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**NEWS RELEASE**

**CINCINNATI PIANIST TO SHARE HER LOVE OF MUSIC WITH AUDIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON**

DAYTON, Ohio — Cincinnati pianist Larissa Sokoloff never knows what kind of experiences her concerts will create. Finding out is precisely what she enjoys most about performing.

Sokoloff, who at age 29 has already developed an impressive educational and concert resume, will present a recital of classical Russian composers at the University of Dayton at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9, in the Kennedy Union Boll Theatre.

Tickets for the performance, which is part of the 1999 - 2000 UD Art Series, are \$10 general admission, \$5 for faculty and staff, and \$3 for students. Tickets are available by calling the Boll Theatre box office at (937) 229-2545.

Sokoloff said her favorite aspect of performing is the distinct relationship she builds with each audience during a concert.

"It's sharing the musical experience with the listener," she said. "It's communicating what's inside of me to the audience and absorbing their response. No performance is ever the same as another. Each time, each experience is different, because the response of the audience inspires the music in a certain way."

Sokoloff has had the opportunity to develop those relationships around the globe. In the last decade she has performed in France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Moscow and Hungary. A stateside concert last fall — at the Phillips Collection art gallery in Washington, D. C. — marked her professional debut.

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Her first compact disc, recorded live at a performance with the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra in November, 1998, has just been released. Sokoloff, who is acting as her own distributor while she continues to look for a manager, said she plans to bring copies of the disc to UD.

After more than two decades of piano studies — including work at Harvard University, the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University and the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest — Sokoloff is now completing an artist diploma program of professional training at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she is also employed as a lecturer in piano.

Her busy schedule also includes preparation for several coming competitions. She will compete in New York in February for a shot at an international competition in Sidney, Australia, in August.

Although her professional career is just beginning to take off, Sokoloff already has her once-in-a-lifetime memory.

“I was born in Montclair, New Jersey, but my parents were born in Russia,” she said. “In 1990, I had the opportunity to visit my parents’ homeland, which was a real treat for me because I’d heard so much about the culture as I was growing up.

“It was also special because my forte is Russian composers. One of my favorites is Alexander Scriabin, who died in the early 1900s, and I got to visit his home and play on his piano. Very few pianists are allowed to play on it, and the last person to do so was Vladimir Horowitz so I was very honored. To see Scriabin’s home, to play on the piano that he composed and played on and lived with was an incredible experience.”