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PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES TOUR PLANS FOR 2009 AND 2010

FIRST INTERNATIONAL TOUR WITH MUSIC DIRECTOR MANFRED HONECK IN MAY 2009

PITTSBURGH – The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (PSO), under the baton of its new music director, Manfred Honeck, announces plans to tour to the Far East in May 2009 and to Europe in 2009 and 2010. All overseas touring by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra is made possible by the Hillman Endowment for International Performances.

The Pittsburgh Regional Alliance (PRA), the marketing affiliate of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, plans to join the PSO on both the Asia and Europe tours.

“Recent PRA successes in partnering with the PSO, a world-class cultural icon of the region, have demonstrated the ability of the PSO to open doors to international audiences of business leaders and influencers. This partnership with the PSO is an important part of the PRA’s long-term, multi-year *Opportunity Asia* and *Opportunity Europe* strategies. These aim to unlock business opportunities abroad for Pittsburgh region companies; to expand bilateral trade; and to position the Pittsburgh region as a preferred US investment destination,” said Allegheny Conference on Community Development CEO Michael Langley.

The tour to Asia in May 2009 includes performances in Beijing and Shanghai, China and Kaohsiung, Taiwan. The tour is the Orchestra' s first international tour with Honeck at the helm. The National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing is the site for two concerts on May 14 and 15, 2009. Located near Tiananmen Square and the Great Hall of the People, the hall' s construction was completed in 2007. Considered the premiere performing arts center in Beijing, the exterior of the theater is a titanium and glass dome that is completely surrounded by a man-made lake – the structure is said to look like an egg floating on water, and is colloquially referred to as “ The Egg.” This is the PSO' s first performance in Beijing since 1987 (its only prior performance on mainland China).

A concert on May 16, 2009 at the Shanghai Oriental Arts Center marks the Orchestra' s Shanghai debut. The Orchestra also makes its debut in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Kaohsiung will host the 2009 World Games in July. This 11-day, international multi-sport event, for sports that are not featured in the Olympic Games, is held every four years. The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra is honored to be invited to open the World Games Stadium with a concert on May 20, 2009.

Repertoire for the concerts in China includes: Beethoven' s Seventh Symphony and Piano Concerto No. 5, “ Emperor”; Mahler' s First Symphony; Christopher Rouse' s *Rapture*; and Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration*. Pianist Garrick Ohlsson is the featured soloist. In Taiwan, the PSO will perform Tchaikovsky' s 1812 Overture and the final movement of Beethoven' s Symphony No. 9. A concert on May 4, 2009, at Washington, DC' s Kennedy Center with Honeck - the PSO' s first outside of its home with Honeck as Music Director - precedes the tour to Asia. The program features cellist Alisa Weilerstein in Haydn' s Cello Concerto in C Major, Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration*, and Beethoven' s Seventh Symphony.

Later in the year, Honeck and the PSO make their European debut together in two previously-announced performances to close the renowned Lucerne Festival in Switzerland in September 2009. Also part of this trip are two concerts in Germany – one at the Philharmonie Essen and one at the Beethoven Festival in Bonn. Featured soloists at the festivals are violinist Viktoria Mullova and soprano Christine Schäfer, and repertoire includes Weber' s Overture to *Der Freischütz*, Beethoven' s Violin Concerto, Dvořák' s Eighth Symphony, Strauss' Four Last Songs, and Bruckner' s Fourth Symphony.

During the 2009-2010 season, Honeck leads the Orchestra in a one-night only concert at New York' s Carnegie Hall with violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter as soloist on February 9, 2010. A tour of Europe, including performances at Vienna' s Musikverein, is currently being planned for later in 2010.

The **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** has been a vital part of the City of Pittsburgh' s heritage for more than 100 years. With its noble history of the finest conductors and musicians and its strong commitment to artistic quality and excellence, audiences around the world have claimed the PSO as their orchestra of choice. In September 2008, the PSO welcomed its ninth Music Director Manfred Honeck. Beginning in the early 1900s with frequent performances in Canada, the PSO confirmed its ranking as a world-class orchestra, earning critical acclaim for each tour abroad. Its 32 international tours include 17 European tours, seven trips to the Far East and two to South America. In January 2004, the PSO became the first American orchestra to perform for Pope John Paul II at the Vatican, as part of the Pontiff' s Silver Jubilee celebration.

Locations, programs and artists subject to change.

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