

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ISABELLA  
STEWART GARDNER  
MUSEUM**

**Composer Leon Kirchner Returns to Gardner Museum to Celebrate 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**  
*Museum's Composer Portraits series honors distinguished composer with  
all-Kirchner program featuring internationally celebrated artists*

BOSTON, DECEMBER 3, 2008 — The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum celebrates Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Leon Kirchner with a special concert in honor of Kirchner's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on **Thursday, January 15, 2009 at 7:00pm.**

An assembly of acclaimed musicians including Jeremy Denk, Paula Robison, and the Claremont Trio—many of them with close personal and professional ties to the composer—will present an all-Kirchner program as part of the museum's *Composer Portraits* series of contemporary classical concerts, presented in collaboration with New York's Miller Theatre. **Kirchner will be honored in a concert at Miller Theatre on Saturday, January 24 at 8:00pm.**

In many ways, the concert will be a homecoming for Kirchner. The Brooklyn-born composer, conductor, and pianist lived and taught in Boston for many years and has enjoyed a long and dynamic relationship with the Gardner Museum, where he served as co-director of the Gardner Chamber Orchestra from 1995–2002.



*Image: Leon Kirchner. Photo: Jamie Cope, 2001*

“We are delighted to welcome Leon Kirchner back to the Gardner,” says the museum's Music Director Scott Nickrenz, a longtime personal friend and professional collaborator of the composer. “We have been privileged to have had a close association with Leon over the years, and it's especially fitting to honor him here as part of this milestone birthday celebration.” The Gardner Museum's Tapestry Room has seen the premieres of many of Kirchner's works, including the Boston premiere of *Duo No. 2*, which pianist Jeremy Denk will reprise for the celebration concert, the American premiere of *Interlude No. 2*, and the world premiere of *Sonata No. 2*. In September 2007, Kirchner's *Interlude No. 1* and *Sonata No. 2* for piano became the first works by a living composer to be included on the Gardner Museum's successful free classical music podcast, *The Concert*, which features live recordings of music performed in the museum's Tapestry Room.

A roster of celebrated musicians, many of them frequent performers at the Gardner Museum and well-known interpreters of the composer's works, will gather in the museum's Tapestry Room on January 15 to present a selection of Kirchner's chamber music. The program includes pieces composed across a span of fifty-plus years and focuses on works with a special resonance for the evening's performers. Paula Robison performs *Flutings for Paula*, which Kirchner wrote for her in 1973; the Claremont Trio performs Kirchner's *Trios No. 1* and *No. 2*, both of which are included on their forthcoming CD; and pianist Jeremy Denk presents *Duo No. 2*, a piece he premiered in 2002, with violinist Corey Cerovsek.

Now residing in New York City, Kirchner lived for many years in Boston, where he was a central figure in the city's new music community. At Harvard University, where he taught from 1961 until his retirement in 1989, he founded a renowned music analysis/performance class that had a huge impact on two generations of composers and performers, including such notables as John Adams and Yo-Yo Ma. Kirchner's works have been championed and premiered by many of the city's top-tier musical ensembles, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which commissioned and premiered his orchestral piece *The Forbidden* in October 2008.

The concert is part of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's acclaimed *Composer Portraits* series of contemporary classical music concerts, presented as part of the museum's *Gardner After Hours* evening events. All concert tickets

include admission to *After Hours* activities, and concertgoers are invited to join the composer and performers at the courtside bar for an informal reception following the performance.

**TICKETS:** \$23 adults, \$18 seniors, \$15 members, \$10 college students, \$5 children ages 5-17 (children under 5 not admitted.) All *After Hours PLUS* concert tickets include admission to *Gardner After Hours*.

Tickets may be purchased through the Gardner Museum's Box Office at 617 278 5156; online via [www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org); or at the museum's front entrance at 280 The Fenway, Boston (pending availability).

#### **PROGRAM DETAILS:**

Composer Portraits: The Music of Leon Kirchner  
Thursday, January 15, 2009 \* 7:00pm

*Paula Robison, flute*  
*Corey Cerovsek, violin*  
*Jeremy Denk, piano*  
*Ayano Kataoka, percussion*  
*Claremont Trio*

Leon Kirchner	Trio No. 2 (1993)
Leon Kirchner	Flutings for Paula (1973)
Leon Kirchner	Duo No. 2 (2001)
Leon Kirchner	Sonata Concertante (1952)
Leon Kirchner	Trio No. 1 (1954)

#### **ABOUT THE ARTISTS:**

*Corey Cerovsek, violin* – Praised as “a formidable talent whose playing combines an exciting spontaneity and a powerful technique with an old-world charm” by *The New York Times*, Cerovsek has performed as a concert soloist with dozens of orchestras across the globe, and in recital at such acclaimed venues as Washington’s Kennedy Center, New York’s Lincoln Center and the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. Born in Vancouver, British Columbia, Cerovsek’s career took off at age 9 when he won the grand prize of the Canadian Music Competition over 3,000 other musicians. At age 12, he enrolled as an undergraduate student in both music and mathematics at Indiana University, and completed his doctoral course work in both disciplines at age 18. He is a frequent interpreter of the works of Leon Kirchner.

*Claremont Trio* – Formed in 1999 at The Juilliard School by Boston-born twin sisters Emily Bruskin (violin) and Julia Bruskin (cello) with Donna Kwong (piano), the Claremont Trio is widely regarded as the premier piano trio of its generation. Consistently lauded for its thrillingly virtuosic and richly communicative performances, the Trio took first prize in the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson International Trio Award and is the only piano trio ever to win the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. In December 2008, the Trio will release their third CD, entitled *American Trios*, the first album ever to showcase both of Leon Kirchner’s trios, *Trio I* and *Trio II*.

*Jeremy Denk, piano* – An acclaimed soloist and avid chamber musician, Denk’s playing has been praised as “equally adept and exhilarated” by *The Washington Post*. Denk plays solo recitals regularly in New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, and has appeared as a soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony and the London Philharmonia. In 2002, he gave the world premiere of Leon Kirchner’s *Duo No. 2* with violinist Ida Levin at the Marlboro School and Festival. Denk has also gained notoriety in the online community for his blog *Think Denk*, full of musical analysis, philosophical quandaries and, according to the tongue-in-cheek writer, “the glamorous life and thoughts of a concert pianist.”

*Ayano Kataoka, percussion* – Marimbist and percussionist Kataoka is known for her artistic versatility, regularly performing music of diverse genres and mediums. She has premiered works by today’s leading composers including Leon Kirchner, Paul Moravec, and Huang Ruo, and has collaborated with a range of artists including Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble; award-winning actor Alan Alda; former Pink Floyd band member Roger Waters; and Cuban-born clarinet and saxophone master Paquito D’Rivera. Kataoka was the first percussionist to be chosen for the Chamber

Music Society of Lincoln Center's CMS Two program and serves on the faculty of the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

*Paula Robison, flute* – Described as “A rare artist who can make the flute sound both sensuous and classically pure ... An absolute wonder” by *The New York Times*, Robison's elegant artistry and passionate intellect have inspired the musical world and made her a role model for young flutists everywhere. Beyond the concert stage, her projects intermingling the visual and musical arts, her many recordings, her master classes, and her books on the art of flute playing have earned her renown and respect with a diverse audience. Robison, a passionate advocate for new music, has premiered works by many of today's preeminent composers, including Leon Kirchner, whose *Flutings for Paula* was written for her.

**“COMPOSER PORTRAITS” CONCERT SERIES • 7:00PM on select Thursday evenings • Tickets: \$5-23**

The product of a collaboration with New York's Miller Theatre, the “adventurous” *Composer Portraits* series has “energized the city's musical life” (*Boston Globe*), bringing visionary composers and top-tier new music groups to Boston. The Gardner's *Composer Portraits* season concludes on April 16<sup>th</sup> with a performance featuring the music of Iannis Xenakis performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble. Past concerts have celebrated the work of Steve Reich, Magnus Lindberg, and John Zorn, among others.

*Composer Portraits* concerts are presented on select Thursday evenings as part of *Gardner After Hours*, an ongoing series of evening events on the third Thursday evening of each month from 5:30–9:30pm. *After Hours* provides a variety of ways for visitors to experience the Gardner, from concerts to self-guided tours of the collection, live pre-concert music in the courtyard, and access to the museum's café and courtside bar.

**ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM • 280 The Fenway Boston MA 02115 (617-566-1401)**

[www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org) • Green Line E train or #39 bus to Museum • Hours: Tue.–Sun., 11 am–5 pm • Tickets: \$12 adults; \$10 seniors; \$5 students; FREE children 18 & under and all named “Isabella”

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum contains one of the most remarkable art collections in the world, housed in a Venetian-inspired palace, turned inside-out and surrounding an ever-changing interior courtyard garden, and featuring artworks by masters including Rembrandt, Michelangelo, Raphael, Botticelli, Degas and Sargent. Continuing the legacy of its founder, special contemporary and historic scholarly exhibitions, the longest-running museum music program in the nation, community programs, evening events, and a changing floral courtyard display enrich the permanent collection and provide ongoing inspiration for visitors old and new.

*Composer Portraits is made possible, in part, through the generous support of Charles and JoAnne Dickinson. Gardner After Hours is made possible by The Wallace Foundation; the media sponsor is The Boston Phoenix. The piano is dedicated as the Elliot Forbes Hamburg Steinway. The Tapestry Room chairs are a gift from Charles O. Wood III and Miriam M. Wood. Artistic programming is made possible, in part, by the Barbara Lee Program Fund.*

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