

KARABITS LEADS CELEBRATED CAST IN STRAUSS' *ELEKTRA*



Kirill Karabits brings a crop of the world's leading operatic talent to Poole and Birmingham

- **A concert staging of R Strauss' dramatic opera to Poole and Birmingham this March**
- **British soprano Catherine Foster makes an anticipated return to the UK stage**
- **Susan Bullock, Allison Oakes and Andreas Bauer Kanabas in leading roles**

Kirill Karabits, the Chief Conductor of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, has assembled some of the most celebrated names in opera to present a concert staging of R Strauss' mighty work, *Elektra*, this spring.

Scored for 16 soloists, chorus and large symphony orchestra, the performances will take place at **Lighthouse, Poole (Wed 18 Mar)** and **Symphony Hall, Birmingham (Sat 21 Mar)**.

The opera charts the story of a central character, Elektra, and the cycle of revenge killings that motivate her highly-dysfunctional family. Based on a Greek myth, R Strauss' interpretation is based on a revision influenced by early 20th century psychology.

British soprano **Catherine Foster** has enjoyed several years of ovations for her performances of *Brünnhilde* at the nucleus of dramatic opera, the Bayreuth Festival. A former NHS midwife Foster's career has been as extraordinarily dramatic as the roles she sings; these performances of *Elektra* will mark her return to the UK stage after a break of 20 years.

Foster says, *"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."*

The cast of soloists features some of the most sought-after names in opera. Soprano **Susan Bullock** established her name with performances of *Elektra* at La Scala, Milan and the Metropolitan Opera, New York; she will sing the role of Klytämnestra. **Allison Oakes** makes her UK operatic debut; she has given recent performances at the Bayreuth Festival, the Metropolitan Opera and with the Berlin Philharmonie. German bass **Andreas Bauer Kanabas** has appeared this season at the Royal Opera House, London and in Frankfurt Opera; his rich bass voice has won him a global following. Director **Geertje Boeden** has directed recent productions with Deutsches Nationaltheater and Staatskapelle Weimar. Vocal students from Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Trinity Laban Conservatoire will form the Chorus.

Kirill Karabits says of the project, *"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 two years ago, Elektra will be a highlight of the season!"*

Dougie Scarfe, Chief Executive of the BSO, will present a pre-concert talk ahead of the Birmingham performance. He says, *"The casting of these outstanding and experienced singers, each 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. The BSO is proud that these performances of Elektra will be the first ever given at Lighthouse, Poole in its 40 years and Symphony Hall Birmingham in the 29 years since it opened."*

The performances are made possible with support from the BSO Elektra Syndicate.

Kirill Karabits conducts Richard Strauss' *Elektra* in Poole (18 Mar) and Birmingham (21 Mar).
For tickets and further details visit bsolive.com

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Notes to Editors:

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1. Images available [here](#)
 - 1) Players of the BSO © Patrick Baldwin
 - 2) Chief Conductor Kirill Karabits © Konrad Cwik
 - 3) Catherine Foster © Uwe Arens
 - 4) Susan Bullock © Christina Raphaëlle
 - 5) Allison Oakes © Fiona MacPherson

6) Andreas Bauer Kanabas ©Roberto Kressner

2. Performances

Elektra

Wed 18 Mar (Lighthouse, Poole)

Sat 21 Mar (Symphony Hall, Birmingham)*

R Strauss *Elektra*

Performances supported by the BSO Elektra Syndicate

Catherine Foster, Elektra

Susan Bullock, Klytämnestra

Allison Oakes, Chrysothemis

Andreas Bauer Kanabas, Orest

Jeffrey Lloyd-Roberts, Aegisth

Simon Wilding, Tutor to Orest

Peter Van Hulle, Young Servant

Alwyn Mellor, Overseer

Emma Carrington, 1st Maid

Sarah Pring, 2nd Maid

Rachael Lloyd, 3rd Maid

Kiandra Howarth, 4th Maid

Natalia Tanasii, 5th Maid

Kirill Karabits, conductor

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Chorus from Royal Birmingham Conservatoire & Trinity Laban

Anthony Kraus, Assistant Conductor

Geertje Boeden, Director

James Smith, Lighting Designer

<https://bsolive.com/events/elektra/>

*Dougie Scarfe, Chief Executive of the BSO, will present a **pre-concert talk** ahead of the **21 March** performance in Birmingham.

3. Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is a world-class ensemble known for spearheading change both on and off the stage since 1893. Highly regarded for its ambitious programming and recordings, its Prokofiev cycle and survey of Eastern European music under the baton of Chief Conductor Kirill Karabits has received recent critical acclaim.
4. In 2019, the BSO won the Royal Philharmonic Society Impact Award for its work in improving opportunities for the next generation of disabled talent. The Orchestra serves a 10,000-square mile region, touring around 140 performances each year to audiences in South West England and beyond; it also offers a number of smaller ensembles, including BSO Resound, the disabled-led ensemble pushing the boundaries of performance practice, and Kokoro, a contemporary chamber ensemble.

5. A bold champion of new talent the BSO boasts an enviable list of principal conductors, from Marin Alsop – the first female principal conductor of a major UK orchestra – to Constantin Silvestri, Paavo Berglund and Andrew Litton. It has given memorable performances at Carnegie Hall, the Musikverein, and Rudolfinum, and gives regular live broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM.
6. 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.
7. The BSO's Principal Broadcast Partner is BBC Radio 3
8. The BSO is Classic FM's Orchestra in the South of England.