MASON BATES’S TERM AS KENNEDY CENTER COMPOSER IN RESIDENCE EXTENDED FOR TWO ADDITIONAL YEARS, THROUGH 2019–2020 SEASON

Bates’s KC Jukebox Series Continues this Season on November 15 Featuring Guest Artists Mouse on Mars

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announces the extension of Composer in Residence Mason Bates’s contract for two additional seasons, through the 2019–2020 season.

“I’m delighted to extend our relationship with Composer in Residence Mason Bates for a further two seasons,” said Kennedy Center President Deborah F. Rutter. “Mason’s creative instincts, his collaborative spirit, and his ability to appeal to a wide audience across genres have made him an excellent ambassador for contemporary classical music and culture here at the Center, and we eagerly look forward to what the coming years may bring.”

Bates was appointed as the Center’s first-ever Composer in Residence for a three-year term, beginning with the 2015–2016 season. Since that time, he has established a new series of contemporary programs at the Center, KC Jukebox, which features guest performers from a range of genres throughout the season. KC Jukebox experiments with new concert formats, ranging from a fluid evening presenting a century of ambient music to a unique concert pairing Thievery Corporation’s electronic soundworld with an orchestra. At each event, which includes pre- and post-concert DJs, audiences are educated about the new music
on the program through projections and videos. In addition, Bates’s signature concert experience, *Mercury Soul*—a blend of live electronica, classical music, DJing, and visual art—creates a cutting-edge, immersive dance club.

“It’s so inspiring to work in a place where so many art forms collide,” said Mason Bates. “As a composer, I’ve been thankful to hear the National Symphony Orchestra bring to life several of my pieces, including *Passage*, a tribute to JFK’s ‘Moonshot’ speech. As a curator, I’ve enjoyed creating nontraditional events in the Kennedy Center’s myriad spaces, which offer exciting opportunities to present music in new ways. Audiences enjoy adventurous new art when the concert experience is inviting and fluid, and that’s something we can offer at the Kennedy Center in creative ways.”

Bates’s work can be heard at the Center throughout the 2017–2018 season, including this week by the National Symphony Orchestra, which gives its first performances of *Auditorium*—a Baroque thriller that haunts the modern orchestra with original neo-Baroque music composed for period instruments—on October 12, 14, and 15. *KC Jukebox* programs begins on Wednesday, November 15, at 7:30 p.m. with a rare area appearance of the German electronica duo, Mouse on Mars. This visceral event combines live electronica and acoustic instruments, creating an unconventional concert experience in the Center’s Atrium.

Other *KC Jukebox* events this season include *Ear / Eye*, featuring music by Anna Clyne, Marcos Balter, and Jacob Cooper on December 8 in the Terrace Theater; *California Mystics*—part of *DIRECT CURRENT*—with music by Lou Harrison, Steve Reich, Nathaniel Stookey, and Bates on March 11, 2018, in the Atrium; *Mercury Soul* on March 15, 2018, in the Atrium; and *JFK Jukebox: In Homage to JFK’s Legacy in Civil Rights*, a program of music informed by the Civil Rights movement, on April 25, 2018, in the Terrace Theater. *Mercury Soul* takes place on March 15, 2018, at 7:30 p.m. in the Kennedy Center Atrium.
Bates’s Kennedy Center-commissioned composition, Passage, received its world premiere at the Center in May 2016 by the National Symphony Orchestra and mezzo-soprano Sasha Cohen, as part of the Center’s yearlong celebration of JFK’s centennial. Passage intersperses electronics and actual recordings of JFK’s famous “Moonshot” speech into a vibrant orchestral setting of portions of Walt Whitman’s poem, Passage to India, celebrating American exploration. Among Bates’s other recent successes are the premiere of his first opera, The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs, at the Santa Fe Opera earlier this year, as well as two Grammy Award® nominations for recordings of his work: Anthology of Fantastic Zoology, released by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Riccardo Muti, and a composer portrait disc by the San Francisco Symphony and Michael Tilson Thomas.

ABOUT MASON BATES
Recently named the most-performed composer of his generation, Mason Bates serves as the first composer-in-residence of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Championed by legendary conductors such as Riccardo Muti, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Leonard Slatkin, his symphonic music is the first to receive widespread acceptance for its unique integration of electronic sounds, and his recent opera, The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs, was hailed as one of the best-selling productions in the history of Santa Fe Opera.

As both a DJ and a curator, Bates has become a visible advocate for bringing new music to new spaces, whether through institutional partnerships such as his residency with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, or through his club/classical project Mercury Soul, which transforms spaces ranging from commercial clubs to Frank Gehry-designed concert halls into exciting, hybrid musical events drawing large crowds. In awarding Bates the Heinz Medal, Teresa Heinz remarked that “his music has moved the orchestra into the digital age and dissolved the boundaries of classical music.”

Bringing classical music to new audiences is a central part of Bates’s activities as a curator, whether as a composer or DJ. With composer Anna Clyne, he transformed the Chicago Symphony’s MusicNOW series into an imaginative concert experience drawing huge crowds, with cinematic program notes and immersive stagecraft. At the Kennedy Center, Bates works with the Center’s broad range of artistic constituents, from performances with the National Symphony Orchestra to appearances with Jason Moran on the Kennedy Center Jazz series, often integrating DJs into the Center’s unique spaces.

Working in clubs under the name DJ Masonic, Bates has developed a post-classical rave that has integrated classical music and electronics to packed crowds in collaborations with clubs and orchestras around the country. Mercury Soul embeds sets of classical music into an evening of DJing and immersive stagecraft. Sold-out performances from San Francisco’s famed Mezzanine club to Miami’s New World Symphony have brought a new vision of the listening experience to widespread audiences, and the project has been invited by the Chicago Symphony and Pittsburgh Symphony for events at local clubs. Mercury Soul will be
presented in three shows at San Francisco’s DNA Lounge; elsewhere around San Francisco, Bates DJs on this year’s LoveBoat party after a performance by Moby.

This spring, Bates returns to his hometown of Richmond, Virginia with a new work celebrating the Richmond Symphony’s 60th anniversary. His first work for chorus and orchestra, *Children of Adam*, is an exuberant setting of American poems about creation, with a special focus on secular poets exploring sacred themes. The work also includes creation texts from Native Americans of the Virginia area, as well as novel celebrations of the creative power of the Industrial Age from Carl Sanburg.

Elsewhere, the legendary Joffrey Ballet premières a new ballet Feb 7-18 on *The B-Sides* by Nicholas Blanc, who first choreographed *Mothership* for New York City Ballet. The superstar chorus Chanticleer tours the new work *Drum-Taps* around the country on a program responding to armed conflict.

**ABOUT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

The **John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts** is America’s living memorial to President Kennedy. Under the guidance of Chairman David M. Rubenstein, and President Deborah F. Rutter, the nine theaters and stages of the nation’s busiest performing arts facility attract more than three million visitors to more than 2,000 performances each year, while center-related touring productions, television, and radio broadcasts reach 40 million more around the world.

The Center produces and presents performances of music, dance, comedy, and theater; supports artists in the creation of new work; and serves the nation as a leader in arts education. With its artistic affiliates, the National Symphony Orchestra and Washington National Opera, the Center has produced more than 300 theatrical productions, and dozens of new ballets, operas, and musical works, in addition to hosting numerous international cultural festivals. The Center’s Emmy® and Peabody Award-winning *The Kennedy Center Honors* is broadcast annually on CBS and annual *The Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize for American Humor* is broadcast on PBS.

The education programs of the Kennedy Center, including those of its affiliate VSA, the international organization on arts and disability, have become models for communities across the country and have unlocked the door to learning for millions of young people. *Education at the Kennedy Center* produces and presents age appropriate performances and educational events, and fosters innovative programming, curriculum, and professional development for students, teachers, and families.

The Center and its affiliates stage more than 400 free performances by artists from throughout the world each year on the Center’s main stages, and every day of the year at 6 p.m. on its Millennium Stages, which are also streamed live, online. The Center also offers reduced and complimentary tickets to young people, active members of the military, and the underserved through its *MyTiX program* and offers a Specially Priced Tickets program for students, seniors, persons with disabilities, and others with fixed low incomes.

To learn more about the Kennedy Center, please visit [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org).
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FUNDING CREDITS
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