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NEWS RELEASE

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Alasdair Neale conducts live orchestral score to renowned film classic, *The Battleship Potemkin*

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Season-opening screenings on October 7 & 9 pair the Marin Symphony and the Mill Valley Film Festival

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SAN RAFAEL, CA—Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 black-and-white silent film classic, *The Battleship Potemkin*, is acclaimed as one of the greatest and most ingenious films of all time. Eisenstein's cinematographic brilliance, exhibited memorably in this feature depicting the 1905 revolt that incited the Russian Revolution, gave rise to the technique of the "montage" which permitted a range and intensity of emotional expression never before translated to film. *The Battleship Potemkin*, more than any other of Eisenstein's works, cemented the director's place in cinematographic history.

The Marin Symphony's Music Director, Alasdair Neale, has become a worldwide authority on the performance of this groundbreaking film with live orchestral score by Shostakovich. Mr. Neale has performed it more than any other conductor, in locales such as Sydney, Australia; San Francisco and Chicago (for the Grant Park Festival)—always to packed houses and enthusiastic critical acclaim. Mr. Neale kicks off the Marin Symphony's 07/08 "Season of the Silver Screen" by bringing this emotionally riveting production to Marin Center in performances on October 7th and 9th at 7:30pm.

Sheldon Rich, the Executive Producer of this breakthrough *Potemkin* version featuring both a restored print (1976) and live orchestral score, considers Mr. Neale one of the pre-eminent conductors for his project. "This is a very demanding score," Mr. Rich explains, "The conductor must interpret and incorporate the film's emotions and drama while synchronizing the music to the film. Both the film and the score must be memorized. There is no click track. To unify the emotional and technical elements of the symphonic score and the film is a remarkable accomplishment, and to do it with Alasdair's dramatic verve is rare."

Mr. Rich and his wife, Artistic Director Alicia Schachter, worked extensively with the Soviet Union to bring this production of *The Battleship Potemkin* to life. Founders in 1972 of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Mr. Rich and Ms. Schachter worked in the early 1990s to perform the complete canon of Shostakovich's chamber works. Their immersion in Shostakovich's oeuvre permitted Mr. Rich, when attending a subsequent screening of a revised, re-released *Potemkin* in the Soviet Union, to attribute the new score to Shostakovich, and to recognize the wide range of Shostakovich works from which it drew. Assembled by the Soviets in 1976 for the jubilee re-release of the film, this revised score compiled recorded excerpts from Shostakovich's 4th, 5th, 10th and 11th symphonies. Mr. Rich immediately recognized the promise of live, rather than recorded, performance, and set about working with numerous agencies in the USSR to obtain permissions not only to restore and remaster the film print, but to develop an orchestral score for live performance. It is this score that Mr. Neale will conduct in the Marin Symphony's performance in October.

The screening of *The Battleship Potemkin* is a collaborative undertaking between two of Marin County's finest and most time-honored arts institutions—the Marin Symphony and the Mill Valley Film Festival, this season celebrating their 55th and 30th anniversaries, respectively. "We're excited about the program," comments the Mill Valley Film Festival's Founder and Executive Director, Mark Fishkin, "as Eisenstein's 'Potemkin' is a seminal work. Eisenstein changed the way filmmakers thought about and pursued their craft."

Marin Symphony Executive Director Noralee Monestere appreciates the multimedia excitement that this collaboration affords. "The trend in the performing arts today is to mix media," she says. "The Bay Area is such a haven for film lovers, we decided to start mixing and matching by creating a season celebrating music and film."

The Marin Symphony's "Season of the Silver Screen" will continue with November 4 & 6 concerts featuring acclaimed violin virtuoso Elizabeth Pitcairn who performs in partnership with the 1720 "Red Mendelssohn" Stradivarius, said to have inspired the 1999 Academy Award-winning film,

The Red Violin. In collaboration with the California Film Institute, the Marin Symphony will present a screening of the film with Ms. Pitcairn in conversation at the Rafael Film Center on November 1. Also on the program for 07/08 are performances by revered violinist Vadim Gluzman, performing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in a program by Russian composers on January 20 and 22, 2008; and by cellist Hai-Ye Ni, currently the Principal Cello of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ms. Ni returns to Marin after having soloed here to rave reviews previously, and after having been the recipient of a Marin Music Chest scholarship in 1986. The Maestro will conduct a program of classical music excerpts used in the scores of notable films in the Marin Symphony's February 24 and 26, 2008 concerts, "Screen Gems." Audiences will enjoy hearing favorite soundtrack excerpts from *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Fantasia*, *Immortal Beloved*, *The Right Stuff*, *Chocolat*, *Platoon*, *Schindler's List* and more.

The Marin Symphony / Mill Valley Film Festival screening of *The Battleship Potemkin* will be held on Sunday, October 7 and Tuesday, October 9, 2007 at 7:30pm at Marin Center, 10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael.

Tickets at \$27/\$50/\$65 (students half price) are available now at 415.499.6800 and www.marinsymphony.org

Flexible, discounted subscription tickets to the Marin Symphony's "Season of the Silver Screen" are available at 415.479.8100.

Mr. Neale hosts a free, pre-concert conversation in the auditorium one hour prior to each performance (6:30pm).

Other related events:

Sunday, October 7, 2007, 5pm

Marin Symphony Season-Opening Gala, "Caviar & Comrades" – Russian cuisine and caviar served "under the tent". Black-tie Patrons' Dinner - \$125 per person; Post-concert Champagne and Dessert Reception - \$25/\$35 at the door; Both events - \$130 per person. More information at http://www.marinsymphony.org/season_gala.htm

Tuesday, October 9, 2007, 6-7:30pm

LGBT Night at *Potemkin* - Members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities are invited to attend a fine wines and hors d'oeuvres reception in the concert hall before the Tuesday, October 9 screening of *The Battleship Potemkin*. This reception is FREE to concert ticket holders, but space is limited. Participants must purchase a ticket and pre-register to attend. More information at http://www.marinsymphony.org/LGBT_Night_at_Potemkin.htm

Tuesday, October 9, 2007, 9:30pm

Tuesday Night Wraps Party – an ongoing adjunct to the Marin Symphony season, these post-concert "wrap" parties give audience members a chance to meet and socialize with the Maestro, guest artists and orchestra members immediately following each Tuesday concert. No host bar. Four Points by Sheraton San Rafael, 1010 Northgate Drive, San Rafael.

The Battleship Potemkin screening sponsored by Bank of America, Bon Air Center and Marin Magazine. Screening made possible by the generous support of The Bernard Osher Foundation with additional funding provided by Ruth & Alfred Heller, Leonard & Beryl Buck Fund, Lois & Frank Noonan, Gilardi & Co. LLC and Pat & Irene Hunt.



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Jpg:

Maestro Alasdair Neale ©Terrence McCarthy

High resolution stills from the film *The Battleship Potemkin* are available by request.

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