

Press Release

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BRITTEN SINFONIA CONCERTS - MARCH/APRIL 2018

- **World premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage's opera, *Coraline***
- **Easter concerts: Britten Sinfonia and Britten Sinfonia Voices in Stravinsky's *Mass* and Mozart's *Missa Brevis*; Britten Sinfonia and Polyphony – Bach's *St John Passion***
- **World premiere by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw as part of 'At Lunch' series**

Britten Sinfonia's busy March/April 2018 features two world premieres, and in Easter concerts, two masses separated by almost 200 years, and Bach's *St John Passion*. Full details at

www.brittensinfonia.com

WORLD PREMIERE

MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE: *CORALINE*

29 MARCH – 7 APRIL, BARBICAN THEATRE, LONDON

Britten Sinfonia features in the Royal Opera House production of **Mark-Anthony Turnage's** latest opera, *Coraline*, based on the atmospheric, fantasy novel by Neil Gaiman (with a libretto by Rory Mullarkey). The prize-winning novella, about a girl who discovers a door in her parent's home leading to an entirely different place and family, was chosen by Turnage as the subject for his fourth opera because he felt it had '*a message well worth telling; we should not be afraid to do what we believe is right*'. **Aletta Collins** stages the opera for family audiences with **Sian Edwards** conducting Barbican Associate Ensemble, Britten Sinfonia. BBC Radio 3 will record the final performance for broadcast in 'Opera on 3' on Saturday 21 April. Further information on performance dates and times at <http://www.barbican.org.uk>

Coraline is produced by the Royal Opera House. A co-production with Folkoperan, Opéra de Lille, Theater Freiburg and Victorian Opera.

EASTER CONCERTS

MOZART'S *MISSA BREVIS* in F Major and STRAVINSKY'S *MASS*

WEDNESDAY 28 MARCH AT 7.30PM – MILTON COURT CONCERT HALL

Easter is marked by **Britten Sinfonia Voices and Britten Sinfonia** in a performance of two masses written 170 years apart: Stravinsky's *Mass*, with its sensational harmonic colours and Mozart's beautiful *Missa Brevis in F major*. Directed by **Eamonn Dougan**, *Missa Brevis* is interleaved with a series of short motets by Stravinsky, reflecting the traditional liturgical presentation of a mass - where the movements would never be performed consecutively - and contrasting Mozart's sparkling early work with what Dougan describes as "*the more lush sound world of the winds and brass in Stravinsky - by interspersing the movements of the mass and the Stravinsky motets, we get a change of sound world and texture*". Stravinsky's *Mass for chorus and wind instruments* features in the second half of the programme, alongside short works from across four centuries by Gabrieli, Gesualdo and Bruckner. A discovery of a *Missa Brevis* score in a second hand book shop inspired Stravinsky to write his own work, which he envisaged as a "*real*" functional mass for church performance, describing it as "*liturgical, almost without ornament*". Dougan describes the full score, performed here, as "*a revelation*". The programme is completed by Esa Pekka Salonen's

Concert *étude for solo horn*, a homage to Salonen's childhood horn teacher, Holger Fransman, with soloist **Ben Goldscheider**, finalist in the 2016 BBC Young Musician of the Year (and the son of Britten Sinfonia violinist Nicola Goldscheider).

JS BACH'S ST JOHN PASSION

GOOD FRIDAY 30 MARCH AT 2.30PM, ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE

Britten Sinfonia joins forces with Polyphony for a Good Friday performance of Bach's *St John Passion* at St John's Smith Square, London. **Stephen Layton** conducts with soloists including **Nicholas Pritchard, Ashley Riches** and **Neal Davies**.

WORLD PREMIERE

BRITTEN SINFONIA 'AT LUNCH' – CAROLINE SHAW: PIANO QUARTET

TUESDAY 17 APRIL – WEST ROAD CONCERT HALL, CAMBRIDGE

WEDNESDAY 18 APRIL – WIGMORE HALL, LONDON

FRIDAY 20 APRIL – ST ANDREW'S HALL, NORWICH

American composer Caroline Shaw, the youngest ever winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2013, is a solo violinist, chamber musician, vocalist in the Grammy Award-winning ensemble Roomful of Teeth, and has collaborated with superstar rapper Kanye West. Britten Sinfonia leader **Thomas Gould** (violin), **Clare Finnimore** (viola), **Caroline Dearnley** (cello) and **Tom Poster** (piano) perform Caroline Shaw's new piano quartet (co-commissioned by Wigmore Hall) alongside Brahms' expansive Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor Op. 25. Caroline Shaw comments: "*This new piece for piano quartet is a kind of deep dive into my own memories of rehearsing and performing Brahms' Piano Quartets as a violinist. I fell in love with his harmonies and vocal melodic lines, and when I think of really thrilling, moving chamber music experiences I've had I always come back to the fun and joy and effort of playing Brahms. I couldn't possibly write a piece for this combination of instruments without constantly revisiting that feeling and that music...*" Britten Sinfonia at Lunch concerts begin at 1pm and last an hour. Caroline Shaw discusses her new work in pre and post concert talks in London and Cambridge (Wigmore Hall – 12.15pm; West Road Concert Hall – 2.15pm).

Website links for venues

www.barbican.org.uk

www.westroad.org

www.wigmore-hall.org.uk

www.brittensinfonia.com (for ticket sales and information for Norwich concerts)

Further press information from: **Sophie Cohen** on **020 7482 3466 07711 551 787**

sophie@sophiecohenartspr.com