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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 2, 2010

***THE NEW YORKER* MUSIC CRITIC AND AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR
ALEX ROSS RETURNS TO CAL PERFORMANCES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14 AT 8:00 P.M.**

BERKELEY, September 2, 2010—Opening Cal Performances’ *Strictly Speaking* series and celebrating the release of his sophomore book, author and the music critic of *The New Yorker*, **Alex Ross** comes to **Wheeler Auditorium** on **Thursday, October 14** at **8:00 p.m.** For one night only, Ross gives a whirlwind history of music as told through bass lines in a lecture titled *Chacona, Lamento, Walking Blues: Bass Lines of Music History*. In an audio-rich talk based on a chapter of his new book, *Listen to This* (September 2010), Ross shows how lusty Spanish dances were transformed into somber masterpieces by Purcell and Bach, and how figures of lament appear variously in Eastern European folk music, Renaissance masses, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, and songs by Bob Dylan and Led Zeppelin. Ross describes his speech as “a tale of the interconnectedness of musical language and the universality of human emotion.”

Born in Washington DC, Ross began studying piano at the age of 10 and started to compose music around the same time. One of his first great experiences as a listener was hearing Leonard Bernstein rehearse and conduct Mahler’s “Resurrection” Symphony at the National Cathedral. In college, Ross studied music, history, and English literature and wrote a thesis on James Joyce. After a belated discovery of jazz and rock, he played keyboards in a band called Miss Teen Schnauzer.

Ross’s first attempts at music criticism appeared in the program guide of WHRB, a Harvard student radio station where he had a show called *Music Since 1900*. After college, he began publishing reviews and articles in *The New Republic*, *Fanfare*, *Symphony*, and *The New York Times*. Ross wrote for *The New York Times* from 1992 to 1996 covering indie rock, jazz, and classical music. His first article for *The New Yorker* appeared in 1993, and he became the official music critic for *The New Yorker* in the fall of 1996. There he has published profiles of

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Valery Gergiev, John Adams, Björk, Peter Sellars, Mitsuko Uchida, and Michael Giacchino, and critical essays on Mozart, Schubert, Verdi, Wagner, Schoenberg, Leonard Bernstein, and Marian Anderson.

Ross's first book, *The Rest Is Noise* (2007), a project that took him 10 years to complete, won numerous awards, including the 2007 National Book Critics Circle Award for criticism and the 2008 Guardian First Book Award. "A work of immense scope and ambition...a great achievement" (*The New York Times*). The book was selected as one of *The New York Times*'s 10 best books of the year, translated into 16 languages, and has sold nearly 200,000 copies worldwide.

Ross has served as a McGraw Professor in Writing at Princeton University and received honorary doctorates from the New England Conservatory and the Manhattan School of Music. In 2008, he was named a MacArthur Fellow. He now lives in Manhattan with his husband, actor and filmmaker Jonathan Lisecki, and with their three cats.

Ross last lectured in Berkeley in 2007 soon after the publication of *The Rest Is Noise*.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Alex Ross** on **Thursday, October 14 at 8:00 p.m.** in **Wheeler Auditorium** are priced at **\$28.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are

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cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20 for all other community members. Information is available at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Thursday, October 14 at 8:00 p.m.

Wheeler Auditorium, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Strictly Speaking

Alex Ross

Chacona, Lamento, Walking Blues: Bass Lines of Music History

Program: Alex Ross, music critic of *The New Yorker* and author of the award-winning international bestseller *The Rest Is Noise*, conducts a whirlwind history of music as told through bass lines.

Tickets: \$28.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

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