

# NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Music Director

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 28, 2008

Contact: Rachel Rossos  
415.357.1111 / rrossos@ncco.org  
Jean Shirk  
510.547.8248 / jean@shirkmedia.com

MUSIC DIRECTOR NADJA SALERNO-SONNENBERG  
AND NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA  
ANNOUNCE 2008-09 SEASON, THEIR FIRST TOGETHER

**Two World Premieres of Commissioned Works by Featured Composer Clarice Assad, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg Performing Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*, and All-Russian Program with Pianist Anne-Marie McDermott Are Among Season Highlights**

---

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA (May 28, 2008)** - Music Director **Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg** and the **New Century Chamber Orchestra (NCCO)** will present two commissioned world premieres as part of the 2008-09 season, her inaugural season as Music Director, the NCCO announced today. Internationally-renowned violinist [Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg](#) will perform as soloist in Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* and Ginastera's *Glosses on Themes by Pablo Casals* in the orchestra's opening series of concerts, September 11-16 throughout the Bay Area. In the season's final program, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg will perform as soloist in *Dreamscape*, a world premiere commission written by composer **Clarice Assad**. In addition, pianist **Anne-Marie McDermott** joins the NCCO for performances of Shostakovich and Prokofiev in an all-Russian program. Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg became Music Director and Concertmaster of the Grammy-nominated 17-member string orchestra in January 2008.

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the orchestra have established a new Featured Composer program, and beginning this season, the NCCO will be commissioning and performing new works in each of the next three seasons. The 2008-09 Featured Composer is **Clarice Assad**, 30, a Brazilian classical and jazz composer, arranger, pianist, and vocalist. The NCCO will perform the world premieres of two of Assad's new commissioned works on its opening and closing programs.



Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg also has plans to record Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* with the orchestra at Skywalker Ranch for her label, NSS Music, during their first week of performances together.

In addition, the orchestra has created a new program to attract concertgoers under 30, including offering four-concert subscriptions beginning at \$56 and single concert tickets for as little as \$16. The NCCO is also offering a new premiere box subscription option for its performances at Herbst Theatre in San Francisco. A four-concert premiere box subscription at \$400 includes premium box seats, a visit with Music Director Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, food and beverage service, and valet parking. Premiere box single tickets are also available for \$125.

Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg joins the NCCO in the midst of a long and successful career as an in-demand soloist who performs with many of the world's finest orchestras, and is a vivid recitalist. Her recordings and concerts feature a wide breadth of repertoire, from Baroque favorites to 20<sup>th</sup> century gypsy music. She has appeared on numerous national television programs, and was the subject of the 1999 Academy Award-nominated documentary film, *Speaking In Strings*.

### **About the 2008-09 Season**

The 2008-09 NCCO season begins with an evening of all Brazilian and Argentine music, including the Clarice Assad commission *Impressions* (Suite for Chamber Orchestra). Music Director Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg is featured as soloist in Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* and Ginastera's *Glosses on Themes by Pablo Casals*. The orchestra's season, its 17th, also will include pianist Anne-Marie McDermott performing Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*, Op. 22 and Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No. 1 in an all-Russian program. In its final program of the season, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg and the NCCO will perform an evening of works on the theme of music of the night, including the second Assad commission, *Dreamscape*; Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*; and a suite by film composer Bernard Herrmann from the film *Psycho*.

In December 2008, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the orchestra will present a festive holiday program that includes Bach *Brandenburg* Concertos Nos. 2 and 5; Christmas carols; and Chanukah songs, performed by soprano Melody Moore, a former San Francisco Opera Merola Program participant and Adler Fellow, and Schola Cantorum San Francisco. Clarice Assad will arrange the carols.

"I'm thrilled to announce my inaugural season of programs as Music Director of the New Century Chamber Orchestra," Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg said. "Having the opportunity to program my first season, and to perform as part of this talented ensemble, is an artist's dream becoming reality. Performing Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* to lead off the season, commissioning two world premieres from Clarice Assad to begin our new Featured Composer program, and inviting Anne-Marie McDermott to perform Prokofiev and Shostakovich with the NCCO are all highlights.

"With the NCCO, my experiences are completely different from anything I've ever known. With this ensemble of soloists, we work together as one – discussing together, deciding together every single aspect of the performance. Such enthusiasm, excitement and excellence are rare."

“Bay Area audiences have a lot to look forward to in Nadja’s inaugural season with the New Century Chamber Orchestra,” said Board Chair Paula Gambs. “Nadja’s creative contributions as a world-renowned soloist and her inspiration as a musical leader are going to make this spectacular orchestra even better.”

### **About the Featured Composer Program**

In the Featured Composer program, the NCCO will commission and perform the work of a new composer each season. The first Featured Composer, [Clarice Assad](#), composes both classical and jazz music, and her work has been published and performed internationally. This season, the NCCO will perform the world premieres of two of her new works, *Impressions*, Suite for Chamber Orchestra, and *Dreamscape*. In the season opening program, the orchestra will perform her arrangement of Heitor Villa-Lobos’s *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5*, and in December, the NCCO will perform her arrangements of international holiday carols for string orchestra, soprano, and chorus. Ms. Assad will attend the performances of her works as well as other NCCO events to introduce her music to the audience.

“I am especially pleased that the NCCO is commissioning new works for chamber orchestra, for our audiences and for the literature,” Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg said. “I created the Featured Composer program specifically to expand the chamber orchestra repertoire, as part of the vision to take this orchestra to the highest level.”



### **New Ticket Prices for Music Lovers Under 30**

Beginning immediately, the NCCO is offering four-concert subscriptions and single concert tickets at a 50 percent discount for everyone under 30. “We feel strongly that once people come and hear this orchestra, they’ll be energized, and they’ll want to come back and share the experience with family and friends,” Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg said. “So we’re offering this incentive for young people to come for as little as \$16 per ticket - we invite you to join us!”

### **Ticket Information**

Season subscriptions for the orchestra’s four sets of concerts in San Francisco, Berkeley, Palo Alto and San Rafael are on sale now through the NCCO at [www.ncco.org](http://www.ncco.org) and 415.357.1111, or through City Box Office after August 1 at [www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com) and 415.392.4400. Four-concert series subscriptions range from \$112 to \$184 (\$56 for those under 30). A four-concert premiere box subscription, including premium box seats, a visit with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, food and beverage service, and valet parking, is also available for \$400. Single tickets for the orchestra’s concerts go on sale to non-subscribers on August 15. Individual concert tickets are \$32 to \$54 (\$16 for those under 30). Premiere box single tickets are available for \$125.

**PROGRAMS:**

***Nadja Plays Piazzolla: The Sounds of Brazil & Argentina***

**Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, violin**

Thursday, Sept. 11 at 8pm, First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley

Saturday, Sept. 13 at 8pm, Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

Sunday, Sept. 14 at 5pm, Osher Marin Jewish Community Center, 200 N. San Pedro Road, San Rafael

Tuesday, Sept. 16 at 8pm, First United Methodist Church, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto

**Clarice Assad: *Impressions*, Suite for Chamber Orchestra (NCCO Commission, World Premiere)**

**Alberto Ginastera: *Glosses on Themes by Pablo Casals***

**Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, violin**

**Piazzolla (arr. Leonid Desyatnikov): *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires***

**Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, violin**

**Heitor Villa-Lobos (arr. Clarice Assad): *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5***

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg's inaugural set of concerts as NCCO Music Director will include a selection of Brazilian and Argentine music, featuring herself as soloist on Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* and Ginastera's *Glosses on Themes by Pablo Casals*. The program opens with the world premiere of an NCCO commission, Clarice Assad's new *Impressions*, Suite for Chamber Orchestra. The Villa-Lobos work, perhaps his best-known, was originally written for soprano and eight cellos, and will be presented in a new arrangement by Clarice Assad.

***Celebrate the Holidays***

**Melody Moore, soprano**

**Schola Cantorum San Francisco**

Thursday, Dec. 11 at 8pm, St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave., Berkeley

Friday, Dec. 12 at 8pm, First United Methodist Church, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto

Saturday, Dec. 13 at 8pm, Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

Sunday, Dec. 14 at 5 pm, Osher Marin Jewish Community Center, 200 N. San Pedro Road, San Rafael

**Handel: *Solomon*, Overture and *Entrance of the Queen of Sheba***

**Bach: *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 2 in F major, BWV 1047**

**Bach: *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 5 in D major, BWV 1050**

**Holiday Songs and Carols (arr. Clarice Assad)**

**Melody Moore, soprano**

**Schola Cantorum San Francisco**

The NCCO celebrates the holidays with *Brandenburg* Concertos and a collection of Christmas and Chanukah music from throughout the world. Soprano Melody Moore performed Britten's *Les Illuminations* with the NCCO last season, and covered the role of Magda in Puccini's *La Rondine* for San Francisco Opera. Schola Cantorum San Francisco is highly regarded for its

purity of sound, careful tuning, and fine blend of voices, and is especially known for its interpretations of Renaissance polyphony.

***The Glory of Russia***

**Anne-Marie McDermott, piano**

Thursday, March 5, 2009 at 8pm, Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco  
Friday, March 6, 2009 at 8pm, First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley  
Saturday, March 7, 2009 at 8 pm, First United Methodist Church, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto  
Sunday, March 8, 2009 at 5 pm, Osher Marin Jewish Community Center, 200 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael

**Prokofiev (arr. Rudolf Barshai): *Visions Fugitives*, Op. 22**

**Anne-Marie McDermott, piano**

**Shostakovich: Piano Concerto No. 1 in C minor, Op. 35**

**Anne-Marie McDermott, piano**

**Tchaikovsky: *Souvenir de Florence***

Anne-Marie McDermott, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg's long-time recital partner, performs the Prokofiev work, a fiery, fleeting set of impressions assembled from twenty piano miniatures. The Shostakovich is high-spirited, youthful, energetic, and full of jokes and quotations. Ms. McDermott performed it on her recent acclaimed tour of the U.S. with the Australian Chamber Orchestra. She has also recorded Prokofiev's complete sonatas and chamber works. Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence*, a richly expressive and joyous romantic piece for sextet or string orchestra, was featured in the 1999 documentary about Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg, *Speaking in Strings*.



***Shadows and Light***

**Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, violin**

Thursday, May 14, 2009 at 8pm, First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley  
Friday, May 15, 2009, at 8pm, First United Methodist Church, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto  
Sunday, May 17, 2009 at 5pm, Osher Marin Jewish Community Center, 200 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael  
Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at 8 pm, Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

**Mozart: *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik***

**Bernard Herrmann: *Psycho Suite***

**Borodin: *Nocturne***

**Clarice Assad: *Dreamscape* (NCCO Commission, World Premiere)**

**Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, violin**

**Strauss (arr. Mats Lidstrom): *Die Fledermaus Suite***

The orchestra leads a journey through sweet dreams and nightmares, from the lighter tones of Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and Borodin's *Nocturne* to the terror of Bernard Herrmann's

gripping *Psycho Suite*. The pinnacle of the evening is Mats Lidstrom's string orchestra arrangement of the overture to Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, a hilarious opera of love and revenge.

**TICKETS:** Season subscriptions for the orchestra's four sets of concerts in San Francisco, Berkeley, Palo Alto and San Rafael are on sale now through the NCCO at [www.ncco.org](http://www.ncco.org) and 415.357.1111, or through City Box Office after August 1 at [www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com) and 415.392.4400. Four-concert series subscriptions range from \$112 to \$184 (\$56 for those under 30). A four-concert premiere box subscription, including a visit with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, food and beverage service, and valet parking, is also available for \$400. Single tickets for the orchestra's concerts go on sale to non-subscribers on August 15. Individual concert tickets are \$32 to \$54 (\$16 for those under 30). Premiere box single tickets are available for \$125.

### **About The New Century Chamber Orchestra**

[The New Century Chamber Orchestra](#), founded in 1992, looks for fresh, exciting ways to present classical music in the San Francisco Bay Area by combining performances of extraordinary quality with innovative programming. World-renowned violin soloist, chamber musician and recording artist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg joined the 17-member string ensemble as Music Director and Concertmaster in January 2008. The NCCO, comprised of local musicians as well as those who travel from across the U.S. and Europe to perform in the Bay Area together, performs without a conductor. Musical decisions are made collaboratively, resulting in an enhanced level of commitment on the part of the musicians to concerts of remarkable precision, passion and power.

As part of its dedication to the future of music and to the community, the NCCO provides violin lessons to underserved students in Marin City and San Rafael's Canal District. String quartets of NCCO members give intimate classroom performances in Bay Area elementary schools.

The orchestra has released four compact discs. *Written With The Heart's Blood*, a recording of Shostakovich works, was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1997. The orchestra has also recorded the music of 20th century Swiss composer Frank Martin, Argentine composers Alberto Williams and Alberto Ginastera, and Kurt Rohde. For more information, please visit [www.ncco.org](http://www.ncco.org).

### **About Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg**

Uniquely gifted and creative violin virtuoso [Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg](#) continues to bring joy to audiences whether from the stage, the TV screen, or the internet. Innovative, sharp and witty, she is truly an artist whose impact on the world of classical music is as deep as her love for the art.

An internationally-acclaimed soloist and chamber musician for more than 25 years, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg was named Music Director and Concertmaster of the New Century Chamber Orchestra in January 2008. Nadja's debut with the orchestra was in September 2007, when energy, excitement, and pure joy filled the air as the musicians excelled in a program of Bach, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky and Kreisler. The violinist's natural leadership, together with the ensemble's artistic excellence, made for an evening to remember, thus opening the door for future collaboration.

In addition to performances with the NCCO, the 2007-08 season also found Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg touring the West Coast with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, and performing with the symphony orchestras of New Jersey, Houston, Oregon, York, Baltimore and Colorado. Other highlights this season included recitals with pianist Anne-Marie McDermott and a Louisiana residency, with the Louisiana Philharmonic in New Orleans and the Baton Rouge Symphony.

A powerful and innovative presence on the recording scene, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg continues to enrich the collection of her record label NSS Music, which she started in 2005. The label already features Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg's *Merry* (a compilation of Christmas favorites, performed by Nadja and friends), *Nadja* (Tchaikovsky and Clarice Assad, violin concertos), *Live* (Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and Anne-Marie McDermott), as well as Anne-Marie McDermott's *Bach*, and John Cerminaro's *John Cerminaro, A Life of Music*. This year marked the release of NSS Music's first jazz album, entitled *Love, All That It Is*, featuring The Clarice Assad Trio. An ever-evolving and creative project, NSS Music will continue to bring forth unique performances from many musical genres.

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg's professional career began in 1981 when she won the Walter W. Naumburg International Violin Competition. In 1983 she was recognized with an Avery Fisher Career Grant, and in 1999, she was honored with the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize. Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg was born in Rome and emigrated to the United States at the age of eight to study at The Curtis Institute of Music. She later studied with Dorothy DeLay at The Juilliard School. For more information, please visit <http://www.nadjasalernosonnenberg.com/> or <http://www.nssmusic.com/>.

### **About Clarice Assad**

*NCCO Featured Composer, 2008-09 Season*

Brazilian native Clarice Assad is an accomplished composer, pianist, performer and arranger whose work is sought out by classical and jazz musicians. Her compositions have been published and performed internationally, and often explore physical and psychological themes. The NCCO performed her arrangement for solo violin and string orchestra of Kreisler's *Preludes* and *Allegro* in September 2007. Her new jazz CD with the Clarice Assad Trio, *Love, All That It Is*, was recently released on Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg's label, NSS Music.

Ms. Assad's recent world premieres include *Pole to Pole* by Cube in Chicago; *Song Cycle Confessions for Soprano and Chamber Group* at Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall; and *O Curupira* at Symphony Space by the Ethos Percussion Ensemble, all in 2007. In 2008, The Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas performed her *Brazilian Fanfare* under the baton of Alondra de la Parra, and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott performed Ms. Assad's *When Art Showed Up*. Other commissions include Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, commissioned and recorded by Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg with conductor Marin Alsop and the Colorado Symphony Orchestra on NSS Music in 2004, and *Brazilian Fanfare*, an overture for full orchestra commissioned by conductor Robert Bernhardt and premiered in 2006 with the Chattanooga Symphony.

As a pianist, Clarice Assad has received acclaim for her performances of both original compositions and her own arrangements of popular Brazilian songs and jazz standards. She has

performed in concert and appeared on radio and television throughout Brazil, the United States, and Europe. Ms. Assad sings in Portuguese, French, Italian and English.

Clarice Assad is the daughter of Sergio Assad, one of the world's preeminent guitarists and composers, and has performed professionally since the age of seven. She studied classical piano at Berklee School of Music and at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Ms. Assad holds a Bachelor of Music from the Chicago College of the Performing Arts, Roosevelt University, and a Masters of Music in Composition from the University of Michigan. For more information, please visit <http://www.clariceassad.com/>.

For more press information, or to request an interview with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg or other NCCO artists, please contact Rachel Rossos, Director of Development and Marketing, at 415.357.1111 or [rossos@ncco.org](mailto:rossos@ncco.org), or Jean Shirk at 510.547.8248 or [jean@shirkmedia.com](mailto:jean@shirkmedia.com). High-resolution photos of the artists are available at [www.ncco.org/mediakit.htm](http://www.ncco.org/mediakit.htm).

Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg's inaugural season's marketing and public relations is made possible in part by a generous grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.