

For Immediate Release
MEDIA RELEASE

January 7, 2011

The VSO presents violinist Kyoko Takezawa and renowned conductor Elgar Howarth

Vancouver, BC - Violinist **Kyoko Takezawa** will join the VSO in an exciting evening featuring **Barber's Violin Concerto** at **8pm** on **Saturday, January 22** and **Monday, January 24** at the **Orpheum Theatre**, conducted by **Elgar Howarth**.

Violinist **Kyoko Takezawa** electrifies audiences with a richness of playing, a virtuosic confidence of feeling, and a fiery intensity that establishes her as one of today's foremost violinists. Ms. Takezawa's interpretive insight and indisputable talent have made her a sought after soloist with many of the world's leading orchestras. She will perform an exciting rendition of **Barber's Violin Concerto**.

Guest conductor **Elgar Howarth** is a firmly established star of the conducting pantheon. He began his conducting career in the early 1970's and since then he has appeared regularly with all the leading British orchestras both in the concert hall and in the recording studio. Abroad he has appeared at major festivals and conducted many well-known orchestras including the Munich Philharmonic, Bayerischer Rundfunk Symphony, Zurich Tonhalle, Berlin Radio Symphony, and Royal Flanders Philharmonic.

The evenings begin with **Samuel Barber's *The School for Scandal***. Barber was known for composing music lush with romantic lyricism and filled with expansive melody. Richard Brinsley Sheridan's play, *The School for Scandal*, was the subject matter for Barber's first full-scale orchestral composition. He gave himself the challenge of capturing the moods and spirit of the famous play, a comedic masterpiece that pokes fun of the social conventions of the time, and the pretensions of the elite.

Up next, **Barber's Violin Concerto** rapidly found its place in standard repertoire, and has become a favourite of American concertos. The first movement, with its beautiful, haunting, utterly Romantic melody stated immediately by soloist and orchestra together, is perhaps the greatest stretch of music composed by Barber. Similar to the Brahms concerto, the second movement begins with an oboe solo – its songful character and soul create a dreamy sonic environment for the imagination to roam. Then comes the famous finale, one of the most extraordinary and breathless four minutes of music to be found in a musical work of any kind.

The evening closes with **Bruckner's** *Symphony No. 6*. The symphony begins quietly, with rhythmic and harmonic tensions that gather and set the stage for the entire work, dissipating in resolution only in the Finale.

CONCERT INFO

Masterworks Diamond

SATURDAY & MONDAY, JANUARY 22 & 24, 8 PM, ORPHEUM THEATRE

Elgar Howarth *conductor*

Kyoko Takezawa *violin*

BARBER	The School for Scandal: Overture
BARBER	Violin Concerto
BRUCKNER	Symphony No. 6

Kyoko Takezawa is one of the foremost violinists of her generation, and a prolific recording artist. Her rendition of the exciting **Barber** *Violin Concerto* will dazzle you, and the **VSO's** performance of **Bruckner's** colossal *Symphony No. 6* will amaze you.

Visit **Kyoko Takezawa** at www.kyokotakezawa.com

TICKET INFORMATION:

Tickets: \$26.75 - \$84 (senior, student and subscriber discounts available)

Tickets available online at www.vancouversymphony.ca or by calling VSO customer service at 604.876.3434

BIOGRAPHIES

Elgar Howarth *Conductor*

Elgar Howarth studied music at Manchester University and the Royal Manchester College of Music, where his first study was composition. His conducting career began in the early 1970's and since then he has appeared regularly with all the leading British orchestras both in the concert hall and in the recording studio.

Abroad, mostly in Europe, he has appeared at major festivals and conducted many well-known orchestras including the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Bayerischer Rundfunk Symphony, Zurich Tonhalle, Berlin Radio Symphony, Stockholm Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony, Residentie Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, French National Radio Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Austrian Radio Orchestra and Royal Flanders Philharmonic. He has toured Australia, conducting the Sydney, Melbourne and Queensland Symphony orchestras and appearing at the Brisbane Biennial. He has also toured Japan with the London Sinfonietta, an orchestra he has conducted regularly both in the UK and abroad from the beginning of his career.

His operatic achievements cover a wide repertoire and include the world premiere of Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre* at the Stockholm Royal Opera, followed by productions of the same work in Hamburg, Paris and London. Other productions include *La Clemenza di Tito* and *Peter Grimes* in Stockholm, *I Pagliacci* and Chaynes' award-winning *Erzsebet* in Paris, *The House of the Dead* and *Lulu* in Gothenburg, *Tosca* in Oslo, *Wozzeck* in Prague, *King Priam* and *Billy Budd* in Flanders, *The Rake's Progress* in Brussels, *Billy Budd* in Cologne and *Boris Godunov* at the Australian Opera. He conducted *Peter Grimes* with the Royal Opera House Covent Garden at the Savonlinna Festival. In 1985 he made his debut at Covent Garden with *King Priam* which he later performed with the same company at the Athens Festival. For Glyndebourne he has conducted *The Barber of Seville*, *Falstaff*, Nigel Osborne's *The Electrification of the Soviet Union* and Birtwistle's *The Second Mrs Kong* and *The Last Supper*. He conducted the world premiere of Birtwistle's *Gawain* at Covent Garden in May 1991 and the revivals in 1994 and 2000, a recording of which has been released by Collins Classics. Most recently he conducted the world premiere of Brett Dean's *Bliss* for Opera Australia in Sydney, Melbourne and at the Edinburgh International Festival. For Garsington Opera he has conducted *Arabella*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Intermezzo*, *Die Schweigsame Frau*, a double bill of *Sarka* and *Osud*, *Daphne*, *Cherevichki*, *Die Ägyptische Helena*, *Die Liebe der Danae*, *Genoveva* and Rimsky Korsakov's *May Night*. He conducted *Figaro's Wedding* at the inaugural season at Grange Park Opera.

For English National Opera he has conducted *Boris Godunov* and *Hansel and Gretel*, as well as contemporary works: Birtwistle's *The Mask of Orpheus*, Tippett's *King Priam*, Paol Ruder's *The Handmaiden's Tale*, Henze's *The Prince of Homburg* and Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten*. For his work on these last two productions Elgar Howarth won the 1997 Olivier award for 'Outstanding achievement in Opera'. He was principal Guest Conductor of the English Northern Philharmonia from 1985-1989. In addition to conducting many concerts with this orchestra, he appears frequently with the sister company, Opera North (where he was music advisor from 1996 – 99), in repertoire which has included *Jenufa*, *Nabucco*, *La Bohème*, *Katya Kabanova*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, the British premiere of Nielsen's *Masquerade*, *The Jewel Box*, *Billy Budd* and *Arabella*.

He retains an interest in composing especially, as a former trumpet player, for brass instruments. His works are published by Chester Music and Novello, and are much recorded, particularly on the Decca label.

Kyoko Takezawa, violin

As the embodiment of musicality, violinist Kyoko Takezawa electrifies audiences with a richness of playing, a virtuosic confidence of feeling, and a fiery intensity that establishes her as one of today's foremost violinists. Ms. Takezawa's interpretive insight and indisputable talent have made her a sought-after soloist with many of the world's leading orchestras.

Ms. Takezawa has performed as soloist with such prominent ensembles as the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, and the symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Cleveland, Baltimore, Saint Louis, Houston, Toronto, Dallas, Montreal, Detroit and Cincinnati. Abroad, she has been heard with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, the London Symphony, the Tonhalle Orchestra of Zurich, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Dresden Staatskapelle, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the NHK Symphony and the New Japan Philharmonic. She has collaborated with many distinguished conductors, including Seiji Ozawa, Sir Colin Davis, Michael Tilson Thomas, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Kurt Masur, Sir Neville Marriner, Leonard Slatkin, Charles Dutoit, Marek Janowski and Sir Andrew Davis. She has performed at major venues around the world, notably Carnegie Hall in New York;

the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.; London's BBC Proms; Musikverein in Vienna and Suntory Hall in Tokyo.

In past seasons, Ms. Takezawa performed in North America with the St. Louis, Tucson and Jacksonville, Charlotte, Toronto and Seattle Symphonies. She also performed with the China Philharmonic, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Japan Philharmonic, Singapore, Guangzhou, Nagoya and Osaka Symphonies in Asia, Denmark's Aarhus Symphony, France's Orchestre National de Lille, and Manchester's Halle Orchestra. She also appeared as the feature soloist on the Hamburg NDR Symphony tour of Japan.

Ms. Takezawa's chamber music performances have drawn high praise, and as co-director of the Suntory Festival Soloists of Suntory Hall in Tokyo, she has collaborated with the late Isaac Stern, Yo-Yo Ma, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Joseph Suk, Pinchas Zukerman and many other distinguished artists. A prolific recording artist, Ms. Takezawa can be heard on BMG's RCA Victor Red Seal label. Her most recent recording is a performance of the Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 14, by Samuel Barber with Leonard Slatkin and the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra. Her other recordings include the Elgar Violin Concerto with Sir Colin Davis and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra; the Violin Concerto No. 2 by Bartók with Michael Tilson Thomas and the London Symphony; and the Mendelssohn Concertos Nos. 1 & 2 with Klaus Peter Flor and the Bamberg Symphony.

Ms. Takezawa began violin studies at the age of 3 and at 7 toured the United States, Canada and Switzerland as a member of the Suzuki Method Association. In 1982 she placed first in the 51st Annual Japan Music Competition, and at 17 she entered the Aspen Music School to study with Dorothy DeLay, with whom Ms. Takezawa continued to study at The Juilliard School until graduating in 1989. In 1986 she was awarded the Gold Medal at the Second Quadrennial International Violin Competition in Indianapolis and, most recently, she received the prestigious Idemitsu Award for outstanding musicianship. Ms. Takezawa, who has been performing on the Antonio Stradivarius "Campocselice"(1710) on loan to her from the Nippon Music Foundation, most recently has been given the Guarneri del Gesu "Wieniawski" (1742), on loan to her provided by the Stradivarius Society in Chicago.

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