FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BARYSHNIKOV ARTS CENTER ANNOUNCES SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE $1M CAGE CUNNINGHAM CAMPAIGN AND THE INAUGURAL CAGE CUNNINGHAM FELLOW ALEXEI LUBIMOV

Award Funds will Support New Commissions by Russian and American Composers

New York, NY, Tuesday, December 15, 2015 — Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC) announces the successful completion of its two-year, $1M Cage Cunningham Campaign to establish the Cage Cunningham Fund for artist fellowships, named for legendary artistic partners John Cage and Merce Cunningham. BAC’s Artistic Director Mikhail Baryshnikov announced the inaugural Cage Cunningham Fellow, Alexei Lubimov, at an event on Monday, December 14, held at the Center. The event also served as the official naming of BAC’s Studio 6A the John Cage and Merce Cunningham Studio. The Studio is the first physical space honoring Cage and Cunningham’s unparalleled contribution to 20th century art and culture.

The Cage Cunningham Fund is designed to directly support artists who are continuing Cage and Cunningham’s commitment to artistic innovation. Beginning in 2016, the Cage Cunningham Fellowship will be awarded annually to an artist reflecting Cage and Cunningham’s commitment to collaboration, experimentation, and rigor. Fellows will receive $50,000, distributed over two years, in support of new works and collaborations.

The first Cage Cunningham Fellow is a creative visionary who has had a profound influence on the advancement of contemporary composers and the avant-garde: Russian pianist Alexei Lubimov. A strikingly original musician, Lubimov is renowned for his unusual, dual aptitude and passion for 20th century works, as well as Baroque music, particularly played on early instruments. He performs an enormous variety of repertoire on stages around the world. In the 1960’s, Lubimov gave the Soviet premieres of many western compositions, including pieces by John Cage, Charles Ives, Arnold Schönberg, Anton Webern, and Karlheinz Stockhausen. Despite consequences of censorship and limits to his personal freedom at the time, Lubimov remained—and has continued to be throughout his career—a courageous, active proponent for pushing and redefining boundaries within cultures and across art forms. Among his many projects and collaborations, Lubimov is founder of the Alternativa Festival in Moscow, providing a platform for contemporary composers to explore a broad stylistic and ideological range.

In accord with BAC’s intention for the Cage Cunningham Fellowship to support development of new work, Lubimov will apply his entire $50,000 award to commission five composers that he has identified as being at the forefront of music innovation. They include Russian composers Anton Batagov, Pavel Karmanov, and Sergei Zagny, and American composers Bryce Dessner and Julia Wolfe. Lubimov’s use of his Cage Cunningham Fellowship to advance voices of artists based both in New York City and abroad aligns with BAC’s role as a locus of international cultural exchange and expression, and as an American home for artists and work from Central and Eastern Europe. In addition to cash resources, BAC will provide the composers with significant administrative and technical support for project development. Beyond the 2016-17 Fellowship period, the Center will look to possibilities for presenting the completed works at BAC.

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BAC Artistic Director Mikhail Baryshnikov said: “Alexei Lubimov is an ideal fit for the inaugural Cage Cunningham Fellow. Not only does he demonstrate extraordinary breadth of musical appreciation and expertise, but he is also a champion of risk-taking and an advocate for freedom of expression and creativity. The Fellowship will provide Alexei with resources to enact his unique vision for the creation of new work by composers who embody both the diligence and the daring of John Cage and Merce Cunningham.”

BAC reached the Cage Cunningham Campaign thanks to the inspirational support of over 80 donors. BAC Board Member Suzanne Weil and Mikhail Baryshnikov made initial leadership gifts to the Campaign. New and additional funds were raised thanks to a $100,000 matching gift in 2014 from BAC Board Member Diana DiMenna and her husband, Joe DiMenna. In 2015, the Merce Cunningham Trust contributed a tremendous leadership gift of $250,000 in support of the Campaign.

The Cage Cunningham Campaign was launched with the encouragement of the John Cage and Merce Cunningham Trusts. The Campaign Advisory Committee includes: Charles Atlas, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Frank Cordasco, Tony Creamer, Molly Davies, Deborah Eisenberg, John Guare, Colleen Keegan, Garrison Keillor, Laura Kuhn, Liz LeCompte, Harvey Lichtenstein, Benedicte Pesle, Georgiana Pickett, Judith Pisar, Kirk Radke, Liz Gerring Radke, Peter Sellars, Wallace Shawn, Allan Sperling, David Vaughan, Suzanne Weil, Lynn Wichern, and Robert Wilson.

**Artist Biographies**

Born in Moscow in 1944, **Alexei Lubimov** was one of the last pupils of Henryk Neuhaus at the Moscow Conservatory. He founded both the avant-garde Alternativa Festival in Moscow, which features works by contemporary composers, and the Moscow Baroque Quartet. Lubimov has performed with such orchestras as the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of London, Russian National Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Deutches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, and Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, as well as the orchestras of Helsinki, Israel, Los Angeles, and Munich. He has worked with such conductors as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Neeme Järvi, David Oistrakh, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Marek Janowski, Christopher Hogwood, Sir Roger Norrington, Frans Brüggen, David Robertson, Andrey Boreyko, Ivan Fischer, Kent Nagano, and Yan Pascal Tortelier. In recent seasons he has performed with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Austrian Tonkünstler Orchester, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Münchner Philharmoniker, SWR Stuttgart, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, and Danish National Symphony Orchestra. Lubimov has recorded for many labels, such as Melodya, Erato, BIS, and Sony, which have released his interpretations of the complete sonatas of Mozart, as well as works by Schubert, Chopin, and Beethoven, and 20th century composers, including Arvo Pärt.

Composer and pianist **Anton Batagov** is a graduate of the Gnessin School and the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, and prizewinner of the International Tchaikovsky Competition (1986) and other competitions. Batagov introduced music by John Cage, Morton Feldman, Steve Reich, and Philip Glass to Russian audiences. He served as artistic director of the Alternativa Festival of contemporary music in Moscow from 1989–1996. In 2009, Batagov received the prestigious Steppenwolf Award in the Best Music category. His 2015 recording *I Fear No More*, a symphonic/rock vocal cycle performed by the Russian State Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Vladimir Jurowski, was nominated for International Classical Music Awards.

**Bryce Dessner** is one of the most sought-after composers of his generation, with a rapidly expanding catalog of works commissioned by leading ensembles. His orchestral, chamber, and vocal compositions have been commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Metropolitan Museum of Art (for the New York Philharmonic), Kronos Quartet, BAM Next Wave Festival, Barbican Centre, Edinburgh International Festival, Sydney Festival, eighth blackbird, So Percussion, New York City Ballet, and many others. Recordings include *Aheym*, a Kronos Quartet disc devoted to his music (Anti- ); *St. Carolyn by the Sea* on Deutsche Grammophon, with the Copenhagen Phil under Andre de Ridder; and *Music for Wood and Strings*, an album-length work performed by Sō Percussion (Brassland). Dessner’s music—called “gorgeous, full-hearted” by NPR and “vibrant” by The New York Times—is marked by a keen sensitivity to instrumental color and texture. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Yale University. While at Yale in the late 90’s, Dessner formed the instrumental quartet Clogs, and in 2001, co-founded the critically acclaimed, Grammy-nominated indie rock band The National.
Composer Pavel Karmanov graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 1995. He has participated in major Russian festivals of contemporary music, including Alternativa Festival. Karmanov's work has been commissioned and performed by renowned artists including Yuri Bashmet, Alexei Lubimov, Alexei Goribol, Polina Osetinskaya, Vladislav Pesin, Nazar Kozhukhar, Tatiana Grindenko, Mark Pekarsky, Yuri Kasparov, and others. Karmanov performs flute and piano as a member of the Moscow rock band Vezhivlyi otkaz, directed by Roman Suslov. He has written a number scores for documentaries and films by Alexei Khanutin, Timur Bekmambetov, Andrei Proshkin, Nurbek Egen, Alexander Kott, and Anna Fenchenko.

Julia Wolfe, winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize in music, draws inspiration from folk, classical, and rock genres, bringing a modern sensibility to each while simultaneously tearing down the walls between them. Wolfe’s music is distinguished by an intense physicality and a relentless power that pushes performers to extremes, and demands attention from the audience. Recent projects include her evening-length Steel Hammer for the Bang on a Can All-Stars and singers, which is now touring in an expanded theatrical form with director Anne Bogart and her SITI Company and received its New York premiere at BAM’s 2015 Next Wave festival. Wolfe’s body concerto rSE and fLY was written for Colin Currie and the BBC Orchestra will be performed by the Cincinnati Symphony in January 2016. She has written a major body of work for strings, from quartets to full orchestra. Wolfe's Cruel Sister for string orchestra, inspired by a traditional English ballad, was commissioned by the Munich Chamber Orchestra and received its U.S. premiere at the Spoleto Festival. Fuel for string orchestra is a collaboration with filmmaker Bill Morrison. Wolfe has collaborated with theater artist Anna Devere Smith, choreographer Susan Marshall, designers Jeff Sugg and Jim Findlay, and director François Girard, among others. Her music has been heard at venues throughout the world, including the Sydney Olympic Arts Festival, LG Arts Center (South Korea), Settembre Musica (Italy), Theatre de la Ville (France), the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Lincoln Center, and Carnegie Hall, and has been recorded on Cantaloupe Music, Teldec, Point/Universal, Sony Classical, and Argo/Decca. In 2009 Wolfe joined the NYU Steinhardt School composition faculty. Wolfe is co-founder and co-artistic director of New York’s legendary music collective Bang on a Can. Her music is published by Red Poppy Music (ASCAP) and is distributed worldwide by G. Schirmer, Inc.

Sergei Zagny studied composition with Albert Leman and music theory with Vsevolod Zaderatsky at the P.I.Tchaikovsky State Conservatory in Moscow. His honors include the John Cage First Russian Prize in Moscow (1992). Zagny’s work has been performed in Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, the U.K., and the U.S. As a performer, Zagny improvises on non-traditional instruments, organ, and piano. He conducted the Small Garden Orchestra of the School of Individual Directing in Moscow (1992–96) and worked at the Theremín Centre for Electroacoustic Music of the P.I.Tchaikovsky State Conservatory (1993–95). Zagny has written for publications in Russia and U.S., including the journal Perspectives of New Music. He has been a teacher of analysis, harmony, and polyphony at the P.I.Tchaikovsky State Conservatory since 1992. He has written music for films and stage productions.

About Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC)

BAC is the realization of a long-held vision by artistic director Mikhail Baryshnikov who sought to build an arts center in Manhattan that would serve as a gathering place for artists from all disciplines. BAC’s opening in 2005 heralded the launch of this mission, establishing a thriving creative laboratory and performance space for artists from around the world. BAC’s activities encompass a robust residency program augmented by a range of professional services, including commissions of new work, as well as the presentation of performances by artists at varying stages of their careers. In tandem with its commitment to supporting artists, BAC is dedicated to building audiences for the arts by presenting contemporary, innovative work at affordable ticket prices. For more information, please visit www.bacnyc.org.

Cage Cunningham Campaign Contributors

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All gifts as of December 15, 2015

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In Memory of Sophia Adams, Pierre Apraxine, Elena Aristova, Jason R. Baron, Mikhail Baryshnikov and Lisa Rinehart, Tina and Jeffrey Bolton Family Fund, Catherine Brennan, Clyde Brownstone, Lori Cohen and Christopher Rothko, Frank and Monique Cordasco, Edoard Dejoux, Michael and Denise Deleray, Richard and Jennie DeScherer, Michael Devins, Joseph and Diana DiMenna, Debbie Druker, James H. Duffy, Jennifer and Russell Echlov, Ehrenkranz Family Foundation, Barbara Fleischman, Richard and Nicole Fortson, Sandra Foschi, Paola Gianturco, Jon Gilman & Brad Learmonth, Slavka B. Glaser, Louise Guenther, Agnes Gund, Dr. Ayele Hadero, Annie and John Hall, The Hare Family, Brian and Tania Higgins, Roger and Joan Hooker, Huong Hoang, Fredericka Hunter, Julia and Michael Katz, Colleen Keegan, Donald M. Kendall, Paul and Teresa Kim, Joan Konner and Alvin Perlmutter, Herman Krawitz, Salo Ann Kriegsman, Mark Ladner and Julie Ross, Dr. Christopher and Eleanor Lange, Charlie and Lorie Levy, Jarrett and Maritess Lilien, Julie Lilien, Jane Lipton, Jane & Richard Mescon, Valerie and Stuart Mogul, In Honor of Natalie Moody, Aidan Mooney, Cheri Mowry, Elizabeth Osha, Irina Pavlova, Steven and Michèle Pesner, Steve and Randi Piaker, Hubert and Joanna Parzecki, Aidan and Elizabeth Quinn, John S. Rockwell, Leslie Ruff, Dorothy Scheuer, Wallace Shawn, Jeremy Smith, Christina Sterner, Jennifer Tipton, Ian and Jack Archer Watters, Mary Waters, Suzanne Weil, and World Wide Holdings Fund in The New York Community Trust, in honor of Victor Elmaleh.


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Yamaha is the official piano of the Baryshnikov Arts Center.

As of December 7, 2015