FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 24, 2017

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Christoph Eschenbach, Music Director

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND
CELLIST ALISA WEILERSTEIN TO PARTICIPATE IN
ROSTOPOVICH FESTIVAL IN RUSSIA
CELEBRATING SLAVA AT 90

NSO is First American Orchestra to Participate in Festival,
March 29–31 in Moscow and St. Petersburg

NSO’s “Salute to Slava” Continues at Home in March
with Eschenbach Leading Subscription Program
and Run-Out Concert

March 9 and 11 in Kennedy Center Concert Hall;
March 12 at Ferguson Center in Newport News, Virginia

(WASHINGTON)—Music Director Christoph Eschenbach leads the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) and cellist Alisa Weilerstein on a weeklong tour in Russia, where the Orchestra is the invited guest of the Rostropovich Festival. Mstislav Rostropovich, the late Russian cellist and former NSO music director, would have celebrated his 90th birthday on March 27, the date the Festival begins. Eschenbach leads the NSO and Weilerstein in three performances in Russia during the Festival—two in Moscow and one in St. Petersburg—March 29–31, marking the first time an American orchestra has participated in the Festival.
These performances—two in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory and one in Philharmonia Hall in St. Petersburg—salute Slava, the NSO’s beloved former music director for 17 years from 1977–1994. His tenure with the Orchestra proved to be one of the most glittering periods in the life of the NSO thus far, and saw the introduction of many signature projects that remain an important part of the NSO’s life to this day. Touring was a prominent part of Rostropovich’s time with the NSO: extensive travel around North and South America, four European tours, the NSO’s first visits to Asia, and, in 1990, Rostropovich’s triumphant return to Russia after 16 years in exile. The capstone of their partnership, the 1993 visit to Russia during which the NSO became the first orchestra ever to perform in Red Square, ensured that Rostropovich’s time as music director had placed the NSO on the artistic map as never before.

The NSO honors Slava’s memory with programs by composers that he not only knew well and collaborated closely with, but whose music he and the Orchestra were particularly well known for performing. Dmitri Shostakovich was the one of the three great composers (the other two being Sergei Prokofiev and Benjamin Britten) with whom Slava formed intensely productive artistic and personal relationships.

On March 29 in Moscow, the Orchestra performs a program which features a work closely associated with the NSO and Slava, its fourth Music Director, performed by Alisa Weilerstein: Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 1, which the composer wrote for Slava, and which later became one of his signature works. Tobias Picker’s *Old and Lost Rivers* opens the program, which concludes with Schubert’s Symphony No. 9, “The Great.”

This program is also included in the NSO’s year-long “Salute to Slava” at the Kennedy Center on Thursday, March 9, 2017, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 11, 2017 at 8 p.m.; and a run-out performance at the Ferguson Center at Christopher Newport University in Newport News, Virginia, on Sunday, March 12, at 3 p.m.
In addition to the Picker/Shostakovich/Schubert program, Eschenbach and the NSO also perform a program featuring Picker’s *Old and Lost Rivers*, Elgar’s Cello Concerto No. 1, and Shostakovich’s Eighth Symphony—another work that became a signature piece for him and the Orchestra. This program is featured in Moscow on March 30 and in St. Petersburg on March 31.

**PROGRAM DETAILS**

**Thursday, March 9, 2017, at 7 p.m.**  
**Saturday, March 11, 2017 at 8 p.m.**  
Kennedy Center Concert Hall  
National Symphony Orchestra  
Christoph Eschenbach, conductor  
Alisa Weilerstein, cello  
“Salute to Slava”

Picker  
*Old and Lost Rivers*  
SHOSTAKOVICH  
Cello Concerto No. 1  
SCHUBERT  
Symphony No. 9 in C major, “Great”

Tickets: $15–$89

**Sunday, March 12, 2017 at 3 p.m.**  
Diamonstein Concert Hall, Ferguson Center for the Arts  
Christopher Newport University, 1 Avenue of the Arts, Newport News, Virginia 23606  
National Symphony Orchestra  
Christoph Eschenbach, conductor  
Alisa Weilerstein, cello  
“Salute to Slava”

Picker  
*Old and Lost Rivers*  
SHOSTAKOVICH  
Cello Concerto No. 1  
SCHUBERT  
Symphony No. 9 in C major, “Great”

Tickets: $25–$85
NSO ON TOUR – RUSSIA

Wednesday, March 29, 2017, at 7 p.m.
Rostropovich Festival
Great Hall, Moscow Conservatory, Moscow, Russia
National Symphony Orchestra
Christoph Eschenbach, conductor
Alisa Weilerstein, cello

PICKER  Old and Lost Rivers
SHOSTAKOVICH  Cello Concerto No. 1
SCHUBERT  Symphony No. 9 in C major, “Great”

Thursday, March 30, 2017, at 7 p.m.
Rostropovich Festival
Great Hall, Moscow Conservatory, Moscow, Russia
National Symphony Orchestra
Christoph Eschenbach, conductor
Alisa Weilerstein, cello

PICKER  Old and Lost Rivers
ELGAR  Cello Concerto
SHOSTAKOVICH  Symphony No. 8

Friday, March 31, 2017, at 7 p.m.
Rostropovich Festival
Philharmonia Hall, St. Petersburg, Russia
National Symphony Orchestra
Christoph Eschenbach, conductor
Alisa Weilerstein, cello

PICKER  Old and Lost Rivers
ELGAR  Cello Concerto
SHOSTAKOVICH  Symphony No. 8

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
The 2016–2017 season marks the NSO’s 86th, and its seventh and final led by Music
Director Christoph Eschenbach, also the Music Director of the Kennedy Center. Founded in
1931, the Orchestra has, throughout its history, been committed to artistic excellence and
music education. In 1986, the National Symphony became an artistic affiliate of the John F.
Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where it has performed a full season of
subscription concerts since the Center opened in 1971. The National Symphony Orchestra
regularly participates in events of national and international importance, including
performances for state occasions, presidential inaugurations and official holiday
celebrations. Its regularly televised holiday appearances for Capitol Concerts and local radio
broadcasts on WETA make the NSO one of the most-heard orchestras in the country.

The Orchestra itself numbers 96 musicians who perform approximately 150 concerts each
year. These include classical subscription series, pops concerts, summer performances at
Wolf Trap and on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol, chamber music performances in the Terrace
Theater and on the Millennium Stage, and an extensive educational program, with performances designed for ages three years and up, and audience engagement activities, as well. Additionally, the NSO’s community engagement projects are nationally recognized, including NSO In Your Neighborhood which comprises a week of approximately 50 performances in schools, churches, community centers, and other neighborhood venues) and NSO Sound Health, which has taken the NSO to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Children’s Inn at NIH, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Children’s National Medical Center, and Inova Health System. Career development opportunities include the NSO Youth Fellowship Program and its Summer Music Institute.

For more information, visit nationalsymphony.org.

ABOUT CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH
Christoph Eschenbach, Music Director of both the National Symphony Orchestra and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, is in great demand by the finest orchestras and opera houses around the world.

Now in his seventh and final season with the NSO and Kennedy Center, he has, during his tenure thus far, taken the NSO on three international tours; through South and North America in 2012, to Europe and Oman in 2013, and to Europe 2016, earning great acclaim. He and the NSO have also performed together at Carnegie Hall. In 2016–2017, Eschenbach and the Orchestra will perform in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia, at the invitation of Olga Rostropovich, as part of the 2017 Rostropovich Festival, celebrating what would have been former NSO music director Mstislav Rostropovich’s 90th birthday.

Highlights of Eschenbach’s other engagements this season include leading a new production of Benjamin Britten’s The Turn of the Screw at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, guest conducting at the Orchestre de Paris, National Spanish Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Nederland Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra National de France, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, and the with the Vienna Philharmonic for the worldwide televised Summer Night Concert in Schönbrunn Palace.

In addition to his eight subscription weeks with the NSO, Eschenbach can be heard around the U.S. this season, leading concerts with the Houston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and on a 10-concert American tour with the historic German orchestra Bamberger Symphoniker of which Maestro Eschenbach is Honorary Conductor. He will also return to the Ravinia Festival this summer.

Mentored by George Szell and Herbert von Karajan, Christoph Eschenbach has enjoyed a career which has included music directorships of the Orchestre de Paris (2000–2010), Philadelphia Orchestra (2003–2008), Ravinia Festival (1994–2003), NDR Sinfonieorchester (1998–2004), and Houston Symphony (1988–1999). He has also served as artistic director of the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival (1999–2002) and as chief conductor and artistic director of the Tonhalle Orchestra (1982–1986). His many honors include the 2015 Ernst von Siemens Music Prize, Légion d’Honneur; Commandeur dans l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; Officer’s Cross with Star and Ribbon of the German Order of Merit; and the Commander’s Cross of the German Order of Merit for outstanding achievements. He also received the Leonard Bernstein Award from the Pacific Music Festival, where he was co-artistic director (1992–1998).
Eschenbach frequently mentors gifted young performers, and works regularly with the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra. In Washington, he offers rehearsal opportunities to the students of the NSO’s Youth Fellowship Program, side-by-side with the Orchestra.

ABOUT ALISA WEILERSTEIN
Alisa Weilerstein’s 2016-2017 season includes, for the first time in her career, performances of Bach’s complete suites for unaccompanied cello: at Caramoor, in Washington, D.C., and in London. In January she embarks on a nine-city U.S. tour with longtime recital partner Inon Barnatan and clarinetist Anthony McGill, including a concert in New York’s Alice Tully Hall and performances of a Joseph Hallman premiere composed for this trio.

She tours Europe with Barnatan later in the spring, with stops in Salzburg and at London’s Wigmore Hall. Her busy international concert schedule this season features performances around the globe, including performances with the New World Symphony, the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, the Netherlands Philharmonic, with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and the Dallas Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, the Staatskapelle Weimar; Amsterdam’s Residentie Orkest; the Minnesota Orchestra, Sydney Symphony, the Tokyo Symphony, and the National Symphony in both Washington, D.C., and on Tour in Moscow. She also gives the world premiere of Matthias Pintscher’s Cello Concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which co-commissioned the piece for her.

As an exclusive Decca Classics recording artist, Weilerstein releases her fifth album in September. Weilerstein’s career milestones include Elgar’s concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic and Barenboim in Oxford, England, and a performance at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama. An ardent champion of new music, she has worked on multiple projects with Osvaldo Golijov and Pintscher and premiered works by Lera Auerbach and Joseph Hallman. She appears at major music festivals worldwide, and regularly collaborates with Venezuela’s Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra and the El Sistema education program. alisaweilerstein.com

TICKET INFORMATION
Tickets for March 9 & 11 performances ($15–$89) are available at the Kennedy Center Box Office, online at kennedy-center.org, and via phone through Instant Charge, (202) 467-4700; toll-free at (800) 444-1324. For all other ticket-related customer service inquires, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

Tickets for the Ferguson Center performance on March 12 are available via phone at (757) 594-8752, or toll free at (855) FERG-TIX; at the Ferguson Center box office; or online at fergusoncenter.org/tickets.

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The NSO Music Director Chair is generously endowed by Victoria and Roger Sant.

For more information about the NSO, visit nationalsymphony.org.

For more information about the Kennedy Center, visit kennedy-center.org.

Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center’s MyTix program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. For more information, visit kennedy-center.org/mytix

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