FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Tuesday, February 26, 2019

BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND PIANIST KIRILL GERSTEIN
RELEASE NEW BUSONI PIANO CONCERTO CD, AVAILABLE DIGITALLY
ON MARCH 1 AND ON DISC MARCH 15

Recorded on the Myrios Classics label, the album also features conductor Sakari Oramo and the men of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

Fresh from its two Grammy Award wins earlier this month, the Boston Symphony Orchestra has added another CD to its extensive discography: Ferrucio Busoni’s sprawling Piano Concerto in C major with pianist Kirill Gerstein. Recorded live at Symphony Hall in March 2017, the performance was conducted by Sakari Oramo and features the men of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. The CD captures the first performance of the five-movement work in the BSO’s 137-year history.

Due to its immense difficulty and massive scale, Busoni’s Piano Concerto is rarely performed. Composed between 1902 and 1904, the concerto was premiered by the composer with the Berlin Philharmonic and conductor (and future BSO Music Director) Karl Muck at the Beethoven-Saal in Berlin on November 10, 1904. The concerto ends with an unusual choral finale, whose text is a hymn to Allah from Adam Oehlenschläger’s poem-drama Aladdin.

The Italian composer had an important connection with Boston. Ten years prior to the composition of the concerto, from 1891 to 1894, Busoni was based in the U.S., having initially traveled there to teach at the New England Conservatory of Music. He was drawn to Boston in part due to the presence of his friend and collaborator Arthur Nikisch, who was then Music Director of the BSO. Busoni’s relationship with the BSO was the first he formed with an orchestra in the U.S., and this professional connection served as a springboard for performance engagements across the country, including four concert tours.
Mr. Gerstein shares a connection to the city of Boston, having moved there from his native Russia at the age of 14 and studied jazz piano at the Berklee College of Music as the institution’s youngest student ever.

“Busoni’s piano concerto is the summation and culmination of 19th-century Romantic piano writing. It further takes the genre of the concerto away from virtuosity for virtuosity’s sake and fuses the piano and orchestra into a symphonic whole of Mahlerian proportions,” said Gerstein. “To play this piece has been on my wish list ever since I first got my hands on the score some 25 years ago at a Boston library. The Busoni performances with the BSO and Sakari Oramo have been one of the highlights of my musical life, and I am delighted that a recording preserving that moment is now being released.”

Not only is the album a rare contribution to the discography of this concerto, known principally through only a handful of recordings, but it also furthers an appreciation of Busoni and his music through the inclusion of a deluxe, 88-page booklet containing rarely published photographs and documents from the Busoni archive at the Staatsbibliothek Berlin, as well as specially commissioned essays by leading Busoni scholars Albrecht Riethmüller and Larry Sitsky. The album is released by Myrios Classics on **Friday, March 15** in North America, and pre-orders are currently available via Amazon; it is available digitally on **Friday, March 1**.

On Friday, February 22, the Boston Symphony and conductor Andris Nelsons continued their critically acclaimed *Under Stalin’s Shadow* series on Deutsche Grammophon with the release of Shostakovich Symphonies Nos. 6 & 7, together with the composer’s Suite from the Incidental Music to *King Lear* and the *Festive Overture*. The new double-disc set follows the 2018 release of a compelling pairing of Shostakovich’s Fourth and Eleventh Symphonies, which won the Best Orchestral Performance and Best Engineered Album (Classical) categories at the 2019 Grammy Awards earlier this month. This critically lauded project of recording the complete 15 symphonies by Dmitri Shostakovich was also honored with a 2017 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance for Symphonies Nos. 5, 8, 9, and Suite from *Hamlet*, as well as a 2016 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance for the Tenth Symphony and the Passacaglia from the opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*.

Mr. Gerstein’s most recent album is *The Gershwin Moment* (February 2018; Myrios Classics), which includes the composer’s Piano Concerto in F, the original jazz-band version of *Rhapsody in Blue*, and rare Gershwin transcriptions, among other works.

Kirill Gerstein and the Boston Symphony Orchestra collaborate again in March with the world premiere of Thomas Adès’s Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, written especially for him and conducted by the composer.

**Kirill Gerstein** is one of today’s most intriguing and versatile musicians, with a masterful technique, discerning intelligence, and a musical curiosity that has led him to explore repertoire spanning centuries and a diverse range of styles. He is the recipient of the 2010 Gilmore Artist Award and received First Prize at the 2001 Arthur Rubinstein Piano Competition in Tel Aviv.

A highlight of his 2018–19 U.S. season is the world premiere of Thomas Adès’s piano concerto written for him and performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the composer’s baton. Following this Symphony Hall program, they perform the New York premiere of the work at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Gerstein and Mr. Adès also perform as a piano duo at the New England Conservatory and Zankel Hall. Additional engagements include the Czech Philharmonic’s U.S. tour, in which he performs Tchaikovsky’s final 1879 version of Piano Concerto No. 1, which he has championed in concert and on record, as well as
performances with the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras and Atlanta, Cincinnati, Detroit, St. Louis, and Toronto Symphonies, among others.

His recordings on Myrios Classics include The Gershwin Moment; Liszt’s Transcendental Études, Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1 (final 1879 version); Imaginary Pictures, which pairs Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition with Schumann’s Carnaval; and an album of works by Schumann, Liszt, and Oliver Knussen.

Born in Voronezh, Russia, Mr. Gerstein attended a music school for gifted children studying the classical repertoire and quickly became interested in jazz, which started him on a path that led to his eventual studies for three years at the Berklee College of Music. He subsequently moved to New York to attend the Manhattan School of Music. An American citizen since 2003, Mr. Gerstein now divides his time between the United States and Germany. For more information, visit kirillgerstein.com.

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**KIRILL GERSTEIN**  
**BUSONI: PIANO CONCERTO**  
**MYRIOS CLASSICS MYR024**

Kirill Gerstein, piano

Boston Symphony Orchestra  
Sakari Oramo, conductor  
Men of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus  
Lidiya Yankovskaya, guest chorus master

**FERRUCCIO BUSONI (1866–1924)**

1. I. Prologo e Introito: Allegro, dolce e solenne — 15:24  
2. II. Pezzo giocoso — 9:13  
3. III. Pezzo serioso — 22:59  
   Introduzione: Andante sostenuto  
   Prima pars: Andante, quasi adagio  
   Altera pars: Sommessamente  
   Ultima pars: a tempo  
4. IV. All'Italiana: Tarantella: Vivace; In un tempo — 12:01  
5. V. Cantico: Largamente (with chorus) — 11:48

Total timing: 71:29

Recorded live at Symphony Hall, Boston, Mass., March 10–11, 2017

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