**OLGA KERN**

*Pianist*

Russian-American pianist Olga Kern is now recognized as one of her generation's great artists. With her vivid stage presence, passionately confident musicianship and extraordinary technique, the striking pianist continues to captivate fans and critics alike. Olga Kern was born into a family of musicians with direct links to Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff and began studying piano at the age of five. She jumpstarted her U.S. career with her historic Gold Medal at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth, Texas as the first woman to do so in more than thirty years.

Steinway Artist and First prize winner of the Rachmaninoff International Piano Competition at the age of seventeen, Ms. Kern is a laureate of many international competitions and tours throughout Russia, Europe, the United States, Japan, South Africa and South Korea. In 2016 she served as Jury Chairman of both the Seventh Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition and the first Olga Kern International Piano Competition, where she also holds the title of Artistic Director. Ms. Kern frequently gives masterclasses and since September 2017 has served on the piano faculty of the prestigious Manhattan School of Music.

For the 2018-19 season, Kern will perform with the Moscow Philharmonic, Santa Fe Symphony, and the St. Louis Symphony, as well as opening Pacific Symphony’s season. Olga will also be featured soloist with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, both in Glasgow, and on their Spring 2019 US tour. She will appear in recitals in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Southern California, Zurich, and Milan.

In recent seasons, Kern served as Artist in Residence for the San Antonio Symphony’s 2017-18 season , had her Chinese debut with the National Youth Orchestra of China tour, performed concerts with Detroit Symphony, Pacific Symphony, Colorado Symphony, the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Stuttgart Philharmonic, Tivoli Symphony Orchestra, and La Jolla Music Festival, and recitals in Santa Fe, New Haven, Scottsdale, and San Francisco. Ms. Kern opened the Baltimore Symphony’s 2015-2016 centennial season with Marin Alsop. Other season highlights included returns to the Royal Philharmonic with Pinchas Zukerman, Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice with Giancarlo Guerrero, a month-long tour of South Africa for concerts with the Cape and KwaZulu Natal philharmonics, an Israeli tour with the Israel Symphony, solo recitals at Sarasota’s Van Wezel Hall, New York’s 92nd Street Y, and the University of Kansas’ Lied Center, and recitals with Renée Fleming in Carnegie Hall and Berkeley.

Ms. Kern has performed with Tokyo’s NHK Symphony, Orchestre National De Lyon, Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, the symphonies of Detroit for Tchaikovsky Piano Concertos 1, 2 & 3, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Nashville, Colorado, Madison, and Austin, and gave recitals in New York, San Francisco, Seattle and Louisville, and alongside Renée Fleming and Kathleen Battle. Ms. Kern's performance career has brought her to many of the world's most important venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, Salzburger Festspielhaus, La Scala in Milan, Tonhalle in Zurich, and the Châtelet in Paris.

Ms. Kern's discography includes Harmonia Mundi recordings of the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Christopher Seaman (2003), her Grammy Nominated recording of Rachmaninoff’s Corelli Variations and other transcriptions (2004), a recital disk with works by Rachmaninoff and Balakirev (2005), Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Warsaw Philharmonic and Antoni Wit (2006), Brahms Variations (2007) and a 2010 release of Chopin Piano Sonatas No. 2 and 3 (2010). Most recently, SONY released their recording of Ms. Kern performing the Rachmaninoff Sonata for Cello and Piano with cellist Sol Gabetta. She was also featured in the award-winning documentary about the 2001 Cliburn Competition, Playing on the Edge, as well as Olga’s Journey, Musical Odyssey in St. Petersburg and in They Came to Play. In 2012, Olga and her brother, conductor and composer, Vladimir Kern, co-founded the “Aspiration” foundation whose objective is to provide financial and artistic assistance to musicians throughout the world.

In 2017, Ms. Kern was gratified to receive the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, joining other honorees including Rosa Parks, Buzz Aldrin, Coretta Scott King, and Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. This commendation recognizes Americans who “embody the spirit of America in their salute to tolerance, brotherhood, diversity, and patriotism.”

*Fall, 2018 – 702 words*