

Press Information:

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra to perform Elektra in 2020 with Catherine Foster in the title role

The BSO's Chief Conductor, Kirill Karabits, will lead the Orchestra in a concert staging of Richard Strauss' opera *Elektra* in March 2020 at Symphony Hall, Birmingham and Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts.

Conducted by Kirill Karabits, the BSO's Chief Conductor, the Orchestra will be joined by Catherine Foster as *Elektra*, in her first UK operatic performance in 20 years. Alongside Catherine Foster, the Orchestra will be joined by Allison Oakes in her UK operatic debut as *Chrysothemis*, a role in which she made her Metropolitan Opera debut last season, and Susan Bullock, who is internationally acclaimed for her *Elektra* and will be making her UK debut as *Klytemnestra*.

Catherine Foster said "*I'm absolutely thrilled to have been invited by Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra to sing, not only a favourite role of mine, on returning to the UK, but combining that with the city and stunning Symphony Hall where it all began for me as a BMus student at the Royal Birmingham conservatoire makes this something very special.*"

Dougie Scarfe, the BSO's Chief Executive, said: "*Catherine Foster has achieved phenomenal success across Europe, including for the last six years as Brünnhilde in the Ring Cycle at Bayreuth, and we're thrilled to have her as our Elektra. The casting of Catherine Foster, Allison Oakes and Susan Bullock, three outstanding and experienced dramatic sopranos who will each be singing their particular roles in the UK for the first time, demonstrates the high ambition of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra to perform Elektra at the very highest level.*"

In 2015, Kirill Karabits conducted the BSO in a critically acclaimed performance of Strauss' *Salome*. The Times commented '*under Kirill Karabits's baton this extraordinary score erupted with all the vivid, visceral strangeness that so shocked audiences at its 1905 premiere*'. In addition to his outstanding work with the BSO over the last 10 years, Kirill is currently Generalmusikdirektor of the Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar, where Richard Strauss held the role of second Kapellmeister from 1889 to 1894.

Kirill Karabits said "*I'm delighted to be part of this wonderful project with such a great cast. In order to perform this complex and visceral score you need an orchestra at the top of its game, and I have no doubt that the BSO will be able to deliver. After our huge success with Salome four years ago, Elektra will surely be a highlight of the 2019/20 season!*"

The BSO's performances of *Elektra*, taking place on Wednesday 18 March 2020 in Poole and Saturday 21 March 2020 in Birmingham, form part of the Orchestra's 2019/20 Concert Season, which will be announced next month along with further details on cast and concert staging.

Richard Strauss *Elektra*

18 March 2020 | The Lighthouse, Poole

21 March 2020 | Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Kirill Karabits *conductor*

Catherine Foster *Elektra*

Allison Oakes *Chrysothemis*

Susan Bullock *Klytemnestra*

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

ENDS

For further information, enquiries & requests please contact: Tamsin Eddey at Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra teddey@bsorchestra.co.uk / 01202 644 706 / 07860 776646

Notes to Editors:

1. [1 x Image](#) attached 'Catherine Foster' (Photo Credit: Uwe Arens) and [2 x Image](#) attached 'Kirill Karabits, BSO Chief Conductor' (Photo Credit: Konrad Ćwik)
2. The BSO's performances of *Elektra* will be the first ever given at Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts in its 40 years and Symphony Hall, Birmingham in the 29 years since it opened.
3. Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is a cultural beacon for the South and South West, existing to give people across the region of over 10,000 square miles the opportunity to experience and participate in great art. As one of the UK's busiest orchestras, the BSO reaches around 5,000 concert-goers per week and is the only UK symphony orchestra not based in a major city.
4. The BSO and Kirill Karabits will be announcing their 2019/20 season in May. Their 2018/19 season comes to a close with performances by Johannes Moser performing the world premiere of a new work by Jonathan Leshnoff (1 May), Sunwook Kim (8 May) and James Rutherford in Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* (15 May).
5. As a registered arts charity the BSO is increasingly reliant on the support of individuals, charitable trusts and companies. The income earned from ticket sales, commercial activity and grants from public funding sources help the Orchestra greatly and is increasingly invaluable in supporting BSO's on-going mission to enrich and inspire the cultural lives of many.
6. The BSO's Principal Broadcast Partner is BBC Radio 3
7. The BSO is Classic FM's Orchestra in the South of England.