

Canis Media and the London Contemporary Orchestra present

Silent Shakespeare

In aid of *Sense*

Sunday 1 December 2013

St James Theatre, SW1

Performance at 2:30pm and 7pm

Tickets: £17.50 - £35

Tickets www.stjamestheatre.co.uk or 0844 2642140

"Fascinating! Painstakingly restored. A priceless document in the history of both Shakespearian acting and the cinema" – The Daily Telegraph

In partnership with The British Art Music Series in aid of Sense, the charity for deafblind people, the **London Contemporary Orchestra** in collaboration with **Canis Media** present ***Silent Shakespeare***, for one day only, at the newly opened St James Theatre in London, on 1 December 2013.

Silent Shakespeare is a rare screening of seven silent motion pictures of Shakespeare plays, collected from around the world, produced between 1899 and 1911. Digitally restored by the British Film Institute's National Film and Television Archive in 1999, the screening is accompanied by a specially composed score by award-winning British composer Laura Rossi, performed live by the London Contemporary Orchestra, conducted by Hugh Brunt. ***Silent Shakespeare*** returns to London for the first time in over a decade after critically acclaimed tours across the UK, Belfast and Brazil in 1999. This performance continues the London Contemporary Orchestra's relationship with cinema, having recorded Jonny Greenwood's score for the Academy Award-nominated film *The Master* in 2012.

The extremely rare films – some of the earliest cinematic productions ever committed to celluloid – have been assembled from the USA, the UK and Italy. The films, which have survived for over a century, are a few of a number of film adaptations of Shakespeare from the early years of cinema, which rely on delicate and nuanced facial expression, and the famous silent film device the intertitle to convey the drama and narrative of the original plays. The films include examples of hand stencilling and tinted prints and are testament to the innovation and conviction of these early filmmakers and the enduring fascination with Shakespeare's plays throughout the centuries. Among the Shakespeare works represented are ***King John*** (1899, UK), ***The Tempest*** (1908, UK), ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** (1909, USA), ***King Lear*** (1910, USA), ***The Merchant of Venice*** (1910, Italy) and ***Richard III*** (1911, UK).

Silent Shakespeare featuring the London Contemporary Orchestra will be screened on 1 December 2013 at the St James Theatre, 12 Palace Street, London, SW1E 5JA. Two performances only at 2:30pm and 7pm. For details visit www.stjamestheatre.co.uk **Proceeds from the performances will be donated to Sense, the charity for deafblind people. For more information on Sense please visit www.sense.org.uk**

For further information, interviews or images please contact Maxim Bendall: maxim.bendall@showcase.uk.com or 0207 1830196/07540 524928.

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Notes to Editors

London Contemporary Orchestra

One of the UK's most highly sought after interpreters of contemporary repertoire, The London Contemporary Orchestra have established an unparalleled reputation within the British Classical Music scene since they were formed in 2008 by violist and conductor Robert Ames and conductor Hugh Brunt.

Straddling both the classical and commercial music arenas, London Contemporary Orchestra have worked with a distinguished catalogue of composers and artists and brands Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, Secret Cinema, United Visual Artists, Biosphere, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Vivienne Westwood, Matmos, Belle & Sebastian, Conrad Shawcross, Nike, Jimmy Page and Foals. They have performed at the UK's most prestigious venues including the Royal Opera House, The Roundhouse, The Old Vic Tunnels and The Southbank Centre as well as at the Latitude Festival and on BBC Radio 3 and Sky Arts. In 2010 the London Contemporary Orchestra was recognised by the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards for its work in audience development.

Laura Rossi

Laura Rossi has written extensively for film and television, including scores for Paul Andrew Williams' critically acclaimed features, *London to Brighton* and *The Cottage* and has just completed the score for *Song for Marion*, starring Vanessa Redgrave and Terrence Stamp. Laura has also scored many silent films including the British Film Institute's award-winning *Silent Shakespeare* and the IWM 1916 film *The Battle of the Somme*, which has been released on CD and DVD to worldwide critical acclaim. Laura also recently scored the feature film *The Firm* for Vertigo Films directed by Nick Love and *The Man Inside* directed by Dan Turner.

Her concert works have been performed at the Barbican, the Royal Festival Hall and the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London. Laura is a guest lecturer at the London Film Academy and has led many film music masterclasses across the UK.

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