FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

University of Minnesota School of Music to Confer an Honorary Degree on Maria Schneider, Grammy Winning Composer, Arranger, Big Band Leader, and U of M School of Music Alumna, at U of M School of Music Fall Convocation on Monday, September 24

Minneapolis, MN (8/24/2012)— The University of Minnesota School of Music will confer an honorary degree on Grammy winning composer, arranger, and big band leader Maria Schneider on Monday, September 24 at 10 am at the U of M School of Music’s Fall Convocation at Ted Mann Concert Hall. The Doctor of Humane Letters is the highest award conferred by the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, recognizing individuals who have achieved acknowledged eminence in their field. This event is free and open to the public.

The Convocation program will feature a conversation on Creativity for Music Careers: Leveraging Talent, Technic, and Tenacity with internationally renowned soprano Dawn Upshaw, producer David Frost, and engineer Tim Martyn moderated by School of Music director David Myers. The University of Minnesota Jazz Ensemble I, under the director of jazz professor Dean Sorenson, will perform works by Maria Schneider.

The School of Music Fall Convocation is free and open to the public. Admission to the School of Music Fall Convocation is on a first-come, first-seated basis. Parking is available in the 21st Avenue ramp, one block southwest of the concert hall.

On Schneider’s honorary degree, School of Music director David Myers says, “For years, Maria Schneider has been a musical proponent and mentor to faculty and students alike at the University of Minnesota. Ms. Schneider’s work in the arts exemplifies the School of Music’s important initiatives in preparing career-aspiring musicians to traverse new musical landscape to be engaged leaders and entrepreneurs in society and their communities.”

Myers continues, “It’s time for her alma mater, the flagship institution of the state from which she hails, to bestow its highest honorary accolade on this superbly talented, successful, and deeply dedicated individual.”

Maria Schneider U of M School of Music Residency

Maria Schneider will be in residence at the U of M School of Music from September 24 to October 1, returning October 31. During her residency, she will give a Composer Master Class for School of Music composition and jazz students, engage in open and side-by-side rehearsals with School of Music Jazz ensembles, and give a talk on Building a Music Career. She will also offer a glimpse into the recording process as she records a new album with famed vocalist Dawn Upshaw and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. Maria Schneider’s return on October 31 coincides her orchestra’s performance at the Dakota Jazz Club in Minneapolis. Dawn Upshaw will sing Maria Schneider’s Carlos Drummond de Andrade Stories, a work commissioned and premiered by the SPCO, on Friday, September 28 at 8 p.m. at St. Paul’s UCC in Saint Paul. Schneider will also be the first guest in the Composer Conversation Series co-presented by the SPCO, Minnesota Public Radio and the American Composers Forum on Friday, September 28. Visit classicalmpr.org/composers for more information.
Maria Schneider Biography

Maria Schneider’s music has been hailed by critics as “evocative, majestic, magical, heart-stoppingly gorgeous, and beyond categorization.” She and her orchestra became widely known starting in 1994 when they released their first recording, *Evanescence*. With that recording, Schneider began to develop her personal way of writing for her 17-member collective, tailoring her compositions to distinctly highlight the unique voices of the group. Subsequently, the Maria Schneider Orchestra has performed at festivals and concert halls worldwide. She herself has received numerous commissions and guest conducting invites, working with over 85 groups from over 30 countries spanning Europe, South America, Australia, Asia, and North America.

Schneider’s music blurs the lines between genres, and as a result, her long list of commissioners have slowly become quite varied. They include: the Norrbotten Big Band and Danish Radio Orchestra with Toots Thielemans and Ivan Lins, the Metropole Orchestra in the Netherlands (several works), Orchestra National de Jazz (*Recapitulação*), Carnegie Hall Jazz Orchestra (*El Viento*), Monterey Jazz Festival (*Scenes from Childhood, Willow Lake*), The American Dance Festival (for dance company, Pilobolus - *Dissolution*), University of Miami Concert Jazz Band (*Three Romances*), Hunter College (*Concert in the Garden, Sky Blue*), Jazz at Lincoln Center (*Buleria, Soleá y Rumba*), Los Angeles Philharmonic Association (*Aires de Lando*), Peter Sellars’ New Crowned Hope Festival (*Vienna’s Mozart Festival–Cerulean Skies*), Kronos Quartet (*String Quartet No. 1*) and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra with soprano, Dawn Upshaw (*Carlos Drummond de Andrade Stories*), a work that had its New York premiere May 2011 at Carnegie Hall conducted by Schneider.

Schneider’s most recent work (premiered June 12, 2011), co-commissioned by the Ojai Festival, The Australian Chamber Orchestra and Cal Performances, blurred boundaries further as it featured the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Dawn Upshaw, and three musicians long associated with Schneider’s own orchestra: pianist, Frank Kimbrough, bassist, Jay Anderson, and multi-instrumentalist, Scott Robinson. For this work, she incorporated poems by poet laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner, Ted Kooser, from his book, *Winter Morning Walks*.

Schneider and her orchestra have a distinguished recording career with nine Grammy nominations and two Grammy awards. *Concert in the Garden* (Best Large Ensemble Album), released only through her ArtistShare® website, became historic as the first record to win a Grammy with internet-only sales. The second Grammy was awarded for Schneider’s composition, *Cerulean Skies* (Best Instrumental Composition).

Unique funding of projects has continued for Schneider, as she has recently composed two works for her own orchestra with the involvement of commissioners, not from arts organizations, but directly from her ArtistShare fan base. For these projects, she documented her process of creating the two new works for participating fans. The commissioners are, Christophe Asselineau (*The Thompson Fields*), and Bill and Carol Bloemer, Justin Freed, Paul James and John Koerber (*Lembrança*).

*Concert in the Garden* and her orchestra’s latest album, *Sky Blue* (on which *Cerulean Skies* was recorded) were both named “Jazz Album of the Year” by the Jazz Journalists Association and the *DOWNBEAT* Critics Poll.

“Maria Schneider’s orchestral jazz is about feeling. Like Wayne Shorter, she somehow expresses compassion through tones.” –*The New York Times*

“To call Schneider the most important woman in jazz is missing the point … She is a major composer—period.” –*Time Magazine*
Dawn Upshaw Biography

Joining a rare natural warmth with a fierce commitment to the transforming communicative power of music, Dawn Upshaw has achieved worldwide celebrity as a singer of opera and concert repertoire ranging from the sacred works of Bach to the freshest sounds of today. Her ability to reach to the heart of music and text has earned her both the devotion of an exceptionally diverse audience, and the awards and distinctions accorded to only the most distinguished of artists. In 2007, she was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation, the first vocal artist to be awarded the five-year “genius” prize, and in 2008 she was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

Her acclaimed performances on the opera stage comprise the great Mozart roles (Pamina, Ilia, Susanna, Despina) as well as modern works by Stravinsky, Poulenc, and Messiaen. From Salzburg, Paris and Glyndebourne to the Metropolitan Opera, where she began her career in 1984 and has since made nearly 300 appearances, Dawn Upshaw has also championed numerous new works created for her including The Great Gatsby by John Harbison; the Grawemeyer Award-winning opera, L’Amour de Loin and oratorio La Passion de Simone by Kaija Saariaho; John Adams’s Nativity oratorio El Niño; and Osvaldo Golijov’s chamber opera Ainadamar and song cycle Ayre.

Upshaw’s 2011-12 season features an array of performances in many areas of the repertoire that she has championed. With The St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, where she is an Artistic Partner, Upshaw sings Debussy, Ravel, and the world premiere of a new work written for her by Irish composer Donnacha Denney. A dedicated a recitalist, she embarks on a tour with longtime collaborator Gilbert Kalish. She performs with the Cleveland Orchestra and with the Winnipeg Symphony in music ranging from Canteloube to Golijov and Schubert. With the Australian Chamber Orchestra, she concludes the season with an eight-city tour featuring jazz composer Maria Schneider’s new work “Winter Morning Walks,” written for her in 2011 and recorded in May 2012 following the tour’s final performance at Carnegie Hall.

It says much about Dawn Upshaw’s sensibilities as an artist and colleague that she is a favored partner of many leading musicians, including Richard Goode, the Kronos Quartet, James Levine, and Esa-Pekka Salonen. In her work as a recitalist, and particularly in her work with composers, Dawn Upshaw has become a generative force in concert music, having premiered more than 25 works in the past decade. From Carnegie Hall to large and small venues throughout the world she regularly presents specially designed programs composed of lieder, unusual contemporary works in many languages, and folk and popular music. She furthers this work in master classes and workshops with young singers at major music festivals, conservatories, and liberal arts colleges. She is artistic director of the Vocal Arts Program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music, and a faculty member of the Tanglewood Music Center.

A four-time Grammy Award winner, Dawn Upshaw is featured on more than 50 recordings, including the million-selling Symphony No. 3 by Henryk Gorecki. Her discography also includes full-length opera recordings of Mozart’s Le nozze di Figaro; Messiaen’s St. Francois d’Assise; Stravinsky’s The Rake’s Progress; John Adams’s El Niño; two volumes of Canteloube’s “Songs of the Auvergne,” and a dozen recital recordings. Her most recent release on Deutsche Grammophon is “Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra”, the third in a series of acclaimed recordings of Osvaldo Golijov’s music.

Dawn Upshaw holds honorary doctorate degrees from Yale, the Manhattan School of Music, Allegheny College, and Illinois Wesleyan University. She began her career as a 1984 winner of the Young Concert Artists Auditions and the 1985 Walter W. Naumburg Competition, and was a member of the Metropolitan Opera Young Artists Development Program. Upshaw has recorded extensively for the Nonesuch label. She may also be heard on Angel/EMI, BMG, Deutsche Grammophon, London, Sony Classical, Telarc, and on Erato and Teldec in the Warner Classics Family of labels. She appears by arrangement with IMG Artists.
David Frost Biography

David Frost has produced numerous critically acclaimed recordings, released by major labels such as RCA Red Seal, Sony Classical, London/Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, and EMI Classics. Honors include ten Grammy Awards, among them three for Classical Producer of the Year, Best Classical Album and Best Choral Performance for the Verdi Requiem with Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony, Best Surround Sound Album, Renée Fleming’s “Verismo”, Sharon Isbin’s “Journey to the New World”, “Traditions and Transformations: Sounds of Silk Road Chicago” and for the Sony Classical recording Listen to the Storyteller, with music by Wynton Marsalis, Edgar Meyer and Patrick Doyle, and narrated by Kate Winslet and Graham Greene. He was the producer for Alicia de Larrocha's RCA recording of Granados' Goyescas, which won both a Grammy Award and the Grand Prix du Disque. He also received Grammy Award Nominations for Classical Producer of the Year in 2001 and 2009 and for Renée Fleming’s Homage: The Age of the Diva in 2007. Other credits include Gustavo Dudamel’s recording of Berlioz Symphonie Fantastique for Deutsche Grammophon, the Broadway cast album of Baz Luhrmann’s Production of Puccini’s La Boheme for Dreamworks Records, A.C.T.’s cast album of Kurt Weill’s Happy End for Ghostlight Records and the television broadcast of the Mahler 7th Symphony with Pierre Boulez and the Chicago Symphony for PBS.

As a staff producer at BMG Classics (RCA Red Seal) for nearly a decade, he collaborated with RCA’s most important artists to create dozens of albums. He has also produced recordings for The Milken Archive, a multi-volume set of Jewish American music, which has been released by Naxos. He has been guest faculty at the Banff Centre and the Manhattan School of Music, giving workshops and lectures on record producing.

An accomplished pianist, David Frost has performed Beethoven’s “Emperor” Concerto at Carnegie Hall and has made two recordings, one titled Romantic Variations and one of the music of Scott Joplin. He has both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree from the Juilliard School of Music.

Tim Martyn Biography

Tim Martyn has been involved in classical recording throughout his career, both as a producer and an engineer, and lists among his credits hundreds of recordings with such artists as Sarah Chang, Pinchas Zukerman, Elly Ameling, Itzhak Perlman, and many others. Mr. Martyn is a two-time Grammy Award recipient for his work on recordings with Sharon Isbin and Evgeny Kissin. He holds Bachelor and Masters degrees in performance from the Juilliard School.

In 1985, Martyn was appointed Senior Audio Engineer and Technical Director for the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Tanglewood festival, a position he still holds today. He has produced and engineered projects for RCA/BMG, Deutsche Grammophon, Decca, Sony Classical, and EMI/Angel. He founded Classic Sound Inc. in New York City in 1987, and Phoenix Audio in 2001, as classical remote recording and post-production facilities.

Recent projects include the Vivaldi Four Seasons with Sarah Chang and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra (EMI), the Carnegie Hall Schubert Recital with Evgeny Kissin and James Levine (Sony/BMG), and Mozart Piano Concertos with Jonathan Biss and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra (EMI). Recent post-production credits include the complete Beethoven piano concertos with Evgeny Kissin and Sir Colin Davis with the London Symphony Orchestra (EMI), Renée Fleming’s Homage album of opera arias with Valery Gergiyev and the Mariinsky Orchestra (Decca), Mozart and Schumann Piano Concertos with Evgeny Kissin and Sir Colin Davis with the London Symphony Orchestra (EMI), and Evgeny Kissin’s solo Russian piano album (Sony/BMG). Kissin’s solo album won the 2005 Grammy Award (Best Classical Performance without Orchestra). Martyn won the 2009 Canadian JUNO Award for Classical Album of the Year (Solo/Chamber Music) for the album Homage with violinist James Ehnes.
Established in 1902, the University of Minnesota School of Music offers a dynamic, comprehensive program to more than 550 music students in undergraduate and graduate programs, led by a world-class faculty of more than 50 artists, scholars, and teachers. The School of Music presents more than 400 free concerts per year. For a complete schedule of events, visit www.music.umn.edu or call (612) 626-1094 for a brochure.

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