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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
SAN FRANCISCO, October 14, 2011

CELLIST NORMAN FISCHER VISITS CONSERVATORY FOR CHAMBER MUSIC MASTERS SERIES

Fischer and Conservatory Faculty/Students to Perform Works of Beethoven, Schulhoff and Schoenberg

A recent biography for the acclaimed cellist **Norman Fischer** notes that he “has performed on five continents and in 49 of the 50 United States.” (Could the missing link be Wyoming, or maybe Alaska?) Fischer is certainly no stranger to California, having been to the **San Francisco Conservatory of Music** several times in recent years to work with students and faculty. His latest Conservatory visit takes place this November, as Fischer presents a master class on Tuesday, November 15 and a concert Friday, November 18, as part of the Conservatory’s Chamber Music Masters series—an annual program that brings world-renowned artists to the school’s Civic Center campus to teach and perform alongside the Conservatory’s faculty and students.

A performer of “technical brilliance and full tone” (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*) who “knows how to make the cello speak and sing” (*Boston Globe*), Fischer is well known as a founder of the renowned Concord String Quartet, which in 16 years of existence concertized extensively in the United States and abroad, recording more than 40 works and premiering some 70 scores. The Concord Quartet appeared frequently on radio and television and received numerous accolades, including the Naumburg Chamber Music Award, several Grammy nominations and an Emmy Award. Since 1971 Fischer has collaborated with pianist Jeanne Kierman as the Fischer Duo, which makes a specialty of blending standard repertoire with newly commissioned works and unusual scores from the past. Fischer has also been a chamber music collaborator with the Juilliard, Emerson, Cleveland, Mendelssohn, Blair, Schoenberg and Audubon

string quartets, the American Chamber Players, Da Camera Society of Houston, Ensemble Pierrot and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival.

A committed teacher and mentor to young players, Fischer was artist in residence at Dartmouth College, an artist faculty member of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and currently is professor of violoncello at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. For the last 11 summers he has taught at Musicorda and the Tanglewood Music Center, which recently honored him with the Beatrice Sterling Procter Chair, succeeding the late Louis Krasner in that prestigious position.

For his Conservatory performance Fischer blends a Beethoven trio with two contrary twentieth-century pieces: an early masterpiece by Schoenberg and an “anti-Schoenbergian,” folk-infused work by Erwin Schulhoff. Following a Tuesday master class with Conservatory students, he joins with faculty violinists **Axel Strauss** and **Ian Swensen** plus several advanced chamber music students on Friday to perform Beethoven’s *Piano Trio No. 4 in B-flat Major, Op. 11*, “*Gassenhauer*,” Schulhoff’s *Duo for violin and cello* and Schoenberg’s *String Quartet No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 7*.

Admission for the Tuesday master class is free, though tickets are required. Tickets for the Friday concert are \$20 general admission, \$15 for students, seniors and *Friends of the Conservatory*. For current information on all the Conservatory’s chamber music concerts, visit www.sfcm.edu. Call the Box Office for tickets at 415.503.6275 or purchase online at www.sfcm.edu. All concerts are held at 50 Oak Street, San Francisco.

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About the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Chamber Music Department:

Established in 1985, the Chamber Music Department at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music offers a unique program of study for strings and piano leading to either the Master of Music degree or Artist Certificate in chamber music. An important aspect of this program is the concept of apprenticeship, whereby students, faculty and guest artists rehearse and perform together on a regular basis. At least four hours of weekly coaching, ten hours of rehearsal and weekly private lessons are offered to chamber music majors.

The Conservatory’s chamber music program has roots in the Chamber Music West summer festival, founded in 1976 by then-faculty members **Bonnie Hampton, Nathan Schwartz, David Abel** (all members of **The Francesco Trio**) and **Paul Hersh**. Immediately this program attracted a string of renowned visitors, including **Felix Galimir, Jaime Laredo, Kim Kashkashian, Robert Mann, Sharon Robinson** and members of the **Tokyo String Quartet**. Following a decade of resounding success, the Conservatory incorporated the program into its regular-year collegiate curriculum, making it the first American conservatory to offer a degree program in chamber music.

Among that year’s inaugural class of seven students were pianist **Seth Knopp** and violinist **Violaine Melançon**, then performing as a duo, who shortly after graduating in 1987 formed the Naumburg Award-winning **Peabody Trio**. Other notable alumni include members of the **Del Sol String Quartet**, two-time winner of the top Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming; the **Nexus String Quartet**, grand prize winner at the 2010 Plowman Chamber Music Competition and this summer’s ensemble-

in-residence at the Banff Center in Canada and the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado; and the **Afiara String Quartet**, 2010 winner of the Young Canadian Musicians Award and graduate resident string quartet at The Juilliard School.

About the San Francisco Conservatory of Music:

Founded in 1917, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music is the oldest conservatory in the American West and has earned an international reputation for producing musicians of the highest caliber. Notable alumni include Yehudi Menuhin, Isaac Stern, Jeffrey Kahane and Aaron Jay Kernis, among others. The Conservatory offers its more than 400 collegiate students fully accredited bachelor's and master's degree programs in composition and instrumental and vocal performance. Its Preparatory Division provides exceptionally high standards of musical excellence and personal attention to more than 550 younger students. The Conservatory's faculty and students give more than 400 public performances each year, most of which are offered to the public at no charge. The Conservatory's Civic Center facility is an architectural and acoustical masterwork, and the Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall was lauded by the *New York Times* as the "most enticing classical-music setting" in the San Francisco Bay Area. For more information, visit www.sfcm.edu.

CALENDAR EDITORS:

CHAMBER MUSIC MASTERS

Concert: \$20 general public/\$15 students, seniors and Friends of the Conservatory.

Master Class: Free, reservations required

Tuesday, November 15, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, November 18, 8 p.m.

Master Class – **Norman Fischer**, cello

Concert – **Norman Fischer**, cello

Beethoven *Piano Trio No. 4 in B-flat Major, Op. 11, "Gassenhauer"*

Schulhoff *Duo for violin and cello*

Schoenberg *String Quartet No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 7*

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