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Violinist Yevgeny Kutik
presented by Washington Performing Arts
Debut at The Kennedy Center

Music from the Suitcase + Meditations on Family
with Pianist Anna Polonsky

Featuring Washington D.C. Premieres
by Gity Razaz and Andreia Pinto Correia
Commissioned by Washington Performing Arts

Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at 7:30pm
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
2700 F Street NW | Washington, DC
Tickets: \$45 at www.washingtonperformingarts.org

“Kutik delivers...with a blend of polished dexterity and genteel, old-world charm” – WQXR

www.yevgenykutik.com

Washington, DC — On **Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at 7:30pm**, Russian-American violinist **Yevgeny Kutik**, known for his “dark-hued tone and razor-sharp technique” (*The New York Times*) makes his Kennedy Center debut presented by **Washington Performing Arts** at **The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Terrace Theater** (2700 F Street NW). Kutik and pianist **Anna Polonsky**, lauded for her “dazzling virtuosity” (*San Francisco Chronicle*) will perform selections from Kutik’s ongoing project *Music from the Suitcase* including Stravinsky’s Divertimento from *A Fairy’s Kiss*; Prokofiev’s Waltz from *Cinderella* (arr. Fikhtengoltz); and Rubenstein’s Romance in E-flat Major, Op. 44, No. 1 (arr. Wieniawski); plus Schnittke’s Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 and Prokofiev’s Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2. Following the concert, there will be a talkback with Kutik and NPR’s Nina Totenberg, who has followed Kutik’s career since his student days under her father’s tutelage.

They will also give the first Washington D.C. performances of two new works that are part of Kutik’s new commissioning project, *Meditations on Family* – **Gity Razaz’s** *Cadenza for the Once Young* and **Andreia Pinto Correia’s** *Litania*, commissioned for Yevgeny Kutik by Washington Performing Arts.

When Yevgeny Kutik was five years old, he and his family emigrated from the deteriorating Soviet Union to the United States with the help of the Jewish Federations of North America. Although they had to leave most of their possessions behind and fit everything else into just two suitcases, Kutik’s mother, a violin teacher, filled one of the suitcases with sheet music from the family’s collection, believing that their music was a significant part of their family’s musical history. Years later, Kutik began to explore the music from the suitcase and was enthralled with the pieces he discovered. He recorded a selection of this music on his critically acclaimed 2014 album, *Music from the Suitcase: A Collection of Russian Miniatures* (Marquis Classics), which debuted at No. 5 on the Billboard Classical chart and was featured on NPR’s *All Things Considered* and in *The New York Times*.

He says, “As I continued to explore this music, they began to organize themselves into a distinct array of moods and themes, suffused with the character of Russian folklore, fantasy, and poetry...The pieces on this album carry with them a simplicity and directness, and with this immediacy, a striking beauty...It reminds me of what we went through and how far we have come.”

As an extension of *Music from the Suitcase*, Kutik has commissioned a diverse group of today’s leading composers for his new project called *Meditations on Family: New Works Inspired by Memories and Tradition*. “I wanted to continue this exploration of family, tradition and heritage using a wider array of music as my vehicle. For my *Meditations on Family* project, I have so far

commissioned eight different voices in composition today to help build a living archive devoted to family. Each composer has translated an old family photograph of theirs into a short miniature for violin as part of this project.”

Featured composers include Joseph Schwantner, Andreia Pinto Correia, Gity Razaz, Timo Andres, Chris Cerrone, Kinan Azmeh, Gregory Vajda, and Paola Prestini. Kutik recorded each of the new pieces for weekly digital release online as singles on Marquis Classics, starting in January 2018 with the full EP released on March 22, 2019.

About Yevgeny Kutik: With a “dark-hued tone and razor-sharp technique” (*The New York Times*), Russian-American violinist Yevgeny Kutik has captivated audiences worldwide with an old-world sound that communicates a modern intellect. Praised for his technical precision and virtuosity, he is also lauded for his poetic and imaginative interpretations of standard works as well as rarely heard and newly composed repertoire.

A native of Minsk, Belarus, Yevgeny Kutik immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of five. In addition to *Music from the Suitcase* his discography includes his 2012 debut album, *Sounds of Defiance*, also on the Marquis label, which features the music of Achron, Pärt, Schnittke, and Shostakovich. Kutik released his third solo album, *Words Fail*, to critical acclaim on Marquis Classics in October 2016. The album uses Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words* as a starting point to expand upon the idea that music surpasses traditional language in its expressive capabilities, and includes two new commissions on the theme by Timo Andres and Michael Gandolfi.

In April 2019, Kutik will make his debut at the Kennedy Center, presented by Washington Performing Arts. Additional performances in his 2018-19 season include appearances with the Dayton Philharmonic, La Crosse Symphony, Duluth Superior Symphony, Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Symphony of the Redwoods, Verde Valley Sinfonietta, the Cape Town Philharmonic in South Africa, and recitals at the Honest Brook Music Festival, Bargemusic, and the Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

Deeply committed to fostering creative relationships with living composers in addition to performing music from the standard repertoire, Yevgeny Kutik has been involved in commissioning and premiering several new works. As an extension of *Music from the Suitcase*, Yevgeny has commissioned a diverse group of today’s leading composers to form his new project, *Meditations on Family: A New Collection of Music for Violin*. The composers will translate a personal family photo into a short musical miniature for violin and various ensemble. Featured composers include Joseph Schwantner, Andreia Pinto Correia, Gity Razaz, Timo Andres, Chris Cerrone, Kinan Azmeh, Gregory Vajda, and Paola Prestini. Recent highlights include the world premieres of Timo Andres’ *Words Fail* at The Phillips Collection, Michael Gandolfi’s *Arioso Doloroso/Estatico* at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, Ron Ford’s concerto *Versus* with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, and Sheila Silver’s *Six Beads on a String*, as well as the New York premiere of George Tsontakis’ Violin Concerto No. 2 at the 92nd Street Y. He has also been involved in the performances of new and rarely played works by Kati Agócs, Joseph Schwantner, Nico Muhly, and Donald Martino.

Passionate about his heritage and its influence on his artistry, Kutik is an advocate for the Jewish Federations of North America, the organization that assisted his family in coming to the United States, and regularly speaks and performs across the United States to both raise awareness and promote the assistance of refugees from around the world.

Yevgeny Kutik made his major orchestral debut in 2003 with Keith Lockhart and The Boston Pops as the First Prize recipient of the Boston Symphony Orchestra Young Artists Competition. He has since performed with numerous regional orchestras across the U.S., and around the world at major venues including Switzerland’s Verbier Festival; with Germany’s Norddeutsche Philharmonie Rostock and WDR Rundfunk Orchestra Köln; Japan’s Tokyo Vivaldi Ensemble; and in Poland at the March of the Living. In 2006, he was awarded the Salon de Virtuosi Grant as well as the Tanglewood Music Center Jules Reiner Violin Prize. Yevgeny Kutik began violin studies with his mother, Alla Zernitskaya, and went on to study with Zinaida Gilels, Shirley Givens, Roman Totenberg, and Donald Weilerstein. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Boston University and a master’s degree from the New England Conservatory and currently resides in Boston. Kutik’s violin was crafted in Italy in 1915 by Stefano Scarpella.

About Anna Polonsky: Anna Polonsky is widely in demand as a soloist and chamber musician. She has appeared with the Moscow Virtuosi, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, the Memphis Symphony, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, the St. Luke’s Chamber Ensemble, and many others. Polonsky has collaborated with the Guarneri, Orion, Daedalus, and Shanghai Quartets, and with such musicians as Mitsuko Uchida, Yo-Yo Ma, David Shifrin, Richard Goode, Emanuel Ax, Arnold Steinhardt, Peter Wiley, and Jaime Laredo. She has performed chamber music at festivals such as Marlboro, Chamber Music Northwest, Seattle, Music@Menlo, Cartagena, Bard, and Caramoor, as well as at Bargemusic in New York City. Polonsky has given concerts in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Alice Tully Hall, and Carnegie Hall’s Stern, Weill, and Zankel Halls, and has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia.

Anna Polonsky made her solo piano debut at the age of seven at the Special Central Music School in Moscow, Russia. She emigrated to the United States in 1990, and attended high school at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. She received her Bachelor of Music diploma from The Curtis Institute of Music under the tutelage of the renowned pianist Peter Serkin, and continued her studies with Jerome Lowenthal, earning her Master's Degree from the Juilliard School. In addition to performing, she serves on the piano faculty of Vassar College, and in the summer at the Marlboro and Kneisel Hall chamber music festivals. Anna Polonsky is a Steinway Artist.

About Washington Performing Arts: One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has more than a half-century history of serving artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly its stage: in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, Washington Performing Arts presents a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, jazz, international genres, and more.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events in myriad performance venues and neighborhoods, Washington Performing Arts engages international visiting artists in community programs and introduces local artists to wider audiences. The institution places a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and educational programs.

Washington Performing Arts' achievements have been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with two Mayor's Arts Awards from the D.C. Government. Washington Performing Arts has embarked upon the next half-century with the goals of expanding its commitment to excellence and rededicating itself to the motto of the founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

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