

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Springfield Public Forum and Pioneer Valley Symphony to Host “An Evening for Ukraine”

SPRINGFIELD, MA- The Springfield Public Forum and the Pioneer Valley Symphony are joining forces to host “**An Evening for Ukraine**” on Wednesday, May 25, from 6:00 - 9:00 pm, at Springfield Symphony Hall. The event features a talk from former Ambassador to Ukraine Bill Taylor and a benefit concert of Ukrainian music performed by the Pioneer Valley Symphony, featuring violinist Solomiya Ivakhiv. Sponsored by MassMutual and the Thomas de Hartmann Project, 100% of the proceeds of the evening will benefit humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

The evening will begin at 6:00 pm with a talk by former Ambassador to Ukraine Bill Taylor, which is free with no reservations required. Ambassador Taylor is now the vice president, Russia and Europe, at the U.S. Institute of Peace. In 2019, he served as chargé d'affaires at the U.S. embassy in Kyiv. During the Arab Spring, he oversaw U.S. assistance and support to Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria. He served as the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine from 2006 to 2009. Ambassador Taylor also served as the U.S. government's representative to the Mideast Quartet, which facilitated the Israeli disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. He served in Baghdad as the first director of the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office from 2004 to 2005, and in Kabul as coordinator of international and U.S. assistance to Afghanistan from 2002 to 2003. Ambassador Taylor was also coordinator of U.S. assistance to the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He earlier served on the staff of Senator Bill Bradley. Ambassador Taylor is a graduate of West Point and Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and served as an infantry platoon leader and combat company commander in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and Germany.

“We are thrilled to partner with the Pioneer Valley Symphony to bring this event to Springfield. This collaboration brings the 4 counties of Western MA together to support one important cause that is much bigger than our corner of the world,” said Executive Director of the Forum Michelle Morash.

Elegant Affairs is sponsoring an intermission between the talk and concert with complimentary hors d'oeuvres served in the lobby and Mahogany Room at Symphony Hall.

At 8:00 pm, the Pioneer Valley Symphony (PVS) will be joined by musicians from throughout the region to present a benefit concert of orchestral and choral Ukrainian music. The concert will feature Ukrainian violinist Solimiya Ivakhiv, a celebrated soloist, recitalist and educator who is Associate Professor of Violin and Viola and Head of Strings at the University of Connecticut and Professor of Violin at Longy School of Music, Bard College. The concert will be conducted by the American Prize-winning Tianhui Ng, Music Director of the PVS, Boston Opera Collaborative, the Victory Players, White Snake Projects, and the Mt. Holyoke Symphony Orchestra.

Ng traveled to Ukraine last year with Thomas de Hartmann Project to collaborate with the Lviv National Philharmonic Orchestra on premiere recordings of the recovered works of Ukrainian-born composer Thomas de Hartmann (1884-1956). “We have an opportunity and an obligation to use music to express a message of peace, and show solidarity with the

people of Ukraine in a powerful way,” said Ng. “We are honored to be working with Solomiya Ivakhiv and other Ukrainian musicians to present this program.”

The concert duration is approximately one hour. Tickets are required by donation and are available online at pvsoc.org, by phone at 413.773.3664, or at the door before and after the Springfield Public Forum on the evening of the event. Thanks to the sponsorship of the Thomas de Hartmann Project and MassMutual, one hundred percent of ticket sales and financial contributions will be donated to three charities: [Vostok SOS](#) – an in-country organization that works on the ground with internally displaced Ukrainians to connect them with medical, housing, food, and psychosocial services; [Project HOPE](#) – an organization that works with grassroots medical networks in Poland and other neighboring countries to provide medicine and care to refugees; and Friends of the Lviv National Philharmonic Orchestra of Ukraine - directly supporting professional musicians in Ukraine who have lost their instruments and livelihoods in this conflict.

MassMutual and the Thomas de Hartmann Project are the presenting sponsors of “An Evening with Ukraine”, with additional support provided by Premier Media Sponsor MassLive, The Republican, MassCultural Council, the City of Springfield/Symphony Hall, and many individuals in our community.

For more information, see pvso.org or springfieldpublicforum.org. Face masks are required for the concert portion of the evening.

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