



OREGON BACH FESTIVAL

Matthew Halls *Artistic Director*
Janelle McCoy *Executive Director*

MEDIA RELEASE

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PASSIONS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS HEADLINE AS **OREGON BACH FESTIVAL 2017** SETS DATES AND ARTIST LINEUP

January 25, 2017 – [Eugene, OR] – The internationally-renowned **Oregon Bach Festival (OBF)** announces its new Season of world-class concerts and musicians. OBF 2017, which runs **June 29 through July 15**, promises an enthralling selection of concerts, lectures, and community events – including epic works from Bach, Beethoven, and Handel – and a celebration of the Festival’s iconic educational roots. The Festival will be held in Eugene, Oregon, and will delight audiences at historic Beall Concert Hall on the University of Oregon campus, as well as Silva Concert Hall and Soreng Theater at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts.

OBF Artistic Director **Matthew Halls** will open the 2017 Festival with Bach’s quintessential sacred choral masterpiece, ***St. Matthew Passion***. Called the “most exalted of music’s [spiritual] monuments” by the *Los Angeles Times*, the Passion is one of Bach’s most celebrated works, and will feature international tenor phenom **Charles Daniels** as the Evangelist.

Daniels’ “burning passion and utter conviction” (*Gramophone*) will also be on display during ***St. John Passion*** – presented in three parts as the 2017 iteration of the audience-favorite, Discovery Series. The newly renamed **[re]Discovery Series** seeks to engage audiences through conversation and demonstration. Due to high demand, OBF is pleased to move the [re]Discovery Series from its recent afternoon time slot to an evening performance schedule.

A major cornerstone of the 2017 Festival is the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the **Stangeland Family Youth Choral Academy (SFYCA)**. Director **Anton Armstrong** returns to lead eighty of the best high school singers in the country. As part of the celebration, current SFYCA singers will be joined on stage by SFYCA alumni from the past twenty years. “We hope,” says Halls “that Eugene will be flooded with alumni and friends so that we can ‘raise the roof’ in praise for all that this flagship educational program has achieved over the past two decades.” Moreover, one of the Festival’s newer educational endeavors, **Berwick Academy**, returns for its third year of

historically-informed performance. One of the only U.S. festival-based education program of its kind, Berwick Academy students will be featured in concerts that highlight French and German Baroque music, as well as John Blow's cautionary tale, *Venus and Adonis*. "We're very pleased to highlight our educational offerings this year," says OBF Executive Director, Janelle McCoy. "As our originating programmatic intent, education is at the heart of Oregon Bach Festival." In addition to SFYCA and Berwick Academy, OBF will continue to offer the highest-level of music education through the Organ Institute, Master Class in Conducting, and Vocal Fellows initiative.

OBF is also thrilled to welcome back tremendous artists and Festival-favorites: organist **Paul Jacobs**, tenor **Nicholas Phan**, Grammy-nominated violinist and Artistic Director of Portland Baroque Orchestra, **Monica Huggett**, and the taiko drumming sensation, **On Ensemble**. Additionally, OBF will welcome conductor, harpsichordist, and Concerto Copenhagen Artistic Director, **Lars Ulrik Mortensen**. The 2000 Danish Musician of the Year, Mortensen will conduct Berwick Academy, as well as the epic Handel oratorio, *Hercules*.

Rounding out the Festival concert schedule are works from **John Tavener**, **Herbert Howells**, and a performance of the satirical and family-friendly *Beethoven's Wig*, from four-time Grammy nominee, **Richard Perlmutter**. The Festival comes to an end with "a divine bit of Beethoven" (NPR, Weekend Edition), as one of the composer's supreme achievements, *Missa Solemnis*, closes OBF 2017 with unparalleled virtuosity.

Additional concerts, artists, and events will be announced in the coming weeks. Exclusive presale tickets are available from February 1, and **tickets go on sale to the general public in early May**. More information can be found at www.oregonbachfestival.com.

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Oregon Bach Festival (OBF) has presented the masterworks of J.S. Bach, and composers inspired by his work, to audiences in Eugene and throughout the State of Oregon for nearly five decades. The annual event began as a collaboration between German Conductor and Organist, Helmuth Rilling and former Associate Dean of the University of Oregon School Of Music, Royce Saltzman. OBF is now an international festival of worldwide repute, led by Maestro Matthew Halls. In addition to traditional choral-orchestral masterworks, the festival also presents internationally renowned guest artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Midori, Pink Martini and Joshua Bell, and offers educational opportunities, children and family programing, and community events.