



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS CONTACTS:

Libby Huebner (562) 799-6055 email: [nyjazz@aol.com](mailto:nyjazz@aol.com)

Jennifer Pons (770) 367-7521 email: [jpons@thornton.usc.edu](mailto:jpons@thornton.usc.edu)

**ACCLAIMED CONDUCTOR HELMUTH RILLING TO LEAD  
USC THORNTON SYMPHONY AND CHORAL ARTISTS IN  
BACH'S MONUMENTAL *B MINOR MASS***

**Friday, November 13, 2009, 7:30 P.M., at USC's Bovard Auditorium**

***Stellar Soloists Include Soprano Jessica Rivera, Mezzo-Soprano Kelley O'Connor,  
Tenor Christopher Cock, and Bass-Baritone Christòpheren Nomura***

***Concert Is Culmination of Week-Long Residency by Rilling, Who also Leads Two Conducting  
Masterclasses and Conducts USC Choral Artists for First Time in 8 Years***

Internationally acclaimed conductor and Bach specialist Helmuth Rilling will direct the USC Thornton Choral Artists, the USC Thornton Symphony and a quartet of renowned soloists in one of the unparalleled musical contributions of all time, Bach's *B Minor Mass*, on Friday, November 13, 2009, 7:30 P.M., at USC's Bovard Auditorium. Featured guest artists include Jessica Rivera, soprano; Kelley O'Connor, mezzo-soprano; Christopher Cock, tenor; and Christòpheren Nomura, bass-baritone. The concert, which is part of USC Thornton's ongoing 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, is the culmination of a weeklong residency at USC by Rilling, who also leads two conducting masterclasses. This marks the first time Rilling has conducted the USC Choral Artists in eight years.

A pre-concert lecture at 6:30 P.M. features Thornton's renowned sacred-music scholar Dr. Nick Strimple, who will discuss the historical importance and relevance of this colossal work, which explores the meanings of faith, religion and spirituality through Bach's emotional, mathematical, musical and structural treatment of the Latin text.

Helmuth Rilling's self-described credo is that "Music should startle people and reach deep down inside them, forcing them to reflect. It should never be merely 'comfortable,' never fossilized, never soothing." Born in 1933 in Stuttgart, Germany, Mr. Rilling is a conductor, educator and ambassador for the music of Johann Sebastian Bach worldwide. He founded the Gächinger Kantorei and later the Bach-Collegium Stuttgart, serving as the choir's regular orchestral partner. In 1981, Mr. Rilling founded the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart, which was dedicated to furthering the music of J.S. Bach through public concerts, master classes, symposia and residencies throughout the world. Mr. Rilling is dedicated to encouraging young musicians, and in 2001, he founded the Festivalensemble Stuttgart, consisting of a choir and orchestra that drew talented young musicians from 25 different countries. The residency and concert with the USC Thornton Choral Artists and USC Thornton Symphony furthers this mission.

(more)

**General admission is \$18. Tickets for seniors, USC alumni and non-USC students are \$12. (USC students, staff and faculty with valid ID are free.) USC's Bovard Auditorium is located at 3551 Trousdale Parkway, Los Angeles, CA 90089 (on the USC campus in downtown LA). Ample parking is available. For tickets and information, please call 213-740-4672 or visit [uscticketoffice.com](http://uscticketoffice.com).**

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As a solo artist **CHRISTOPHER COCK**'s extensive range and communicative performances have established him as a premier lyric tenor. He has received wide acclaim performing his signature role as a Bach Evangelist, with more than fifty performances to his credit both in the US and internationally. Appearing as Evangelist in the *St. Matthew Passion* with The Los Angeles Philharmonic, the *LA Times* praised his performance for its "illuminating freshness." He has, for numerous seasons, appeared as a guest artist with the Oregon Bach Festival, led by German conductor, Helmuth Rilling. In recent seasons he has sung with the Florida Orchestra, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, the Miami Bach Society, the American Sinfonietta, and the Grand Rapids Symphony. He frequently appeared as a soloist with Maestro Robert Shaw and the Robert Shaw Festival Singers. His performances with the Festival Singers can be heard on recordings released by Telarc International. He has sung the role of the Evangelist in both Bach Passions with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and is tenor soloist on their recording of hymns (2001). In 2002 he made his solo debut at Carnegie Hall and appeared as soloist with the Bach Choir of Berlin. He returned to Carnegie Hall for a performance of Handel's *Messiah* with the Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra in 2007. Mr. Cock is Director of Choral and Vocal Activities at Valparaiso University, where he holds the Phyllis and Richard Duesenberg Chair in Lutheran Music, and is Director of the Bach Institute.

Baritone **CHRISTOPHEREN NOMURA** has emerged at the forefront of the new generation of American singers. Since making his New York City debut in 1992 at the Tisch Center for the Arts, he has performed throughout the world, recently hailed as one of classical music's "rising stars" by the Wall Street Journal (January 1, 2000). Mr. Nomura has earned a place of prominence on the operatic, concert and recital stages. He is known for his deep commitment to the art of the recital, having given more than 250 recitals throughout North America, Europe, Asia, South America and Africa. In recent seasons he has appeared at Lincoln Center, on the Fleet Bank of Boston Celebrity Series, the Rising Stars Series at Ravinia, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Arts in Washington, D.C., and the Vancouver Recital Society, frequently combining his performances with in-depth residencies to introduce new audiences to classical vocal music. The 2001-02 season brings residencies with the Kansas City Friends of Chamber Music, the Fleet Bank of Boston Celebrity Series and the first of four years as Artist in Residence with San Francisco Performances. His collaborations with such ensembles as the Skampa, Boromeo and St. Lawrence String Quartets and pianists Martin Katz, Dalton Baldwin, Charles Wadsworth, Jean-Yves Thibaudet and William Bolcom have brought him to the most important Chamber Music Festivals in including Santa Fe, Marlboro, Tanglewood, La Jolla, Spoleto and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

Possessing a voice of uncommon allure, musical sophistication far beyond her years, and intuitive and innate dramatic artistry, the Grammy-winning mezzo-soprano **KELLEY O'CONNOR** quickly has emerged as one of the most compelling performers of her generation. During the 2009/10 season the California native's impressive calendar includes a return to the Los Angeles Philharmonic for Peter Lieberson's *Neruda Songs* under the baton of Gustavo Dudamel; she also will be reunited with Bernard Haitink for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. O'Connor makes her debuts with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in Weill's *Sieben Todsünden*, and with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic in Michael Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*. She reprises *Neruda Songs* with the Atlanta Symphony, the Colorado Symphony, the Canton Symphony, and the Alabama Symphony, and takes on Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* at the Festival of the Arts Boca. The American mezzo also performs Beethoven's Ninth with the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall under Sir Roger Norrington, as well as with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Manfred Höneck, the San Diego Symphony, the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, and on tour with the Budapest Festival Orchestra and Iván Fischer. She joins Edo de Waart for Mahler's Third Symphony with both the Hong Kong Philharmonic and the Milwaukee Symphony, sings Bach's St. John Passion with the Calgary Philharmonic, and appears in a gala concert for the New York City Opera.

Hailed by the *New York Times* as a "vocally luminous young soprano," **JESSICA RIVERA** quickly is establishing herself as one of the most creatively inspired vocal artists before the public today. The intelligence, dimension, and spirituality that she infuses in her performances on the international concert and opera stages has garnered Ms. Rivera unique artistic collaborations with many of today's most celebrated composers including John Adams, Osvaldo Golijov, and Nico Muhly, and has brought her together in collaboration with such esteemed conductors as Bernard Haitink, Sir Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Robert Spano, and Michael Tilson Thomas. Ms. Rivera was heralded in the world premiere of John Adams's newest opera, *A Flowering Tree*, singing the role of Kumudha, in a production directed by Peter Sellars, as part of the New Crowned Hope Festival in Vienna. Since then, she has performed *A Flowering Tree* for her debut with the Berliner Philharmoniker with Sir Simon Rattle and, under the composer's baton, with the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Lincoln Center, and the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Centre. The London performances were recorded and are now commercially available on the Nonesuch Records label.

The **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FLORA L. THORNTON SCHOOL OF MUSIC**, currently celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and regarded as one of the premier music schools in the world, offers a unique combination of innovative programs such as popular music performance, recording science, and scoring for motion pictures and television, which stand alongside more traditional programs in classical music, opera, jazz studies, composition and research. Blending the rigors of a traditional conservatory-style education with the benefits of studying at a leading research university, USC Thornton offers students an unparalleled music education in a real-world context. Its illustrious alumni and faculty have been awarded countless Grammy and Academy Awards and

serve as leaders in all facets of the music industry. The school's venerated faculty has, over the years included violinist Jascha Heifetz, cellist Gregor Piatigorsky and violist William Primrose, among many others. Celebrated alumni include pop great Herb Albert; film score composers James Horner, Jerry Goldsmith and James Newton Howard; TV/film score composer Bear McCreary; composer and Presidential Medal of the Arts recipient Morten Lauridsen; acclaimed conductors Michael Tilson Thomas and Grant Gershon; opera stars Marilyn Horne, Rod Gilfry, Jessica Rivera and Erica Miller; and esteemed classical guitarist Christopher Parkening. In 1999, philanthropist Flora L. Thornton became the school's benefactor with a naming gift of \$25 million, at the time the largest such contribution to an American school of music. USC Thornton is the oldest continuously operating cultural institution in Los Angeles. USC Thornton currently enrolls 1,072 students from 40 countries and has a student-faculty ratio of six to one.

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**EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**CALENDAR LISTING**

**WHAT:**

**Helmuth Rilling conducts Bach B Minor Mass**

**WHO:**

Helmuth Rilling, Guest Conductor  
Jessica Rivera, soprano  
Kelley O'Connor, mezzo-soprano  
Christopher Cock, tenor  
Christòpheren Nomura, bass-baritone  
USC Choral Artists  
USC Thornton Symphony

**WHEN:**

Friday, November 13, 2009, 7:30 P.M.  
(6:30 P.M. – pre-concert talk featuring USC Thornton's sacred music specialist Dr. Nick Strimple)

**PROGRAM:**

BACH                    B Minor Mass

**WHERE:**

Bovard Auditorium  
3551 Trousdale Parkway  
Los Angeles, CA 90089  
(located on the USC campus in downtown LA; ample parking is available)

**TICKET PRICE:**

\$18 – General admission  
\$12 – Seniors, non-USC students and USC alumni  
(USC students, staff and faculty with valid ID are free)

**INFO:**

(213) 740-4672  
[www.uscticketoffice.com](http://www.uscticketoffice.com)

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11/02/09