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**MASTER PIANIST AND SPEAKER ALFRED BRENDEL ASKS
“DOES CLASSICAL MUSIC HAVE TO BE ENTIRELY SERIOUS?”
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31 AT 8:00 P.M. AT HERTZ HALL**

BERKELEY, September 29, 2010—Legendary pianist, recently retired, **Alfred Brendel** returns to Cal Performances on **Sunday, October 31 at 8:00 p.m.**, bringing insight and wit to his lecture, *Does Classical Music Have to Be Entirely Serious?* “Britain’s greatest living pianist” (*The Guardian*, London), also a gifted writer, speaker and comic poet, has embarked on a separate venture since retiring from the concert platform in 2008, imparting to audiences his remarkable knowledge and insights about music gleaned from more than 60 years onstage. This talk marks Brendel’s second visit as orator to the Cal Performances stage; his first was 2009’s *On Character in Music*, an examination of Beethoven’s sonatas.

Does Classical Music Have to Be Entirely Serious? is a question Brendel has been considering for many years; he first attempted to answer it at Cambridge University in 1984. Brendel, who lists laughing among his favorite hobbies, has continuously extracted humor from the classical form through performances, countless recordings, and numerous written publications. Bringing attention to the oft-overshadowed elements of wit and humor and an unintentional one-dimensionality of emotion mistakenly conveyed in classical music, Brendel wrote, “To sit down and start Haydn’s last C major sonata with a tortured look is even worse than to embark on the so-called Moonlight Sonata with a cheerful smile.” He declares that “humor, wit and irony are crucial elements of certain works of great music, particularly by Haydn and Beethoven, and that proof can be found in the compositions themselves.” Brendel will support this assertion with excerpts of works by Haydn, Beethoven, and Ligeti.

Alfred Brendel is well-versed in the fields of literature, language, architecture, films and music. In addition to his books, *Alfred Brendel on Music* and *Ausgerechnet Ich* (“Me of All People”), he has published two collections of articles, lectures and essays. He is a frequent contributor to *The New York Review of Books*, having written articles on Mozart, Liszt, and

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Schoenberg. His volumes of poetry include *One Finger Too Many*, published in the United States by Random House, and he is the subject of the BBC documentary *Alfred Brendel: Man and Mask*.

Established as one of the premier classical pianists of the day, Alfred Brendel has had a long and illustrious career. His tours have included orchestral concerts and solo recitals throughout Europe, as well as his annual North American tour featuring solo recitals in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Vancouver and Berkeley, among others. On January 27, 2006, Brendel, Simon Rattle, and the Berlin Philharmonic marked the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth with a special Carnegie Hall performance of the composer's final piano concerto. In recent seasons, he has performed with the Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Cleveland Orchestra.

One of the most prolific recording artists of all time, Brendel has recorded for the Philips Classics label for over 30 years. He is the first pianist to have recorded all of Beethoven's piano compositions and one of the few to have recorded the complete Mozart piano concertos. Recent releases include the complete Beethoven cello sonatas with his son, Adrian Brendel; a live recording of Schubert sonatas; the five Beethoven piano concertos with Simon Rattle and the Vienna Philharmonic; the Schumann and Schoenberg piano concertos; Mozart sonatas and the complete Beethoven bagatelles; and works by Haydn, Schubert, and Liszt recorded live in Salzburg. He has won many prizes for his recordings, notably the Grand Prix du Disque, the Japan Record Academy Award, *Gramophone* magazine's "Critics' Choice," the Grand Prix de l'Académie du Disque Français, the Edison Prize, and the British Music Trades Association Prize.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Alfred Brendel's** talk *Does Classical Music Have to Be Entirely Serious?* on **Sunday, October 31, 2010 at 8:00 p.m.** in **Hertz Hall** are priced at **\$32.00**. 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 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

Sunday, October 31 at 8:00 p.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley

Strictly Speaking

Alfred Brendel

Does Classical Music Have to Be Entirely Serious?

Program: Retired after 60 years on the concert stage, legendary pianist Alfred Brendel will discuss the music of Beethoven and perform excerpts from Beethoven's sonatas.

Tickets: \$32.00, 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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