NSO AND VIOLINIST NICOLA BENEDETTI PERFORM EAST COAST PREMIERE OF WYNTON MARISALIS’S VIOLIN CONCERTO LED BY CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH

October 27 and 29, 2016

(WASHINGTON)—Violinist Nicola Benedetti is the featured soloist in the East Coast premiere of Wynton Marsalis’s Concerto in D with Christoph Eschenbach leading the National Symphony Orchestra. Two performances—Thursday and Saturday Evenings, October 27 at 7:00 pm and October 29 at 8:00 pm—at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall also feature works by Tchaikovsky: Polonaise from *Eugene Onegin* and Symphony No. 3, “Polish.”

Marsalis’s Violin Concerto was composed in 2015 on a joint commission from the National Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Ravinia Festival, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, and the Amsterdam concert series NTR ZaterdagMatinee. The piece was composed in memory of composer, fiddler, and educator Francis Johnson. Written especially for Benedetti, the piece draws inspiration from the violin concerto’s evolution, from its first iteration in the Baroque era through to the 21st Century. It includes a slow movement inspired by an African American spiritual, and explores Benedetti and Marsalis’s own musical heritage in Scottish folk and American jazz music, respectively. It is not only a unique fusion of musical styles from around the world but a celebration and representation of collective cultures embodied in one work. Benedetti gave the American premiere of the work at Ravinia in July 2016 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Works by Tchaikovsky serve as bookends of this program, which opens with Polonaise, a one movement tribute from the third act of his opera, *Eugene Onegin*. The program closes with one of the composer’s lesser-known symphonies, his Symphony No. 3, “Polish.”
PROGRAM DETAILS

**Thursday, October 27, 2016, at 7:00**
**Saturday October 29, 2016 at 8:00**
National Symphony Orchestra
Christoph Eschenbach, conductor
Nicola Benedetti, violin

TCHAIKOVSKY       Polonaise from *Eugene Onegin*
WYNTON MARSDALIS  Concerto in D (for violin and orchestra)
TCHAIKOVSKY       Symphony No. 3 in D Major, Op. 29, “Polish”

Tickets: $15-$89.

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 of 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](http://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

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 Bamberg 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 WYNTON MARSALIS

WYNTON MARSALIS, Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, was born in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1961. He began his classical training on trumpet at age 12 and soon began playing in local bands of diverse genres. He entered the Juilliard School at age 17 and joined Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. Marsalis has recorded more than 30 jazz and classical recordings, which have won him nine Grammy Awards®. In 1983, he became the first and only artist to win both classical and jazz Grammy Awards® in the same year and repeated this feat in 1984. Marsalis’s rich body of compositions includes Sweet Release, Jazz: Six Syncopated Movements, Jump Start, Citi Movement/Griot New York, At the Octroon Balls, and In This House, On This Morning and Big Train. In 1997, Marsalis became the first jazz artist to be awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for Music, for his oratorio Blood on the Fields, which was commissioned by Jazz at Lincoln Center. He’s also recorded many albums, his most recent being Wynton Marsalis: Live at The House of Tribes. Following Hurricane Katrina, Marsalis co-wrote a composition called Congo Square with Ghanaian drummer Yacub Addy and dedicated the piece to New Orleans. The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, in collaboration with Yacub Addy’s group Odadaa!, premiered Congo Square on April 23, 2006 in New Orleans, then performed the piece on tour from Florida to New York.

Marsalis is also an internationally respected teacher and spokesman for music education, and has received honorary doctorates from dozens of universities and colleges throughout the U.S. He conducts educational programs for students of all ages and hosts the popular Jazz for Young People® concerts produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has also written four books, most recently Jazz ABZ, in collaboration with Phil Schapp, and illustrated by poster artist Paul Rogers. In 2001, Marsalis was appointed Messenger of Peace by Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and he has also been designated cultural ambassador to the United States of America by the U.S. State Department through their CultureConnect program. Marsalis served on Lieutenant Governor Landrieu’s National Advisory Board for Culture, Recreation and Tourism, a national advisory board created to rebuild Louisiana’s tourism and cultural economies. He has also been named to the Bring New Orleans Back Commission, former New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin’s initiative to help rebuild New Orleans culturally, socially, economically, and uniquely for every citizen. He helped lead the effort to construct Jazz at Lincoln Center’s new home – Frederick P. Rose Hall – the first education, performance, and broadcast facility devoted to jazz, which opened in October 2004.
ABOUT NICOLA BENEDETTI
NICOLA BENEDETTI is one of the most sought after violinists of her generation. Her ability to captivate audiences with her innate musicianship and dynamic presence, coupled with her wide appeal as a high profile advocate for classical music, has made her one of the most influential classical artists of today. Winner of Best Female Artist at both 2012 and 2013 Classical BRIT Awards, Nicola records exclusively for Decca (Universal Music). The enormous success of Nicola's most recent recording, Homecoming; A Scottish Fantasy, made Nicola the first solo British violinist since the 1990s to enter the Top 20 of the Official UK Albums Chart. She is credited with broadening the appeal of classical music to young and new audiences through her extensive education work and appearances at events such the Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony and iTunes Festival. Nicola was appointed as a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2013 New Year Honours, in recognition of her international music career and work with musical charities throughout the UK.

TICKET INFORMATION
Tickets ($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.

FUNDING CREDITS
David and Alice Rubenstein are the Presenting Underwriters of the NSO.

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

#NSOch

# # #

MEDIA CONTACT:
Rachelle Roe
(202) 416-8443
rbroe@kennedy-center.org

TICKETS & INFORMATION:
(202) 467-4600; (800) 444-1324
www.kennedy-center.org