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2010/11 [kitchener-waterloosymphony](http://kitchener-waterloosymphony.com)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2011

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Gilmore Award- winning pianist Kirill Gerstein performs Rach 2
***Whirling Dervish* Raqib Brian Burke performs in world premiere by Brian Current**

On April 1st and 2nd, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony (KWS) presents a blockbuster concert featuring pianist **Kirill Gerstein** – who won the 2011 **Gilmore Award** – performing Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 and the **World Premiere** of *Whirling Dervish*, a piece by **Canadian composer Brian Current** featuring the **Sufi Mevlevi whirling dervish Raqib Brian Burke**. Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* Suite rounds out the program.

Kirill Gerstein, who “shows how virtuosity and soulfulness can go hand in hand,” (*Chicago Sun Times*) is the sixth and latest recipient of the Gilmore Artist Award – an honour worth \$300 000 and described as “music’s answer to the MacArthur Foundation ‘genius grants’” (*New York Times*). The Russian-born pianist, said to “turn the tried-and-true...into something startlingly fresh” (*ibid*), grew up in southern Russia, dropped out of Berklee College of Music just shy of a degree, attended the Manhattan School of Music, and has since amassed a long list of awards and honours. Gerstein currently teaches at the conservatory in Stuttgart and maintains a major international career, appearing with top orchestras all over the world.

This concert will also feature ***Whirling Dervish***, a brand new work commissioned by the KWS from Canadian composer Brian Current. *Whirling Dervish* stars Raqib Brian Burke, a Canadian Sufi Mevlevi whirling dervish who began practicing this spectacular form of meditation through movement at the age of 23. Ottawa native Brian Current is recognized as one of the leading composers of his generation in North America. A Guggenheim Fellow and recipient of the Barlow Prize for Orchestral Music, Current's music is performed, broadcasted, and acclaimed all over the world. Renowned for its energy, wit, and daring, the latest recorded collection of his works, *This Isn't Silence*, was nominated for a Juno.

“The voice of an original composer with something important to say could be clearly heard...The composer lives in Toronto; he is worth watching, even from afar.”

– *L.A. Weekly*

Almost four decades ago, Raqib Brian Burke attended a lecture on Sufism and the 12th century poet Rumi and watched a demonstration of “whirling”. The practice entranced Burke and he devoted himself to mastering it over almost 40 years of study and experience under Mevlevi Sheikhs. Burke has since performed in Canada and the United States at numerous spiritual gatherings, arts festivals and music events. He performed in the first-ever Sema Ceremony by North American dervishes in Konya, Turkey; he is the only Canadian to have toured with the Whirling Dervishes of Turkey.

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For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact
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To download the press kit associated with this release, please visit the media room at
kwsymphony.ca.

Gerstein Plays Rach 2 | Apr 1 & 2 | 8 pm | Centre In The Square
Gerstein Plays Rach 2: The Director's Cut | Apr 3 | 2:30 pm | Centre In The Square

Edwin Outwater, conductor
Kirill Gerstein, piano
Raqib Brian Burke, whirling dervish

Stravinsky: *Pulcinella* Suite
Brian Current: *Whirling Dervish*
Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 2

Tickets available online: kwsymphony.ca

By phone: 519.745.4711 or 888.745.4717

In Person: Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts | 36 King St W Kitchener

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