

VANCOUVER RECITAL SOCIETY

MEDIA RELEASE

VANCOUVER RECITAL SOCIETY PRESENTS TWO RISING STARS OF THE NEXT GENERATION – PIANIST INON BARNATAN AND DOUBLE-BASSIST DAXUN ZHANG

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(Vancouver, BC) – The Vancouver Recital Society (VRS) continues its mission to present classical music’s rising stars with two upcoming concerts on its acclaimed ‘Next Generation Series’ at the Vancouver Playhouse and the Kay Meek Centre. First up is young Israeli pianist **Inon Barnatan**, who will perform a solo recital at the **Kay Meek Centre on Sunday, February 22, 2009 at 3.00pm**. His programme will include Schubert, Messiaen and Ravel.

The following week, Barnatan will perform in a duo recital with Chinese double-bassist **DaXun Zhang** at the **Vancouver Playhouse on Sunday, March 1, 2009 at 7.30pm**. Their programme will include Curb, Bottesini, Beethoven, Koussevitzky and Chen Gang. Zhang will premiere *Partita for solo double bass*, a new work that the VRS commissioned the South African composer Hendrik Hofmeyr to write for this recital.



Barnatan and Zhang will also perform together in a special ‘Free Classics-for-Kids’ concert at the Vancouver Public Library on Friday, February 27, 2009. This concert is part of the VRS’ commitment to community outreach and a number of schools from East Vancouver have been invited to attend. For many students, this will be their first introduction to classical music. After their performance, the two musicians will participate in a lively interactive question-and-answer session with the children.

Both musicians are garnering attention in the classical music world at the moment. Although he is still in his twenties, Barnatan’s flourishing career has already taken him to some of the most important music centres and festivals worldwide. He is gaining widespread recognition for his poetic and passionate music making, expressive performances and thoughtful and engaging programming. He has been described by the *New York Times* as a “fearless young pianist” and by London’s *Evening Standard* as “a true poet of the keyboard: refined, searching, unfailingly communicative”.

Zhang’s choice of the double bass as a solo instrument reflects his independent spirit. The double bass has yet to produce a bona fide classical music ‘star’. This may soon change if the plaudits Zhang has recently earned are anything to go by. The music critic at *The Washington Post* enthused “Zhang made the best case for the bass as a solo instrument I’ve ever heard... if the bass is finally to produce a headliner, the instrument can have no better champion than Zhang”. He is a soulful musician who plays this large instrument with both passion and a great deal of refinement.

Inon Barnatan was born in Tel Aviv and started playing the piano at the age of four. He made his orchestral debut at eleven, and continued his studies with Professor Victor Derevianko. In 1997 he moved to London to study at the Royal Academy of Music with Maria Curcio (a student of the

legendary Artur Schnabel) and Christopher Elton. He has also coached extensively with Leon Fleisher, and played for eminent musicians such as Richard Goode, Radu Lupu, Daniel Barenboim, Murray Perahia, Claude Frank and Christoph Eschenbach. He has performed recitals in Carnegie Hall, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Concertgebouw, the Louvre Auditorium, Salla Verdi, Wigmore Hall, the Musikverein, the Arts Theatre in Shanghai, and the Rising Stars series of the Ravinia and Gilmore festivals. In 2006 Inon moved to New York City, where he resides today.

DaXun Zhang comes from a family of bassists in Harbin, China. He has been playing the instrument since the age of nine, and studied at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing beginning at the age of eleven. He continued his studies in the U.S. at the Interlochen Arts Academy and received his Bachelor of Music at the Indiana University School of Music, where he worked with Lawrence Hurst. He has served on the faculty of Northwestern University and was recently appointed Assistant Professor of Double Bass at the University of Texas at Austin. In 2003, he won the prestigious Young Concert Artists Award - the first double bassist in the organization's forty-four year history to do so. In 2007, he won an Avery Fisher Career Grant, only the second double bassist in the history of this prestigious award. He has performed with Yo-Yo Ma and the *Silk Road Project*, including concerts with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Carnegie Hall. During the 2008-2009 season, Mr. Zhang continues his residency with Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Society Two.

Tickets available at www.ticketmaster.ca

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