

NEWS RELEASE

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REBECCA HORN, JIRÍ KYLIÁN, YOUSSEU N'DOUR, MARTIN SCORSESE, WOLE SOYINKA, KATE VALK TO MENTOR YOUNG ARTISTS

Geneva, 13 November, 2007 – Six globally renowned artists were last night announced as the mentors for 2008-2009 in the **Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative**, giving an unparalleled opportunity to six young emerging artists from around the world to learn from a master in their field.

The new mentors are: Rebecca Horn (Visual Arts), Jirí Kylián (Dance), Youssou N'Dour (Music), Martin Scorsese (Film), Wole Soyinka (Literature) and Kate Valk (Theatre).

Each artist will choose a protégé from a group of finalists identified by the Rolex international nominating panels. They will then spend a year working one-to-one with their protégé, regularly engaging in extended dialogue, and sharing and refining their creative work. The six protégés will also receive a grant of \$25,000 each to enable them to take part, in addition to travel and other major expenses.

Launched in 2002, the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative is unique. Seeking out young, highly talented artists worldwide, the Arts Initiative brings them together with great masters for a year of creative collaboration. Working with expert teams of artistic advisors, Rolex organises the entire programme from its headquarters in Geneva. An extraordinary roll-call of international artists has already taken part as mentors. These acclaimed artists are: John Baldessari, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Sir Colin Davis, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, William Forsythe, Stephen Frears, Sir Peter Hall, David Hockney, Toni Morrison, Mira Nair, Jessye Norman, Álvaro Siza, Julie Taymor, Saburo Teshigawara, Mario Vargas Llosa, Robert Wilson and Pinchas Zukerman. The creative outcomes of the programme extend globally, developing a growing community of talented artists of the new generation.

Patrick Heiniger, CEO of Rolex, said to a group of arts leaders gathered last night at Lincoln Center in New York to celebrate the conclusion of the 2006-2007 mentoring year: “We are delighted to have such outstanding creative talents join the growing international community of artists who have given their time and expertise through the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Rolex is proud to support excellence in the arts worldwide, and we are honoured that these six masters are partnering with us to nurture the next generation of great artists.”

For further information:

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About the Mentors:

VISUAL ARTS: Rebecca Horn (Germany) is an internationally admired artist whose cross-disciplinary work incorporates performance, installation, drawing, sculpture, photography, video and film. In 1968, Horn produced her first body sculptures – a hybrid of performance and installation – in which she attached objects and instruments to the human body exploring the relationship between a person and his or her environment. Horn is well known for her avant-garde performances and her more recent film and video work, which explores themes of nature, culture and technology. Her work has been featured in retrospective exhibitions at the Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Tate Modern in London. She is a full-time professor at the Universität der Künste in Berlin.

DANCE: Jirí Kylián (Czech Republic) is an award-winning Czech choreographer who established his career as guest choreographer with Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT) in 1973. During his long tenure with NDT, he created internationally recognised performances such as *Symphony of Psalms* (1978) and the large-scale production *Arcimboldo* (1995). He also founded NDT II (for young dancers) and NDT III (for senior dancers). Kylián stepped down as artistic director of NDT in 1999, yet continues to have significant artistic and developmental influence there. Kylián's accolades include selection as an officer in the Order van Oranje Nassau (1995), the Edinburgh Festival Critics' Award for NDT III's *Tears of Laughter* (1997), the Laurence Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance (2000) and the Légion d'Honneur (2004).

MUSIC: Youssou N'Dour (Senegal) is an internationally celebrated composer, singer and percussionist whose music focuses on world issues while staying close to his Senegalese roots. Blending the musical traditions of his native Africa with eclectic influences of Cuban samba, jazz and hip-hop, N'Dour has collaborated with other renowned musicians such as Peter Gabriel, Sting, Paul Simon and Tracy Chapman. A charismatic musician, N'Dour is also a humanitarian and advocate of children's rights, participating in the Amnesty International *Human Rights Now!* tour in 1988 and serving as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since 1991. He has won numerous awards for his music, including the UNESCO International Music Prize (2004) and a Grammy (2005).

FILM: Martin Scorsese (U.S.) is one of the leading film-makers of our time. Influenced by his childhood in New York's Little Italy, Scorsese achieved early acclaim for *Mean Streets* (1973); *Taxi Driver* (1976), winner of the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or; and *Raging Bull* (1980), which received eight Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture and Best Director. Among his other celebrated films are *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988); *Goodfellas* (1990); *Gangs of New York* (2002), winner of a Golden Globe for Best Director; the much-awarded *The Aviator* (2004); and *The Departed* (2006), which won four Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director, and top directing honours from the

Director's Guild of America (DGA) and others. Scorsese has received numerous accolades for his contributions to cinema, among them the American Film Institute's Life Achievement Award in 1997 and the DGA's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003. A champion of film preservation, he is the founder and chair of The Film Foundation. Scorsese's latest film, *Shine a Light*, a documentary about the Rolling Stones, will open in April 2008.

LITERATURE: Wole Soyinka (Nigeria) is a world-renowned playwright, poet, novelist, essayist and humanitarian. Considered Nigeria's foremost dramatist, he was the first African to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, in 1986, for his inspirational works that fuse Western and African traditions, literature and politics. Soyinka, an outspoken critic of his country's past tyrannies, has spent long periods of his life in exile. His *Poems from Prison* (1969) and *The Man Died: Prison Notes* (1972) describe his 22 months in a Nigerian prison, and his most recent play, *King Baabu* (2001), satirises African dictatorships. Following on a long string of masterpieces written over a half-century is his latest memoir, *You Must Set Forth at Dawn* (2006), about his adult years and opposition to Nigeria's corrupt regimes. Professor emeritus of Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria, Soyinka is currently director of literary arts at the University of Nevada, a fellow of Harvard's W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research, and a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador.

THEATRE: Kate Valk (U.S.) is one of the most accomplished American theatre artists of her generation. As a founding member of the highly respected Wooster Group, Valk has co-composed and performed in all of the group's productions. In addition to her memorable and experimental roles on stage, including in Frank Dell's *The Temptation of St. Antony* (1987) and *House/Lights* (1999 and 2005), Valk has also appeared in films by Jonathan Demme, Peter Sellars and Raoul Ruiz. She graduated from New York's Tisch School for the Arts and has been awarded numerous honours, including an OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence in Performance (1998), a Bessie Award for Best Performer (2002) and a Foundation for Contemporary Art Fellowship Award (2003).