tickets for selected holiday concerts start at \$18.

Handel's *Messiah*

The Philadelphia Orchestra opens its holiday concerts with a time-honored tradition: a performance of **Handel's *Messiah*** (December 13). The work, which was a favorite of the composer, has delighted audiences for over two centuries. British conductor **Paul Goodwin** makes his Philadelphia Orchestra debut leading the Orchestra's 49th consecutive annual performance of the beloved oratorio. Mr. Goodwin and the Orchestra are joined by four stellar soloists for this concert: soprano **Celena Shafer**; mezzo-

soprano **Kelley O'Connor**, in her Philadelphia Orchestra debut; tenor **Anthony Dean Griffey**; and bass-baritone **Andrew Foster-Williams**, in his Philadelphia Orchestra debut. The **Philadelphia Singers Chorale** also performs.

Paul Goodwin is one of Britain's most versatile conductors, renowned for his historically informed interpretations of Baroque, Classical, and Romantic music, while also being a great advocate of contemporary music. He has a great passion for incorporating period style within the traditional orchestral world, and creating unusual and dynamic programs. Mr. Goodwin works closely with the Academy of Ancient Music and is a regular guest conductor with the Kammerorchester Basel and the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern. He was the principal guest conductor of the English Chamber Orchestra for six years. Mr. Goodwin has a wide symphonic repertoire, conducting such orchestras as the BBC Philharmonic, the Hallé Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the National Symphony, the Belgium and Spanish National orchestras, the Rotterdam Philharmonic, the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, and the Bayerischer, NDR (Hannover), and MDR (Leipzig) Rundfunkorchester. In opera, Mr. Goodwin has appeared at the Komische Oper in Berlin, the Teatro Real in Madrid, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, and most recently at Opera Australia.

The Glorious Sound of Christmas

With the **Glorious Sound of Christmas**, The Philadelphia Orchestra lends its lush sound to festive orchestral classics and selections from its best-selling Christmas album of the same name (December 17-19). Since the album's release in 1962, millions of listeners worldwide have celebrated the holidays with the sounds of the Fabulous Philadelphians. This year's program features works included on the original legendary recording and its follow-up, *Joy to the World*. Philadelphia Orchestra Assistant Conductor **Danail Rachev** leads these performances.

Danail Rachev is assistant conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and music director of the Eugene Symphony. During the 2009-10 season, Mr. Rachev makes his debuts with the London Philharmonic and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. In recent seasons he has made debuts with the Stuttgart Radio Symphony, the Porto Symphony, the Nashville Symphony, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, and the Eastern Connecticut Symphony, as well as return engagements with the Baltimore Symphony and CityMusic Cleveland. Mr. Rachev came to Philadelphia in 2008 from the Dallas Symphony, where he had been assistant conductor since the 2005-06 season, leading classical concerts, pops programs, and family concerts, as well as school and outreach programs. From 2002 to 2005 he served as conductor of the Juilliard PreCollege Symphony, and in the 2002-03 season he was the first ever conducting fellow of the New World Symphony, where he worked with Michael Tilson Thomas. In his native Bulgaria, he has worked with several ensembles including the Russe State Opera, where he led performances of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*.

New Year's Eve Concert

Broadway and television star **Audra McDonald** joins Philadelphia Orchestra Associate Conductor **Rossen Milanov** and the Fabulous Philadelphians to ring in 2010 with the annual **New Year's Eve Concert**. One of today's brightest Broadway stars, Ms. McDonald lends her luscious soprano to the songs of Gershwin and other favorites of the Great American Songbook for this very special celebration.

Earning an unprecedented three Tony awards before the age of 30 (*Carousel*, *Master Class*, and *Ragtime*) and a fourth in 2004 (*A Raisin in the Sun*), singer and actress **Audra McDonald** is frequently compared to legendary performers such as Judy Garland and Barbra Streisand. She uniquely blends a classically-trained soprano voice with an incomparable gift for dramatic truth-telling. In addition to her theatrical work, she maintains a major career as a concert and recording artist appearing regularly on many of the great stages of the world. Ms. McDonald opened the 2008-09 season of the Los Angeles Philharmonic with a gala concert at Disney Hall, celebrating Esa-Pekka Salonen's final season as music director. This summer she returned to the New York stage as Olivia in the Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park production of *Twelfth Night*. Along with her live performances, Ms. McDonald maintains a thriving television career, earning an Emmy nomination for her role in the made-for-television movie version of *A Raisin in the Sun* on ABC, alongside Sean "Diddy" Combs, her co-star from the 2004 Broadway revival. Ms. McDonald can currently be seen as Dr. Naomi Bennett in the ABC television series *Private Practice*, now in its third season. Her most recent recordings are Kurt Weill's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*—winner of two 2009 Grammy awards—and a new studio recording of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Allegro*, released on the Sony MasterWorks Broadway label in February 2009.

Rossen Milanov is associate conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and artistic director of The Philadelphia Orchestra at The Mann Center for the Performing Arts. In addition, he serves as music director of the Princeton Symphony; music director of New Jersey's Symphony in C (formerly the Haddonfield Symphony); and music director of the New Symphony Orchestra in his native city of Sofia, Bulgaria. In the 2009-10 season—in addition to conducting The Philadelphia Orchestra in subscription, Family, and community concerts—Mr. Milanov returns to the San Antonio Symphony, the Milwaukee Symphony, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the NHK Symphony, and the Royal Swedish Opera Orchestra. In recent seasons he has also worked with the Baltimore, Indianapolis, Seattle, Charlotte, New Jersey, BBC, and Singapore symphonies; the Scottish and Saint Paul chamber orchestras; the Orchestra of St. Luke's; the Rotterdam and Seoul philharmonics; the Orchestra of the Komische Oper Berlin; and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

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 unity in artistic leadership with only seven music directors throughout its history: Fritz Scheel (1900-07), Carl Pohlig (1907-12), Leopold Stokowski (1912-41), Eugene Ormandy (1936-80), Riccardo Muti (1980-92), Wolfgang Sawallisch (1993-2003), and Christoph Eschenbach (2003-08).

This rich tradition is carried on by Chief Conductor Charles Dutoit. Mr. Dutoit has a long-standing relationship with the Orchestra, having made his debut with the ensemble in 1980. Highlights of his second season include performances of Berlioz's *Te Deum* and *Symphonie fantastique*, part of Mr. Dutoit's four-year focus on the works of that composer, and a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Samuel Barber's birthday. During his tenure, Mr. Dutoit will also showcase the music of the Ballets Russes, continuing in the 2009-10 season with performances of Stravinsky's *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*.

Recent Philadelphia Orchestra highlights include the opening of the Orchestra's Online Music Store, www.thephiladelphiaorchestra.com; regular broadcasts on NPR; a series of critically acclaimed recordings on the Ondine label; and a \$125 million endowment campaign.

The Philadelphia Orchestra annually touches the lives of more than one million music lovers worldwide through its performances, publications, recordings, and broadcasts. Each year the Orchestra presents a subscription season in Philadelphia, education and community partnership programs, regular appearances at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, and a three-week tour. Its summer schedule includes performances at Philadelphia's Mann Center for the Performing Arts, free Neighborhood Concerts, and residencies at the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival and the Saratoga Performing Arts Center.

For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit www.philorch.org.

MESSIAH**December 13 at 2:00 PM** – Sunday afternoon – Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

In the 49th year of this holiday tradition, conductor Paul Goodwin leads the Orchestra, the Philadelphia Singers Chorale, and four leading soloists in Handel's beloved *Messiah*.

The Philadelphia Orchestra**Paul Goodwin** Conductor**Celena Shafer** Soprano**Kelley O'Connor** Mezzo-soprano**Anthony Dean Griffey** Tenor**Andrew Foster-Williams** Bass-baritone**The Philadelphia Singers Chorale**Handel *Messiah*Tickets: \$18-\$105, 215.893.1999 or www.philorch.org**THE GLORIOUS SOUND OF CHRISTMAS****December 17 at 7:00 PM** – Thursday evening – Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**December 18 at 7:00 PM** – Friday evening – Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**December 19 at 7:00 PM** – Saturday evening – Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

The Philadelphia Orchestra lends its lush sound to timeless holiday classics! Named for the Orchestra's best-selling Christmas album, these concerts are ideal for listeners of all ages.

The Philadelphia Orchestra**Danail Rachev** Conductor**Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia****Mendelssohn** "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"**Mendelssohn** *Verleih' uns Frieden***Adam** "O Holy Night"**Murray** "Away in a Manger"**Mendelssohn** *Von Himmel hoch***Traditional** "Angels We Have Heard on High"**Humperdinck** "Children's Prayer" and "Dream Pantomime," from *Hansel and Gretel***Reger** "Mariä Wiegenlied"**Mozart** "Alleluia," from *Exsultate, jubilate***Traditional/Kay** "Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly" (A Merrie Fugue)**Gruber** "Silent Night"**Schubert** "Ave Maria"**Mason** "Joy to the World"**Wade** "O Come, All Ye Faithful"Tickets: \$18-\$105, 215.893.1999 or www.philorch.org

NEW YEAR'S EVE

December 31 at 7:30 PM – Thursday evening – Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Rossen Milanov Conductor

Audra McDonald Vocalist

Ring in 2010 with The Philadelphia Orchestra. A program of festive favorites awaits as we toast the New Year!

Tickets: \$53-\$143, 215.893.1999 or www.philorch.org

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