

**INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE FROM AMERICAN AND KAZAKH COLLABORATORS  
FOR SILENT STEPPE CANTATA AT PALACE OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION  
ON DECEMBER 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011 IN ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN**

*California-based composer Anne LeBaron, Kazakh tenor Timur Bekbosunov and American filmmaker Sandra Powers collaborate with the Women's Philharmonic Choir and Astana Philharmonic Orchestra as part of the official 20th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence celebrations in the Central Asian capital*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LOS ANGELES, CA & ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN (TUESDAY OCTOBER 25, 2011) -**

The international stage debut of an original production of the *Silent Steppe Cantata* has been confirmed for December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in Astana, Kazakhstan. The cantata will be performed at the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation, an architectural landmark designed by Norman Foster, on the official 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kazakhstan.

This production is the culmination of a unique collaboration between American and Kazakhstan artists and performers. Renowned California-based composer Anne LeBaron ("Alpert Award"), Kazakh tenor Timur Bekbosunov ("America's Got Talent") and award-winning filmmaker Sandra Powers created the project in conjunction with the Women's Philharmonic Choir and the Astana Philharmonic Orchestra to commemorate the official 20th Anniversary of Kazakhstan's Independence, with major support from JSC Sovereign Wealth Fund Samruk-Kazyna.

"The *Silent Steppe Cantata* is a bold artistic initiative, and will undoubtedly nurture new relationships among diverse cultures in the world while strengthening and enhancing artistic exchanges between the United States and the Republic of Kazakhstan," said Steven D. Levine, President of the California Institute of the Arts. "I have been aware of the project since its inception, and remain tremendously excited and inspired by the vision it brings forth."

The largest Kazakh newspaper, KazPravda, has deemed the *Silent Steppe Cantata* the most compelling and original contemporary world music performance to take place in Central Asia in throughout the past forty years. It will be performed in three languages: Kazakh, Russian and English, with music by Anne LeBaron, a composer of "uncommon imagination" (The Washington Post), and the first American woman composer to work with a major folk instrument ensemble in Central Asia. Kazakh singer Timur Bekbosunov, recently profiled in LA Weekly's BEST OF LA PEOPLE 2011, will star in the production.

LeBaron's original approach to the *Silent Steppe Cantata* focuses on expanding the traditional classical music cantata form into a multilingual/world-music cantata for the 21st century. The fusion of epic Kazakh poetic forms with hip-hop should appeal to global music devotees as well as to fans of contemporary music. The three-year process of producing the cantata is the subject of a documentary, "The Nomad's Song," by acclaimed American filmmaker Sandra Powers.

For many centuries the territory of ancient Kazakhstan was an important meeting center of civilizations throughout Central Asia. The original motherland of Huns and Turks, it also lays claim to being the birthplace of apples and tulips. Modern Kazakhstan, the ninth largest country in the world, is home to a melting pot of different cultures.

### **ABOUT THE SILENT STEPPE CANTATA**

The *Silent Steppe Cantata* project was initiated through several grants from American organizations: CEC Artslink; City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs; Puffin Foundation; Art of Opera Foundation; and Center for Cultural Innovation. Additional support has been provided by the Embassy of Kazakhstan in the United States, the City of Astana Department of Culture, the United States Embassy in Kazakhstan, KCell, and Rixos Almaty Hotel. This project is the first ever to receive funding from the JSC Sovereign Wealth Fund, Samruk-Kazyna, the largest Central Asian foundation.

Samruk-Kazyna was established in order to enhance competitiveness and sustainability of economy and to prevent potential negative impact from changes in the world markets on the economic growth of the country of Kazakhstan. It also supports regional development as well as the implementation of social and cultural projects, such as the groundbreaking artistic endeavor represented by the Silent Steppe Cantata Project. [www.samruk-kazyna.kz](http://www.samruk-kazyna.kz)

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