



**MUSIC DIRECTOR NICHOLAS MCGEGAN AND
PHILHARMONIA BAROQUE ORCHESTRA
RETURN FROM SUCCESSFUL
SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVALS TOUR**

**Next Bay Area Performance is September 16
Opening the Cal Performances Season**

San Francisco, CA – September 1, 2011 -- Music Director Nicholas McGegan and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, with soloists Dominique Labelle, Yulia Van Doren, Diana Moore, Clint van der Linde, and Wolf Mathias Friedrich, have successfully completed a tour of the most prestigious summer music festivals -- earning standing ovations for performances of Handel's *Orlando* at the Ravinia Festival, the Mostly Mozart Festival and the Tanglewood Music Festival and acclaim for a concert featuring works by Vivaldi, Corelli, and Handel at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival in Connecticut.

The critics raved:

· *Boston Globe*: "...superbly performed... their playing laced precision with a heady dose of abandon... McGegan presided with genial vigor, encouraging and enjoying the extravagance."

· *New York Times*: "*Orlando* has a persuasive new champion in Nicholas McGegan, who led his superb Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra of San Francisco and five fine singers in an invigorating performance at Alice Tully Hall on Sunday afternoon."

· *Chicago Tribune*: "This was a model of how to bring works of the period alive... The British-born maestro drew playing from his fine group of period instrumentalists that was true to the letter as well as spirit of Handel's miraculous score... The orchestra's playing was unfailingly alert, full of vitality, attentive to dramatic flow..."

· *Associated Press*: "There was magic aplenty on the stage of Alice Tully Hall during a concert version of Handel's opera *Orlando*, presented as part of the Mostly Mozart festival. The magician-in-chief was Nicholas

McGegan, who conducted his Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra Sunday afternoon with unflagging energy...”

· *Financial Times*: “Celebrating musical razzle-dazzle, period-instrumental illumination and stylish embellishment in depth, the Mostly Mozart Festival presented Handel’s *Orlando*, uncut. The hero was Nicholas McGegan, who guided his Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra of San Francisco through the operatic cabals, curlicues and convolutions, anno 1733, with gusto and savoir-faire, also infectious affection... the audience registered rapture.”

· *Chicago Classical Review*: “The spectacular touring production of *Orlando* that touched down at Ravinia’s Martin Theatre Thursday night celebrates the 30th anniversary of the San Francisco-based Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, which music director Nicholas McGegan has been leading for 25 of those years... To hear a first-rate period-instrument performance of a Handel opera in an intimate venue with a large cast of singers who are true masters of the period technique that these works require is nothing short of a revelation... From the opening notes, McGegan gave off a smile that remained in place for the entire performance and, through the final chorus some three-and-one-quarter hours later, the fusion of 18th-century music and drama was a sheer delight at every turn... There are huge benefits to playing together for a quarter of a century: so much was communicated with so little means...”

September promises to be a busy month for the Orchestra as well. Philharmonia Baroque will return to the local radio airwaves on Sunday, September 11 at 9 p.m. with the first broadcast of a new series of monthly programs on KDFC. The first broadcast features the music of Mozart, with performances and interviews recorded last season with pianist Robert Levin and Music Director Nicholas McGegan. And on September 13, Philharmonia Baroque Productions will release an all-Vivaldi disc featuring Philharmonia Baroque Concertmaster Elizabeth Blumenstock, the third disc in the new project marking the institution’s return to commercial recording.

The Orchestra and Chorale’s first performances in the Bay Area take place on September 16, 17, and 18 presented by Cal Performances at Zellerbach Hall. Conducted by Mark Morris, the Orchestra and Chorale perform Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* with the Mark Morris Dance Group featuring mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe and baritone Philip Cutlip. ___ The Orchestra’s own concert season gets under way September 22-25 with concerts titled “Mozart & Haydn: A Tale of Two Cities,” featuring natural horn soloist R.J. Kelley performing a new “concerto pasticcio” assembled from newly discovered compositions for the instrument by Mozart.

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra has a presence throughout the Bay Area with regular season performances at San Francisco’s Herbst Theatre, Berkeley’s First Congregational Church, and at two venues on the Peninsula:

The Menlo/Atherton Performing Arts Center in Atherton, and the First United Methodist Church in Palo Alto. Single tickets to Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra are now on sale through City Box Office: www.cityboxoffice.com, (415) 392-4400.

To subscribe to Philharmonia Baroque or to request a season brochure, please call all [415-252-1288](tel:415-252-1288) or email brochure@philharmonia.org.

For more information, call Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra at [415 252-1288](tel:415-252-1288).

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For a complete biography, visit www.philharmonia.org/bio.html. Press photos are available at www.philharmonia.org/resources.html or by contacting John Tavenner, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, at jtavenner@philharmonia.org or [415\) 252-1288, ext. 315](tel:415-252-1288).