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MENUHIN FESTIVAL GSTAAD

PRESS RELEASE

Premiere concert of the Gstaad Festival Orchestra with Maxim Vengerov and pianist Nikolai Tokarev on Friday

9 August 2010 * * * Due to illness Turkish pianist Fazil Say has been forced to cancel his two appearances at the Menuhin Festival Gstaad. Young Russian virtuoso Nikolai Tokarev will perform as his replacement at the inaugural concert of the Gstaad Festival Orchestra at the Festival Tent in Gstaad on Friday 13 August. He will perform, as scheduled on the programme, Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto in collaboration with the orchestra's principal conductor Maxim Vengerov. The Menuhin Festival Gstaad would like to apologize for this last-minute change and thank the public for its understanding. The Festival would also like to thank Nikolai Tokarev for having accepted this noble challenge.

Born in 1983, Nikolai Tokarev comes from a celebrated Moscow family of musicians. After the Gnessine School for child prodigies he continued his studies in 2003 with Dina Parakhina in Manchester and then with Barbara Szczepanska in Düsseldorf. In 2006 he won the second prize at the Géza Anda Competition and signed an exclusive contract with the Sony label the same year. His first recording (dedicated to Chopin, Liszt, Bach and Rosenblatt) was awarded an Echo-Klassik Prize in 2007. His fourth recording, which is scheduled for release on 17 September, features great Russian romantic piano concertos: Tchaikovsky's first and Rachmaninov's third, immortalized together with Vladimir Spivakov and the Russian National Philharmonic.

Gstaad Festival Orchestra & Maxim Vengerov

With the Gstaad Festival Orchestra the Menuhin Festival would like to create a vehicle for representing the modern character of the Menuhin Festival in the 21st century as well as its consequent artistic realization. Something new should emerge in the inspiring region of Saanenland and Gstaad, something of artistic value that is of importance for the music world. Gstaad and the Festival acquire an ambassador with the Gstaad Festival Orchestra that will be able to present this beautiful region of the Bernese Oberland throughout Europe as a "creative music workshop".

"I am highly enthusiastic and motivated to define new directions with and for the Menuhin Festival, to make the Festival even more vibrant, unique and exciting. Original productions provide a means to shape – purposefully and directly – the profile and appeal of the Festival, and the instrument of an own orchestra provides a means for projecting the image of the Gstaad Festival throughout the music world. The Gstaad Festival Orchestra unites my two areas of activity in an ideal manner, allowing me to transform my passion for music into tangible projects: the management of an internationally acclaimed orchestra and the design and direction of an international classic festival. A wish has come true in being able to unite these two worlds in the project of the Gstaad Festival Orchestra, and I will do my utmost to create something of artistic significance from which both the Festival as well as the orchestra and musicians will profit. The exclusive projects realized with the Gstaad Festival Orchestra also will represent a great enrichment for the public, the Festival and its whole surroundings. After successful years of development marked by increasing support on the part of audiences, sponsors and artists as well as by heightened interest on the part of the international media and professional associations, the Menuhin Festival Gstaad has reached a stage at which something new can be created and expanded. I think that a music festival should be in constant motion, always in the flow of things.

It is a great honor and delight for me to have Maxim Vengerov as the Principal conductor of the GFO and to have him direct the ensemble on its first international tour. His intuitive musicality and his personality are sure to win over musicians and audiences alike, and I am convinced that the symphonic programmes with emphasis on the Russian Romantic are sure to be highlights in the Festival programme.

His latest successes with leading international orchestras confirm that Maxim Vengerov is the right musician for this challenge, not to mention the enthusiastic feedback of numerous orchestral musicians from ensembles that he has conducted. The New York Times recently wrote with regard to one of his concerts: "The musicians respond magnetically to him."

We also are already working on a second project with the Gstaad Festival Orchestra for August 2011, for which we were able to obtain the superb mediator and communicator Kristjan Järvi. He is able to transcend the boundaries between diverse musical styles with skill and charm, and thus we are guaranteed to realize exciting projects that will be marked by rhythm, groove as well as pure joy and desire for making music. The New York Times described his presence on the stage as "a kinetic force on the podium, like Leonard Bernstein reborn" – no further commentary is necessary with regard to his career as a conductor."

Christoph Müller, artistic director and intendant of the Menuhin Festival and Director of the kammerorchesterbasel

Tour 2010

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| 13 August | Menuhin Festival Gstaad – Festival-Zelt Gstaad, 7.30 pm |
| 15 August | Festspiele Mecklenburg Vorpommern |
| 17 August | Rheingau Musikfestival, Kursaal Wiesbaden |
| 9 October | Dresden, Frauenkirche |
| 19 October | Bregenz, Festspielhaus |
| 13 November | München, Philharmonie am Gasteig |

www.gstaadfestivalorchestra.com

THE MENUHIN FESTIVAL GSTAAD THANKS ITS SPONSORS

The Menuhin Festival Gstaad would like to thank its sponsors and partners for their invaluable support. Here the latest news from the HSBC Private Bank (Suisse) SA, Armin Strom and the Grand Hotel Bellevue:

• HSBC Private Bank (Suisse) SA – Principal Sponsor

A symphony of connections * * * For seven years HSBC Private Bank (Suisse) SA has supported the Menuhin Festival Gstaad as its principal sponsor, accompanying the festival's development and contributing to the realization of founder Lord Yehudi Menuhin's musical philosophy. Celebrated musician, teacher and humanist, Lord Menuhin strove to abolish the borders between different musical styles in order to offer innovative programmes on the highest level with international stature but intimate in form. Swiss and international at the same time, innovative and traditional, the festival's image coincides perfectly with that of HSBC Private Bank (Suisse) SA. HSBC Private Bank (Suisse) SA is part of HSBC Private Bank, the international private banking division of the HSBC Group. HSBC Private Bank provides private banking and trustee services for high net worth individuals and their families through 96 locations in some 43 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa, employing over 6,700 professionals worldwide. www.hsbcprivatebank.com

• Armin Strom – Sponsor

Exclusive Watches from Bern at the Menuhin Festival * * * The Menuhin Festival in Gstaad is a Bernese event with international character. And watch manufacturer Armin Strom is home in the Canton of Bern and well known around the world for exclusive timepieces of the highest standards. A watch from Armin Strom unites authentic tradition with an innovative style of watchmaking in unique works of art. The partnership with the Menuhin Festival Gstaad in 2010 will serve as a platform for the creative work of the watch manufacturer. Let yourself be dazzled by Armin Strom in the festival lounge, immerse yourself in his world shaped by passion. Take advantage of this rare opportunity and observe the watchmaker at work. The precision and craftsmanship of the individual elements and the concinnity of the clockworks fascinate and tangible symbol for the manufacturer's authenticity. The skeletonizing of watch movements, for example, is deeply rooted in the brand's origins. You can discover all of this and more in the festival tent this year. The team from Armin Strom will be on location at the festival and is looking forward to presenting its newest creations. The collection includes handcrafted skeleton watches that fascinate anew with every examination. One can quickly forget that one is checking the time. As a fully independent manufacturer we are particularly proud to exhibit our first individual watch movement for festival visitors. The magic of a conductor inspiring his orchestra to new heights with an almost palpable force has great similarity to a master watchmaker inspiring and motivating his watchmakers to such a degree that truly remarkable creations arise. We are looking forward to enjoying enchanting concerts together with you this summer! www.arminstrom.ch

• Grand Hotel Bellevue Gstaad – Sponsor

The pinnacle of luxury * * * The Grand Hotel Bellevue in Gstaad has given a touch of youth to the glamour of the legendary ski resort. At the hotel, a sponsor of the Menuhin Festival Gstaad, grandeur comes face to face with cool design, alpine panoramas with Zen ambience and culture with nature. Culinary delights in a class of their own await our guests. The emphasis in the Restaurant Coelho is on traditional brasserie fare, haute cuisine is celebrated at our gourmet temple, the Restaurant Prado. If you're keen to know more about the treasures in our wine cellar, you can take part in a wine tasting event in our romantic Carnotzet. Guests meet in the Bellevue Bar for preprandial drinks and make themselves comfortable in black Le Corbusier armchairs to enjoy some piano music as they wait for a delicious dinner. At the Asian-style Bellevue Spa covering more than 2,500 sq.m., you'll find an aromatic steam bath, a Finnish sauna with outdoor area and a salt and ice grotto for total relaxation. Let your creative thoughts flow in an inspiring environment. The rooms, all flooded with light, are the perfect venue for small, exclusive groups of senior executives of national or international corporations. And can anything be more delightful than taking your breaks on the terrace and enjoying the view of Gstaad's mountains? By now you should at least have guessed the meaning of the hotel's logo: "return". Those who experience genuine hospitality under this sign will return time and again, so the saying goes. www.bellevue-gstaad.com

INFORMATION & PRESS CONTACTS

- Complete programme with photographs: www.menuhinfestivalgstaad.com

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