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BYRON JANIS AND ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE RELATIONSHIP *Legendary Pianist Suffering From Arthritis Gives Back*

ATLANTA, Jan. 11, 2011 – The legendary pianist [Byron Janis](#), who overcame many years of suffering from psoriatic arthritis in his hands and wrists, and the [Arthritis Foundation](#) have announced that they are embarking on a relationship that will benefit the 50 million Americans who suffer with arthritis, the nation’s most common cause of disability. Through his humanitarian efforts of making a difference and giving back, Janis will donate 25 percent of proceeds to the Arthritis Foundation from the sale of his DVD documentary, *The Byron Janis Story*, his newly published book, *Chopin and Beyond - My Extraordinary Life in Music and the Paranormal*, and his soon to be released CD, *Byron Janis - Live from Leningrad*. The proceeds will support the Arthritis Foundation’s mission to improve the lives of people living with arthritis.

In addition, Janis has committed to a limited number of engagements for the Arthritis Foundation’s fundraising drives at national and regional events. These performances will be infused with footage from his career and the message that he still performs at a high level, which will inspire others to achieve. Janis also will conduct workshops for children during the July 2011 Juvenile Arthritis Conference in Washington, D.C.

“Arthritis has taught me to look inside myself for new sources of strength and creativity,” says Janis. “It has given my life a new intensity. I have arthritis, but it does not have me.”

For more than 38 years Janis suffered with psoriatic arthritis, an inflammatory form of arthritis that causes pain and swelling in the joints. For 12 years he did not reveal he had the disease. Together, he and his wife, Maria Cooper Janis, the daughter of late great actor Gary Cooper, continued on a journey that, despite often being in severe pain, allowed him to play with only sporadic absences from the world stage. Maria has been at Byron’s side for over 40 years, chronicling his performances, his challenges and his triumphs. She has been an instrumental force in bringing this story to public television and to the writing and publication of the book. Their life together is truly a life of international glamour, romance and victories in spite of adversity.

“Byron has always lived in two worlds,” says Maria Cooper Janis. “His ability to ride the winds of music and slip over the barricades that separate how and what we experience here from other, more expanded worlds has been a source of strength as he faces the challenges of arthritis.”

Regarded as a child prodigy at age 4, Janis performed around the world, and is the only pianist to have been asked to perform at the White House six times for four sitting presidents. At the White House in 1985, Nancy Reagan announced that Janis suffered from arthritis. He has been a national ambassador for the Arthritis Foundation ever since and the face of inspiration for millions.

“Byron Janis’ life is an inspiration to the millions of people with arthritis. His work with the Arthritis Foundation and the hope he brings to those suffering with the disease is a symbol of true conviction,” says Debra Neuman, Arthritis Foundation chief external relations officer.

For additional information on Byron Janis and to schedule interviews, speaking engagements or public appearances, please contact Bettina L. Klinger, president at KlingerVision INC: (212) 592-1385, or e-mail bklinger@klingerpartners.com. For more information on Byron Janis, please visit byronjanis.com. To purchase the book and DVD and make a contribution to this humanitarian effort, please visit amazon.com/byronjanis. For more information about arthritis and its treatment, visit www.arthritis.org.

The **Arthritis Foundation** (www.arthritis.org) is the leading health organization addressing the needs of the 50 million Americans, including 300,000 children, living with arthritis, the nation's most common cause of disability. The Foundation helps individuals take control of arthritis by providing public health education; pursuing public policy and legislation; supporting research and conducting evidence-based programs to improve the quality of life for those living with arthritis.

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