

 **Bard College Conservatory of Music**

Contact: Mark Primoff
845-758-7412
primoff@bard.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BARD COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC ORCHESTRA
TO TOUR CUBA IN JUNE**

ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, N.Y.—From June 3 to 10, The Bard Conservatory Orchestra will embark on a one-week visit to Cuba to foster cultural exchange. The project includes formal concerts conducted by Leon Botstein in Cienfuegos (June 4), Santa Clara (June 6), and Havana (June 7-9), with pianist Peter Serkin as soloist in Havana (June 9). Collaborations with Cuban artists, in the form of shared concerts, side-by-side performances, and chamber music workshops, are another important component of this concert tour. A side-by-side chamber concert in Havana (June 8) features world-renowned Camerata Romeu, the first all-female string orchestra in Latin America, conducted by Zenaida Romeu. The Bard Conservatory Orchestra will also hold chamber music reading sessions with young musicians at Cuban arts high schools, community music groups, and music schools in these cities. The primary objective of this Cuba tour is to initiate a continuing collaboration, to learn from each other, and to foster student and faculty exchange.

The Bard College Conservatory believes in the power of music and the power of young people to create bonds that will endure and open doors for long-term understanding and collaboration. This summer concert tour combines music and youth as a powerful way to build positive and lasting relationships between the two countries. “With the recent opening up of the United States to Cuba, we see this as an exciting opportunity to establish new ties between our students and the young people of that country,” says Director of the Bard Conservatory of Music Robert Martin. “The tour is happening now, as the pace of relations with Cuba quickens, because we feel we can play a positive role, through music, in affecting the way that the relationship between our counties develops.” Over the past ten years, the Bard Conservatory has established close connections for student exchange and

concert tours with China, Venezuela, and Hungary, and aims to foster similar collaborations in Cuba and other Latin American countries, building new ties among Bard Conservatory students, who come from 16 different countries, with the young people of Cuba and Latin America.

Classical Movements, which is a leader in taking the finest ensembles to Cuba for the last 19 years, secured the invitation for the Bard Conservatory to make a multiple city concert tour and play at the same hall in Havana they arranged for the Minnesota Orchestra in their ground-breaking tour to Cuba in May 2015. Says Neeta Helms, president of Classical Movements “ The Bard Conservatory and their acclaimed Music Director, Leon Botstein, making a visit to Cuba with the celebrated American pianist Peter Serkin was of huge interest to the Cuban cultural and educational officials. The collaborations are of special importance.”

#

2016 CUBA TOUR PROGRAM

The Bard Conservatory Orchestra Cuba Tour

June 3-10

Saturday June 4

Cienfuegos, Teatro Tomas Terry (400 seats)

Concert

Gioachino Rossini

Guillaume Tell (William Tell) Overture

Paul Hindemith

Mathis der Maler (Symphony)

Intermission

Johannes Brahms

Symphony No. 2, op. 73, D major

Monday June 6

Santa Clara, Teatro La Caridad (450 seats)

Concert

Gioachino Rossini
Guillaume Tell (William Tell) Overture

Paul Hindemith
Mathis der Maler (Symphony)

Intermission

Johannes Brahms
Symphony No. 2, op. 73, D major

Tuesday June 7

Havana, Sala Covarrubias at the Teatro Nacional de Cuba
Evening rehearsal for strings with Camarata Romeo

Wednesday June 8

Havana, Sala Covarrubias at the Teatro Nacional de Cuba (850 seats)
Chamber Concert side-by-side with Camerata Romeo

Program includes

Mendelssohn Octet (Bard Conservatory Orchestra)
Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings (conducted by Zenaida Romeo)

Thursday June 9

Havana, Sala Avellaneda at the Teatro Nacional de Cuba (2050 seats)
Concert

Gioachino Rossini
Guillaume Tell (William Tell) Overture

Béla Bartók
Concerto for Piano No. 3, BB127
(with soloist Peter Serkin)

Johannes Brahms
Symphony No. 2, op. 73, D major

#

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Leon Botstein, music director, Bard College Conservatory Orchestra

In addition to leading the Bard College Conservatory Orchestra, Leon Botstein is in his 24th year as

music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra. He established, and is the music director of, The Orchestra Now, an innovative training orchestra and master's degree program designed to prepare young musicians for the challenges facing the modern symphony orchestra. Botstein has been hailed as a visionary for his programming, creating concerts that give audiences once-in-a-lifetime chances to hear rarely performed works, and inviting music lovers to participate, through talks and discussions, in the creative experience. He is also artistic director of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival, now in its 27th year, both taking place in the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College, where he has been president since 1975. He is conductor laureate of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he served as music director from 2003 to 2011.

Botstein leads an active schedule as a guest conductor worldwide, and can be heard on numerous recordings with the London Symphony (including its Grammy-nominated recording of Popov's First Symphony), the London Philharmonic, NDR-Hamburg, and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Highly regarded as a music historian, Botstein's most recent book is *Von Beethoven zu Berg: Das Gedächtnis der Moderne* (2013). He is the editor of *The Musical Quarterly* and the author of numerous articles and books.

Peter Serkin, piano

Recognized as an artist of passion and integrity, the distinguished American pianist Peter Serkin has successfully conveyed the essence of five centuries of repertoire. His inspired performances with symphony orchestras, in recital appearances, chamber music collaborations and on recordings are equally valued worldwide.

Peter Serkin's rich musical heritage extends back several generations: his grandfather was violinist and composer Adolf Busch and his father pianist Rudolf Serkin. He has performed with the world's major symphony orchestras with such eminent conductors as Seiji Ozawa, Pierre Boulez, Alexander Schneider, Daniel Barenboim, George Szell, Eugene Ormandy, Claudio Abbado, Simon Rattle, James Levine, Herbert Blomstedt, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and George Cleve. A dedicated chamber musician, Mr. Serkin has collaborated with Alexander Schneider, Pamela Frank, Yo-Yo Ma, the Budapest, Guarneri, Orion and Shanghai String Quartets and TASHI, of which he was a founding member. He has recently performed a duo-piano team with Julia Hsu. They are devoting themselves to both one-piano, four-hands, as well as to two-piano music.

An avid exponent of the music of many of the 20th and 21st century's most important composers, Mr. Serkin has been instrumental in bringing to life the music of Schoenberg, Webern, Berg, Stravinsky, Wolpe, Messiaen, Takemitsu, Henze, Berio, Wuorinen, Goehr, Knussen and Lieberson and others to audiences around the world. He has performed many important world premieres of works written specifically for him, in particular by Toru Takemitsu, Hans Werner Henze, Luciano Berio, Leon Kirchner, Alexander Goehr, Oliver Knussen, Charles Wuorinen and Peter Lieberson. Mr. Serkin has recently made several arrangements of four-hands music by Mozart, Schumann and his grandfather, Adolf Busch, for various chamber ensembles and for full orchestra. He has also arranged all of Brahms's organ Chorale-Preludes, transcribed for one piano, four-hands.

The 2015 summer season featured engagements at the Tanglewood, Ravinia and La Jolla Chamber Music Festivals in performances of concertos, chamber music, and duo piano programs with pianist Julia Hsu. He travels to Japan to perform with the Tokyo Metropolitan Orchestra and the Osaka Symphony and will give recitals in Tokyo and Shizuoka. Mr. Serkin appears with David Robertson and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in China following an Australian tour last season. Within the

United States he is soloist with the orchestras of Atlanta, San Antonio and the Traverse Symphony and will perform the Reger Concerto in Carnegie Hall with the American Symphony Orchestra in celebration of the centenary of the composer's death. European tours bring him to Cologne and Homburg in recital with programs of Josquin, John Bull, Dowland, Byrd, Nielsen, Mozart, Max Reger and Beethoven, as well as the Reger Piano Concerto with the Leipzig Gewandhaus and Dresden Staatskapelle orchestras conducted by Herbert Blomstedt.

Orchestral highlights of recent seasons have included the Boston, Chicago and Saint Louis Symphonies, New York Philharmonic and Scottish Chamber Orchestra, while recital tours have taken Mr. Serkin to Philadelphia, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Santa Monica, Princeton and New York's 92nd Street Y. Recent summer festival appearances have included BBC London Proms, Tanglewood, Aldeburgh, Chautauqua and Denmark's Oremandsgaard Festival. Mr. Serkin currently teaches at Bard College Conservatory of Music.

Zenaida Romeu, director, Camerata Romeu

Zenaida Romeu studied piano with her mother, Zenaida Romeu Gonzalez, Choir Conducting with Agnes Kralovsky, and Orchestral Conducting with Gonzalo Romeu, at the Superior Institut of Art in Havana became the first Cuban Orchestra Conductor graduated in 1992. Received master classes with Olaf Koch and Gert Firshmuth in Cuba and Germany.

She founded the Choir Cohesion that renewed the Cuban choral movement, the Lyric Studio Choir and the Camerata Romeu, that is her main artistic project that adorns the tradition of three generations of musicians Romeu in Cuba Island.

As a teacher, she has taught at the ISA in the chair of choral, orchestra direction and more recently in the chair of Chamber Music. She combines her work with a weekly program which dialogue on various aspects of Cuban music.

She has worked as musical director on the films The Annunciation directed by Enrique Pineda Barnet, Chamaco and El Premio Flaco by Juan Carlos Cremata, as well as the animated The Ugly and The Moon in the Garden, of the Cross by Adanoe and Yemely Lima, and participated in the feature film soundtrack for Sale, by Jorge Perugorría.

With her own orchestra, Camerata Romeu, was presented at Duke, Northdrige, Baltimore, and Wake Forest Universities, USF, University of Judaism, as well as in CALART, in the Los Angeles County Museum, Santa Bárbara Museum and other prestigious centers of culture and art.

The Camerata Romeu has performed at festivals and concert tours in Mexico, USA, Canada, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Martinique, Jamaica, Barbados, Ecuador, Spain, Belgium, Norway, Sweden and France.

#

ABOUT THE BARD COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC ORCHESTRA

The Bard Conservatory Orchestra consists of 90 gifted students drawn from around the world. With its music director Leon Botstein it has performed twice at Lincoln Center in New York, at Sanders Theater at Harvard, and in Taipei, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjing, Guangzhou, and Wuhan

during a three-week concert tour of Asia. The Bard College Conservatory of Music, founded in 2005 as a special five-year double-degree program within Bard College, has a world-class faculty that includes soprano Dawn Upshaw, pianist Peter Serkin, and violinists Weigang Li and Ida Kavafian, to name just a few.

Students are recruited from the United States and from all over the world, including Australia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Palestine, Poland, Slovakia, South Korea, Ukraine, and Venezuela.

Following the Bard Conservatory Orchestra's performance at Harvard University's Sanders Theater in May 2011, critic David Griesinger wrote: "From the first notes it was obvious that these young players understood what was to come... This was easily the most moving performance of this amazing piece [Shostakovich Symphony No. 5] that I have heard. Special credit goes, of course, to Botstein, but he had the help of some magnificent playing..."

###