



Contact: Cathie Lou Parker | (626) 482-0246 | clparker@urthcaffe.com

NEWS RELEASE for immediate publication

Profile: Award-Winning Teen Soprano Golda Berkman Joins

Dream Orchestra's 'Russian Dreams' Concert on May 20

Beverly High School junior will sing selections from the role of Tatiana from Tchaikovsky's opera 'Eugene Onegin' opposite famed baritone Vladimir Chernov

SANTA MONICA – While many teens may aspire to perform in their high school musical, Golda Berkman of Beverly Hills has been building her future as an opera soprano.

At 16, Golda made her Carnegie Hall debut in March 2015 and returned to the famous concert hall last December for another performance. Performing at Carnegie Hall is the Holy Grail for entertainers. If they step onto its stage, they've "made it" and that was naturally daunting to Golda.

"Of course the first time I was bubbling over with nervousness, but I fell in love with the experience. Just walking through the hallway of the Artists Entrance with its photos of all the greats who have performed there, all these people I admired, it was such a spiritual experience," she recalled.

"The first time, I was nervous and had so many emotions. But as soon as I stepped offstage, I was in tears; it was so intense."

On May 20, she adds the role of Tatiana from Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* to her repertoire as she sings selections from the opera as part of the Dream Orchestra's "Russian Dreams" concert at St. Monica Catholic Church in Santa Monica.

As Tatiana, Golda will perform opposite world-renowned Russian baritone Vladimir Chernov, who will sing the role of Eugene Onegin, which he has performed around the world. Russian tenor Vladimir Dmitruk will perform the role of Onegin's best friend Lensky.

The Dream Orchestra's "Russian Concert" takes place at 8 p.m. on Friday, May 20, at St. Monica Catholic Church, 725 California Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90403. A free Dessert Reception will be presented by Urth Caffé following the concert for all attendees.

Tickets are \$40 general admission and \$30 for students and senior citizens. Tickets are available at St. Monica Catholic Church, all Urth Caffé locations and by visiting www.brownpapertickets.com or www.dreamorchestra.org.

Golda met with the leading prima donna, Russian soprano Anna Netrebko for inspiration and advice to sing "Tatiana's Letter Scene" on May 20, and recalled the visit on Facebook:

"Anna Netrebko is one of the most exciting, dramatic performing artists in the world today. I met her after her performance with husband, tenor Yusif Eyvazov. Anna has truly inspired me to give my best – she is considered one of the best 'Tatianas' performing today."

She has been a soprano soloist at each Dream Orchestra concert during its inaugural resident season at St. Monica Catholic Church that began last September. The performances have added to her repertoire: Bellini's "O quante volte," the "Flower Duet" from Delibes'

Lakme, Mozart's *Requiem Mass in D Minor*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, and the second movement of Gorecki's *Third Symphony*.

The Gorecki piece was particularly resonant for Golda. The composer was inspired by words written on the wall of a Gestapo cell during World War II by 18-year-old prisoner Helena Wanda Błażusiakówna. In Polish, the words translate to "Oh Mamma do not cry – Immaculate Queen of Heaven support me always."

"She does not despair, does not cry, does not scream for revenge. Gorecki explained. "She only thinks about her mother: because it is her mother who will experience true despair."

"That was particularly bittersweet for me," Golda said. "Very few people get to perform it and it's such a moving piece. She was just a couple years older than me. What she wrote was so selfless, and I thought of my own mother as I was singing."

She paused to collect her thoughts before continuing. "I'm getting emotional here remembering that performance. I don't know if I'll ever have another opportunity to sing such an emotional piece as that again."

That performance was also demanding because she performed the night before with the Los Angeles Lawyers Philharmonic singing "Un Bel Di" from Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* and "Climb Every Mountain" from *The Sound of Music* at a benefit for the Salvation Army at UCLA's Royce Hall. Her performance was so well-received, the LA Lawyers Philharmonic asked her to perform an encore concert at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Awards Theater.

"I shared the stage with an incredible orchestra and legendary performers. Meeting Carol Lawrence hit me the most," she gushed. "I'm such a huge musical theatre fan and I love her. She was the original 'Maria' in *West Side Story* on Broadway."

May is going to be a particularly busy month for the young singer. In addition to the Dream Orchestra May 20 concert, Golda has been hired to sing a solo performance of the National Anthem at a private event for Princess Charlene of Monaco at the Los Angeles Music Center. She will also compete in the semi-finals of the Classical Singer International Competition in Boston.

Golda is no stranger to vocal competitions. Her past accomplishments include:

- Young Musician's Foundation Scholarship of Merit Award in classical voice 2013, 2014.
- American Protégé International Music Competition 2014 – First Place in classical voice and Judges' Distinction Award – Carnegie Hall, March 2014
- Music Center's Spotlight Award – Grand Prize Finalist Winner in Classical Voice 2015.
- Golden Voices International Vocal Competition – First Place, Carnegie Hall, NYC, December 2015.

Though Golda has been a soloist at many concerts, she has performed in fully staged operas with LA Opera – Britten's *Noye's Fludde* and Krása's *Brundibar*, both conducted by Maestro James Conlon.

Next November, she will make her professional operatic debut as Lauretta in Puccini's *Gianni Schicci* with The Redlands Opera Company, singing the classic "O Mi O Babbano Caro."

"I'm so excited," Golda said. "I love singing in concert, but being in a full opera production is what I love – being in costume, the stage set, playing a role and all its emotion."

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