



January 27, 2010

KENJI FUSÉ IS GUEST VIOLIST AT ORCHESTRA TORONTO CONCERT

Violist **Kenji Fusé** returns to Toronto to perform Hector Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* at the first full **Orchestra Toronto** concert conducted by its new assistant conductor, **Danielle Lisboa**. A highlight of the February 21st concert is Fusé's sharing a stage with his mother, Orchestra Toronto oboe and English horn player **Lois Fusé**, who is featured in the Berlioz symphony's third movement.

Fusé, who was raised in Toronto and educated at the University of Toronto, is Principal Violist with the Victoria Symphony and the founder of Metapop Orchestra, Victoria's premiere avant-garde improv ensemble. He is in demand as a soloist, chamber musician, instructor and composer.

A passionate environmentalist, Fusé runs his diesel car and truck primarily on used vegetable oil. He starts the vehicles, both equipped with two fuel tanks, on diesel or biodiesel, then, when the engine is warm, switches to the veggie oil tank. In 2006 Fusé and pianist Karel Roessingh incorporated the Island Biodiesel Co-op, which has so far displaced more than 30,000 litres of petro diesel and tonnes of greenhouse gases.

Lisboa, appointed Orchestra Toronto assistant conductor in November, is a member of what is still a small club of female orchestra conductors. After a stellar career in her native Brazil, she was assistant conductor at the Moores Opera House in Houston and co-conductor of the Brockport Symphony Orchestra, a volunteer orchestra in New York state.

The afternoon of the February 21 concert begins at 2:15 p.m. with a pre-concert talk by Lisboa. She then begins the program by conducting **Ludwig van Beethoven's** sparkling **Symphony No. 1 in C Major**, which was completed in 1800. Although he was only 29, the work shows the composer completely the master of his material.

It was composed late in the first period of Beethoven's career, when he was secretly battling the crisis brought about by his gradual loss of hearing. Full of fun, it is a fitting addition to Orchestra Toronto's 2009-10 series of well-known and well-loved works, *A Season of Symphonies*.

Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* was commissioned by the legendary violinist and composer Nicolò Paganini, though he never performed it. "This is not at all what I want," Paganini told Berlioz when shown the first movement. "I am silent a great deal too long. I must be playing all the time." Berlioz finished the composition nonetheless and the work was introduced at the end of 1834.

Berlioz explained that his symphony was "a series of scenes for the orchestra, in which the viola should find itself mixed up, like a person more or less in action, always preserving his own individuality." The composer said the background was formed from his recollections of wandering in the Abruzzi, "introducing the viola as a sort of melancholy dreamer, in the style of Byron's *Childe Harold*." Hence the title, *Harold in Italy*.

Orchestra Toronto, one of Canada's oldest and largest community volunteer symphony orchestras, provides musicians with an opportunity to develop and perform public concerts from the symphonic repertoire. Dedicated to providing affordable family entertainment and music education, the orchestra performs five Sunday-afternoon concerts each season.



All Orchestra Toronto performances are held at 3 p.m. Sundays in the acoustically superb George Weston Recital Hall of the Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge Street, where it is a company in residence. The Toronto Centre for the Arts, the only major theatre complex north of Bloor Street, is accessible by wheelchair and is easily reached by car and by public transportation.

Single tickets for adults (\$35) and for seniors and students (\$30) can be purchased through the Toronto Centre for the Arts box office at 416.870.8000 or through TicketMaster at 416.872.1111 or www.ticketmaster.ca. Single tickets for those up to 18 years old (\$10) as well as special-rate tickets (\$22 each for groups of 10 or more) are available by calling the Orchestra Toronto office at 416.467.7142. Special prices are also available for those 19 to 29 years old through OTopus at www.orchestratoronto.ca.

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Season sponsor for Orchestra Toronto's 2009-10 series of five concerts is TD Canada Trust. Concert sponsors for this year's season are Tridel Enterprises, Long & McQuade Musical Instruments, Yamaha Canada Music Ltd., and Century 21 New Concept Ltd., Brokerage. The continuing support of the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Arts Foundation is also gratefully acknowledged.

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