

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SEAN BOTKIN RECITAL HIGHLIGHTS BELOVED RACHMANINOFF
WORKS FOR PIANO**

Hometown hero returns to Aloha International Piano Festival

CONCERT: Tuesday, June 9, 2009, 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Liliu Theater of the Hawaii Convention Center
TICKETS: \$20. Student tickets are \$5 (available for students up to age 22).
INFORMATION: www.alohapianofestival.com
ARTIST: Sean Botkin, *piano*
PROGRAM: BACH/RACHMANINOFF: Preludio, Gavotte and Gigue ((from
Violin Partita No. 3 in E Major, BWV 1006)
BIZET/RACHMANINOFF: Minuet (from “L’Arlésienne” Suite No. 1)
MUSSORGSKY/ RACHMANINOFF: *Hopak* (from *Sorochintsy Fair*)
TCHAIKOVSKY/RACHMANINOFF: Lullaby, Op. 16 No. 1
KREISLER/ RACHMANINOFF: *Liebesleid*
RACHMANINOFF: Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 28

HONOLULU – (May 13, 2009) – Hometown hero Sean Botkin returns to Honolulu in June to present an all-Rachmaninoff recital at the weeklong Aloha International Piano Festival (AIPF), where he will also teach a master class. His recital promises to thrill young and old with music that is a true pleasure to experience. Botkin’s recital features Rachmaninoff’s spellbinding Sonata No. 1 in D minor, as well as beautiful Rachmaninoff transcriptions of works by Bach, Bizet, Tchaikovsky and more. The recital takes place on Tuesday, June 9, 2009, 7:30 p.m. in the welcoming environment of the Liliu Theater of the Hawaii Convention Center. Tickets are \$20 and students up to age 22 are eligible for \$5 tickets.

The richly inventive Rachmaninoff Sonata No. 1 established Rachmaninoff as a composer and reinforced his reputation as a pianist of virtuosic strengths. Audiences can expect a Botkin to deliver the thrills of a piano masterwork that will “bring down the house” with magnificent solo cadenzas that demand rare technical powers.

“I had the honor of meeting Alexander Rachmaninoff, the grandson of Sergei Rachmaninoff, last October when I was performing in Europe,” said Botkin. “He heard me perform Rachmaninoff’s rarely heard Sonata No. 1 and was deeply moved by my performance. Mr. Rachmaninoff is now organizing a joint recording project for me through Chicago’s Ravinia Festival. I feel truly blessed and never would have dreamed of something like this in a million years, let alone meeting Rachmaninoff’s grandson.”

“Mr. Rachmaninoff encouraged me to learn more of Rachmaninoff’s music and the first half of my AIPF recital consists of Rachmaninoff transcriptions, all new pieces for me,” continued Botkin. “Transcriptions provide contrast in style and personality, and serve as ‘appetizers’ to the main course, the Sonata No. 1, which is massive, serious, and dramatic. The first sonata is, in my opinion, a piece that is underrated and should have more popularity than it does. I am very excited to perform this piece in Honolulu and I hope the audience will enjoy my program!”

Set in multi-cultural Honolulu, AIPF features concerts for the public, workshops and master classes for pianists of all ages, and an annual piano competition for pianists ranging in age from five to 25. The 2009 Festival welcomes concert pianists Martin Canin, Susan Duehlmeier, Bonnie Gritton, Norman Krieger and Noriko Uenaka, who will teach master classes and perform in the recital series. Violinist Ignace Jang and cellist Mark Votapek also join the roster of renowned artists. For more information AIPF, please visit www.alohapianofestival.com.

Sean Botkin Master Class on Thursday, June 11 at 10 a.m.

Topic: The public is welcome to attend a master class with concert pianist Sean Botkin, which features local, mainland and international students participating in the Aloha International Piano Festival.

Location: Liliu Theater of the Hawaii Convention Center

Admission: \$10. Students up to age 22 are \$5. No application is needed to participate.

More about Sean Botkin

Pianist Sean Botkin began studying the piano at age five with his mother, making his first orchestral appearance four years later with the Honolulu Symphony. Botkin went on to study with Neal O’Doan at the University of Washington in Seattle and, under his direction, performed with the Seattle and Spokane Symphonies, and the Seattle Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as numerous solo recitals. Reactions to Botkin’s performances typically are expressed with phrases such as “multidimensional talents,” “superb musicianship,” and “beautiful and rare musical experience.”

Botkin has had great success in prestigious international piano competitions, and has won many awards, including the William Kapell International Piano Competition, Cleveland International Piano Competition, World Piano Competition in Cincinnati, Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition, Busoni International Piano Competition, Dong-A International Music Competition of Korea, International Music Competition of Japan and Washington International Competition.

Botkin received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Stanford University, where he was a student of Adolph Baller. Botkin received his Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School, studying with Martin Canin, and also spent an additional two years there in the Professional Studies program. While at Juilliard, he received the Gina Bachauer Scholarship and performed the Bartok Second Piano Concerto with the Juilliard Symphony at Alice Tully Hall, conducted by Carl St. Clair.

Botkin received his Artist Diploma from Indiana University at South Bend, where he was part of the adjunct faculty and a member of the Alexander Toradze Piano Studio. Botkin has traveled extensively across Europe and America performing with Maestro Toradze and the Studio, most notably at the prestigious Ruhr Klavier Festival (Germany), Ravenna Festival (Italy), Wigmore Hall (England), Stresa Festival (Italy), and the Gilmore Festival (Kalamazoo, MI), where he also performed for the National Public Radio program “Performance Today.”

Botkin recently returned from giving concerts in Italy and at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. His upcoming engagements include performances of the Rachmaninoff Third Piano Concerto in Costa Rica with the University of Northern Iowa Symphony, as well as solo concerts in Portugal and Germany. Botkin is an assistant professor of piano at the University of Northern Iowa.

About the Aloha International Piano Festival

Founded in 2006 by pianist Lisa Nakamichi, the Aloha International Piano Festival (AIPF) offers Hawaii’s local piano students, as well as visiting international students, opportunities to learn from world-class pianists in a nurturing environment. The AIPF enriches the greater community with opportunities to enjoy free and low-cost concerts performed by acclaimed artists. Each year, AIPF strives to elevate the awareness of classical music while offering people of all ages the opportunity to experience music in a relaxed setting. Visit www.alohapianofestival.com for more information.

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