



National Symphony Orchestra
The Kennedy Center

Press Release

September 6, 2018

**REGINA SPEKTOR AND CALEB TEICHER
JOIN THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ON
NOVEMBER 2 FOR
DECLASSIFIED: BEN FOLDS PRESENTS CONCERT**

Tickets on Sale Tomorrow at 10 a.m.

(WASHINGTON)—The National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) and Artistic Advisor Ben Folds welcome Indie singer/songwriter Regina Spektor and dancer/choreographer Caleb Teicher as the featured guest artists for its **DECLASSIFIED: BEN FOLDS PRESENTS** concert on [Friday, November 2, at 9 p.m.](#) in the Kennedy Center Concert Hall. James Gaffigan conducts.

The evening includes pre-and post-concert events. Tickets (\$25–\$75) are on sale tomorrow beginning at 10 a.m.

Folds, who in his role as Artistic Advisor curates all the featured artists and works closely with the orchestra for months on every facet of each performance, said his **DECLASSIFIED: BEN FOLDS PRESENTS** series defies the traditional classical music presentation by offering great live music in a casual and relaxed setting, with many songs that are newly composed or arranged specifically for this event.

“I’m pleased to announce our November 2 show will feature my good bud Regina Spektor,” said Folds. “Regina was born in Moscow, where she began playing piano at a very young age. Leaving the Soviet Union at the age of nine with her family, she carried a strong sense of Russian music, of classical music and discipline that she continued when her family emigrated to the Bronx. Her

musical background and her absolutely unique voice as an artist is why I'm so excited to have her on stage with the NSO. That, and she's just a badass. She will work with us to curate some orchestral music that means so much to her, and that has informed her work and life."

Folds said that all the shows in this concert series strictly adhere to a set of principles that set it apart from other kinds of orchestra performances. "There's no rock band on stage," Folds said. "The NSO is the band. We play by the orchestra's rules, placing them in their natural environment, rather than using them to ornament. We create context that gives both the discerning veteran of the symphony hall as well as the newcomer a musical human experience, drawing a thread between the old and new. Never dumbing down a single note."

Folds also announced that returning to DECLASSIFIED: BEN FOLDS PRESENTS will be Caleb Teicher, "an incredibly artful and musical tap dancer, who you may have seen on our June show performing with Jon Batiste." Folds added that "a moment on stage wasn't enough—I needed to get him back and develop this further. I've already said he's one of the best drummers I've heard in years, and all he uses is his feet. We are working on an orchestral piece, a sort of conversation between his dance and the orchestra."

Throughout the concert series, Folds serves as host, occasionally sitting in with the Orchestra and the featured guests.

The first DECLASSIFIED: BEN FOLDS PRESENTS concert was in June 2017, and featured artist/composer/producer Blake Mills, along with [Latin Grammy®-nominated Cuban artist Danay Suarez](#). Last season's NSO DECLASSIFIED performances featured multi Grammy® and Tony®-nominated vocalist and composer [Sara Bareilles](#) with [Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and singer Caroline Shaw](#) and [bandleader and composer Jon Batiste](#) with [singer/songwriter Kishi Bashi](#), and composer and pianist Joachim Horsley.

ABOUT BEN FOLDS

Ben Folds is widely regarded as one of the major music influencers of our generation.

He's created an enormous body of genre-bending music that includes pop albums with Ben Folds Five, multiple solo albums, and collaborative records with artists from Sara Bareilles and Regina Spektor, to

William Shatner. His last album was a blend of pop songs and his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra that soared to #1 on both the *Billboard* classical and classical crossover charts.

For over a decade he's performed with some of the world's greatest symphony orchestras, and in 2017 was named as the first ever Artistic Advisor to the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center.

Folds continues to perform with symphonies and also recently returned to solo touring around the globe reminiscent of his earliest years, delivering a high energy rock performance using the intimacy of just a piano.

In addition to touring, Folds has also recently been tapped by Ballantine Bantam Dell, a division of Penguin Random House publishing, to write his first book, described as a collection of interrelated essays and anecdotes about art, life, and music. Release is tentatively slated for late 2019.

He is also no stranger to television, having been featured for five seasons as a judge on NBC's critically-acclaimed a capella show *The Sing Off*. He continues to appear in cameo roles on cable and network TV shows from *Billions*, to *You're The Worst* and *Community*, and recently composed the soundtrack for the Netflix show *Handsome*.

An avid photographer, Folds is a member of the prestigious Sony Artisans of Imagery, completed an assignment in 2017 as a photo editor for National Geographic, and was recently featured in a mini-documentary by the Kennedy Center's Digital Project on his photographic work.

An outspoken champion for arts education and music therapy funding in our nation's public schools, in 2016 Ben held the distinction as the only artist to appear at both national political conventions advocating for arts education, and has served for over five years as an active member of the distinguished Artist Committee of Americans for the Arts.

ABOUT REGINA SPEKTOR

Born in the Soviet Union, Spektor began studying classical piano when she was six. Her family emigrated in 1989, landing in New York City, where she continued her classical training. Spektor began writing pop songs in her late teens and made her recorded debut in 2001 with the self-released *11:11*, a collection of songs heavily influenced by jazz and blues. Songs followed in 2002 and *Soviet Kitsch* in 2004.

Her commercial breakthrough came in 2006 with her fourth LP, *Begin to Hope*. The gold-certified album included the singles "On the Radio," "Better" and "Fidelity," which climbed the *Billboard* Hot 100 singles chart. Spektor's fifth album, *Far*, was released in 2009, and sixth, *What We Saw From the Cheap Seats* in 2012; both debuted at No. 3 on the *Billboard* 200 albums chart.

Spektor's songs have appeared in TV shows and movies including *Orange Is The New Black*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Weeds*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Veronica Mars*, *The Good Wife* and *500 Days of Summer*.

ABOUT CALEB TEICHER

Caleb Teicher is a critically-acclaimed dancer, choreographer, director, and teacher based in New York City. He began his dance career as a founding member of Michelle Dorrance's celebrated company, Dorrance Dance, in 2011. He was awarded a 2011 Bessie Award for Outstanding Individual Performance for his work in Michelle Dorrance and Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards' *A Shared Evening* at Danspace Project. Other favorite performance credits include *The Chase Brock Experience*, *Syncopated City Dance Company*, *The Bang Group*, *Sally Silvers & Dancers*, *iLuminate*, *West Side Story* (Int'l Tour and London), and *Irma La Douce* (City Center Encores).

Caleb's current concentration is creating concert dance work for Caleb Teicher & Company. Utilizing

traditional American dance forms (Tap, Vernacular Jazz, Lindy Hop) to create new concert dance work, the company has been presented by The Joyce Theater, Works & Process @ Guggenheim Bilbao, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival's Inside/Out Series, Paris Jazz Roots Dance Festival, Gibney Dance, Beantown Tap Festival, Queens College, The Yard on Martha's Vineyard, Hudson Valley Dance Festival, PS21, Vancouver Tap Festival, LaMaMa E.T.C., and the American Tap Dance Foundation, amongst others.

Teicher was named one of *Dance Magazine's* 2012 "25 to Watch" and, recently, the winner of *Dance Magazine's* "Best Emerging Choreographer" in the 2016 Readers' Choice Awards. He has been featured in *Vogue*, *Interview Magazine*, *Dance Magazine*, *Dance Spirit Magazine*, and many other publications. Teicher has been a guest faculty member at Steps on Broadway and Broadway Dance Center in New York City. He also spends time as a guest soloist, a director/choreographer for interdisciplinary work, and as an instructor of tap dance and solo jazz for international festivals/workshops.

ABOUT JAMES GAFFIGAN

Hailed for the natural ease of his conducting and the compelling insight of his musicianship, James Gaffigan continues to attract international attention and is one of the most outstanding American conductors working today. He is currently the Chief Conductor of the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester. Since taking up this position, he has made a ver significant impact on the Orchestra's profile both nationally and internationally with a number of highly successful tours and recordings. In recognition of this success, Gaffigan's contract has been extended until 2022. He also holds positions as Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and he was appointed the first Principal Guest Conductor of the Gürzenich Orchestra, Cologne in September 2013, a position that was created for him.

In addition to these titled positions, James Gaffigan is in high demand working with leading Orchestras and opera houses throughout Europe, the United States and Asia. In recent seasons, James Gaffigan has also enjoyed guest engagements with the London, Dresden, Czech and Rotterdam Philharmonics, Wiener Symphoniker, Dresden Staatskapelle, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Konzerthaus Berlin, Zurich Tonhalle, Gothenburg, Tokyo Metropolitan and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Leipzig, Berlin and Stuttgart Radio Orchestras. In the US, he has additionally worked with the Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Louis, Baltimore, Dallas, Pittsburgh, and National Symphony Orchestras, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

In opera, James Gaffigan has worked with the Wiener Staatsoper (*La bohème*, *Don Giovanni*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*), Glyndebourne Festival (*Così fan Tutte*, *La Cenerentola*, *Falstaff*), Norwegian Opera (*La Traviata*), Staatsoper Hamburg (*Salome*) and the Bayerische Staatsoper (*Don Giovanni*).

James Gaffigan was a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center and was part of American Academy of Conducting at the Aspen Music Festival. In 2009, he completed a three-year tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony in a position specially created for him by Michael Tilson Thomas. Prior to that appointment, he was the Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra where he worked under Music Director Franz Welser Möst from 2003 through 2006. James Gaffigan was also named a first prize winner at the 2004 Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The 2018–2019 season marks the National Symphony Orchestra's 88th, and Gianandrea Noseda's second as its music director. The Italian conductor serves as the Orchestra's seventh music director, joining the NSO's legacy of such distinguished leaders. Its artistic leadership also includes Principal Pops Conductor Steven Reineke and Artistic Advisor Ben Folds.

Founded in 1931, the Orchestra has always 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 performs year-round. The NSO's community engagement projects are nationally

recognized, including NSO In Your Neighborhood, an annual week of approximately 50 performances in schools, churches, community centers, and other unexpected venues; Notes of Honor, which offers free performances for active, veteran, prior service, and retired members of the military and their families; and Sound Health, a collaboration with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and its affiliated organizations. Career development opportunities for young musicians include the NSO Youth Fellowship Program and its tuition-free Summer Music Institute. For more information, visit nationalsymphony.org.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets (\$25-\$75) 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 inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

FUNDING CREDITS

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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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