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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SF GIRLS CHORUS PRESENTS *A HIGHLANDS HOLIDAY* AT DAVIES HALL DECEMBER 19

NOW WITH SPECIAL SURPRISE GUEST JOSHUA ROMAN

FEATURING NEW MUSIC FOR VOICES AND BAGPIPES BY MATTHEW WELCH, SPECIAL GUEST CELLIST AND TED FELLOW JOSHUA ROMAN, PLUS SEASONAL FAVORITES, SING-ALONGS AND HUNDREDS OF COMBINED VOICES OF THE GRAMMY-WINNING CHORUS

San Francisco, CA, November 7, 2016—Hundreds of combined voices of the Grammy Award-winning San Francisco Girls Chorus and acclaimed Chorus School will take the stage of Davies Symphony Hall Monday, December 19, at 7:30 pm for *A Highlands Holiday.* Curated by SF Girls Chorus Artistic Director *Lisa Bielawa* and conducted by Music Director and Principal Conductor *Valérie Sainte-Agathe*, the evening will feature the world premiere of *Salute on the Birth of Rory Mor* for large chorus and bagpipes by Matthew Welch, James MacMillan's *New-Made for A King* and *Nova! Nova! Ave fix et Eva*, Britten's *Missa Brevis*, Kurt Erickson's "We Three Kings" (world premiere), John Tavener's "The Child Lived from Carnival of the Animals, and a host of holiday music by Holst, Purcell, Rutter and traditional English carols and sing-alongs bringing the community together with a joyful program that looks ahead to the 2017 summer tour to the British Isles. Plus special guest star Joshua Roman, cello. Tickets are priced $30-$60 and may be purchased at www.sfgirlschorus.org .

The UK has brought us some of the most beloved Christmas music of all eras, but it also boasts some of the most innovative choral composers in the present day. This is a chance for our audiences to hear the elegant heraldry of the English Baroque master Henry Purcell alongside the masterful Benjamin Britten, born a century ago, and the pioneering contemporary composer James MacMillan, whose Scottish-Irish influenced music for voices is captivating a whole new musical generation. Matthew Welch leads a rousing team of local pipers for a truly unique festive sound, with Joshua Roman, cello. Both Welch and Bay Area composer Kurt Erickson receive world premiere performances.

About Matthew Welch

The music of Matthew Tobin Welch (b.1976), Composer/Multi-instrumentalist,

stems from a multi-faceted foundation. As a virtuoso of the Highland Bagpipe, he studied traditional music with Gold Medalist masters such as Colin MacLellan, Jack Lee, Angus MacLellan and Andrew Wright. Matthew also was a member of the four - time World Champion Simon Fraser University Pipe Band, winning with them in 1999 and 2001.

Mr. Welch holds two degrees in Music Composition, a BFA from Simon Fraser University (1999), and an MA from Wesleyan University (2001), having studied with noted composers such as Barry Truax, Rodney Sharman, Alvin Lucier and Anthony Braxton. After locating to New York City in 2001, he has worked with a host of other artists such as John Zorn, Julia Wolfe, Zeena Parkins, and Ikue Mori. The eclectic breadth of his interests in Scottish bagpipe music, Balinese gamelan, minimalism, improvisation and rock converge in compositional amalgams ranging from traditional-like bagpipe tunes to electronic pieces, improvisation strategies and fully notated works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles, orchestra and non-western instruments. Since 2002, Mr. Welch has been running and composing for his own eclectic ensemble, Blarvuster, and he has recorded for the Tzadik, Mode, Cantaloupe, Leo, Porter, Muud, Avian, Newsonic and Parallactic record labels.

About Joshua Roman

Joshua Roman is a cellist, composer, and TED Fellow. Called “A cellist of extraordinary technical and musical gifts” by the San Francisco Chronicle, Roman began his career at age 22 as principal cellist for the Seattle Symphony, before making it as a successful soloist. He has since earned national renown for performing a genre-bending repertoire that ranges from Bach to Radiohead. Roman is also a composer, collaborator (most recently with playwright Anna Deavere Smith), educator (via his Popper Project video series), and curator (Artistic Director of Seattle Town Hall’s TownMusic series). He has performed all over the world—from refugee camps and HIV clinics in Africa to the YouTube Symphony Orchestra and the U.S. State Department (with Yo-Yo Ma for national and international leaders). He is grateful for the loan of an 1899 cello by Giulio Degani of Venice.

On November 11th, 2016, Joshua performed all six of J.S. Bach's Suites for Solo Cello on Facebook Live from his living room in NYC. The performance attracted over 17,000 views in real time, and led to a repeat on TED's Facebook page on Tuesday, Nov. 15th, the one-week anniversary of the U.S. Presidential Election. The TED presentation went out to just under one million viewers in real time, and has continued to be shared and viewed since. Joshua had this to say about the endeavor:

"I see a lot of emotional volatility all around: on social media, when I speak to friends, as I observe strangers. I'm not here with words of advice or judgement, but as a musician, I want to offer something else. One of the most important values in art is openness, so I am doing this separate from my own political beliefs, separate from yours, but as a simple gesture of shared humanity. Tomorrow I'll be playing all six of the Suites for Unaccompanied

Cello by Johann Sebastian Bach on Facebook Live. Feel free to tune in for all or part of it - and take a breath with me."

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TICKETS AND INFO: $30-$60 www.sfgirlschorus.org .