

# WORLD PREMIERE

# JANE EYRE

## BY JOHN JOUBERT

"Five stars...strongly recommended."

**Guy Rickards, Musical Opinion**

"As a timely reminder of the melodic strengths and potency of Joubert's music, this fine performance with April Fredrick as Jane, David Stout as Rochester and Mark Milhofer as the Reverend St John Rivers certainly did the trick."

**Andrew Clements, The Guardian**



# JANE EYRE - THE OPERA

## ON TOUR FROM 2018

On the 25th of October 2016, the English Symphony Orchestra, in partnership with Somm Recordings, presented a concert that will be remembered and discussed for many years to come.

The audience and orchestra musicians rose to their feet in unanimous acclaim for composer **John Joubert** on the occasion of the world premiere of his magnum opus, **Jane Eyre**.

**This magnificent three act opera (duration approx. 155 min) is available for a world premiere staging from 2018.**

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## CRITICAL RESPONSE TO THE CONCERT PREMIERE

*"Five Stars. The tears in our eyes at the end of this professional première of John Joubert's Jane Eyre were quickened not only by the ravishing music of Jane and Rochester's reconciliation, but also by the sheer emotional importance of the occasion...on Tuesday Joubert's vision was finally fulfilled...the near-ninety year-old acknowledged thunderous applause after a tremendous performance of a wonderful score... with an adroit libretto by Kenneth Birkin."* - **Chris Morley, Birmingham Post**

*"As a timely reminder of the melodic strengths and potency of Joubert's music, this fine performance with April Fredrick as Jane, David Stout as Rochester and Mark Milhofer as the Reverend St John Rivers certainly did the trick."* - **Andrew Clements, The Guardian**

*"Premiere of the Year, 2016"* - **Classical Music Magazine**

*"The Classical Highlight of 2016... a spectacular year for classical music in the Midlands"* - **The Birmingham Post**

*"...April Fredrick sang with a lyrically gleaming soprano, soaring rapturously on Joubert's singer-friendly lines. David Stout supplied virile tone as Rochester... Kenneth Woods conducted a well-prepared performance that ought on disc to win new admirers for the operatic Joubert"* - **John Allison, Daily Telegraph**

*"...Joubert and his librettist Kenneth Birkin have taken the Eugene Onegin approach, extracting six key scenes from a well-loved novel and going straight for their emotional heart. Joubert's luminous, ardently lyrical score (think Britten without his splinter of ice) is disarmingly direct. David Stout made a suitably brusque and Byronic Rochester, but it was April Fredrick as Jane who really carried the whole thing. Whether flashing with defiance or soaring rapturously and with radiant tone over a surging orchestra, she looked - and sounded - as if she needed to be on stage. Jane Eyre itself certainly does."* - **Richard Bratby, The Spectator**





*"Five Stars. ...there was an added poignancy in the standing ovation, and a feeling that something of real value had taken place: an important contribution to the repertoire, deserving of a place on the world opera stage."*

**Pamela Nash, Bachtrack**

*"The first professional performance of the opera Jane Eyre was recorded by Somm...the 2 CD set release will be quite an event and to be there to hear the performance was a delight...a passionate work and full of heart...this was all so well done...we can look forward to the release of what is likely to prove a glowing entry in the annals of recorded English opera."*

**Rob Barnett, MusicWeb-International**



*"A world première positively reeking of drama and tension...it took this Birmingham audience by storm. Fredrick was utterly absorbing to listen to...Stout matched her at every turn...the English Symphony Orchestra as committed and on the ball as I've heard them...conducted throughout with wonderful command and control by Kenneth Woods...recorded live by the ever bold and imaginative Somm recordings...the genuinely exciting evening was such a treat: a truly rich experience."*

**Roderic Dunnnett, Music and Vision Daily**

## THE RECORDING



Soprano April Fredrick (Jane Eyre) and composer John Joubert

*"Five stars...strongly recommended."*

**- Guy Rickards, Musical Opinion**

*"...a sensual, melodic score that despite employing only [22-]35 players sounds rich and full with sensitively integrated orchestral piano and substantially deployed percussion leading the powerful climaxes"*

**- Clive Paget, Limelight Magazine (Australia)**

*"Joubert's Jane Eyre communicates much about the particularities of individual human experience...The joyful warmth of the impassioned reunion scene leads to a transcendent closing duet."*

**- Claire Seymour, Opera Today**

*"Five stars. It's a thrilling, emotional experience characterised by a score rich in feeling (variously conjuring Wagner, Strauss, Puccini, Britten and others) and dramatic focus."*

**- Michael Quinn, The Classical Ear**



# THE CAST

Jane Eyre - *soprano*

Sarah, a pupil at Lowood - *soprano*

Mr Brocklehurst, a governor at Lowood - *bass-baritone*

Mrs Fairfax, housekeeper at Thornfield - *mezzo-soprano*

Edward Rochester, owner of Thornfield - *baritone*

John, manservant at Thornfield - *bass*

Leah, housemaid at Thornfield - *soprano*

Verger of Thornfield Church - *baritone*

Richard Mason, Rochester's brother-in-law - *tenor*

Briggs, a solicitor - *bass*

The Revd Wood - *bass*

Rector's clerk - *counter-tenor*

Diana Rivers - *soprano*

Mary Rivers - *soprano*

Hannah, the Rivers' housekeeper - *soprano*

The Revd St. John Rivers - *tenor*

The following roles can be doubled (reduces cast from 16 singers to 11)

Sarah with Diana Rivers

Leah with Mary Rivers

Mason with St. John Rivers

Mrs Fairfax with Hannah

Mr Brocklehurst with Revd Wood (or Briggs)

# THE ORCHESTRA

Flute (doubling piccolo), oboe (doubling cor anglais),  
bassoon (doubling contra), horn, trumpet, trombone,  
tuba, piano (doubling organ) timpani, percussion  
(2 players), strings (4 4 2 2 1 min, 8 6 4 4 2 preferred).

Minimum 25 players

# CONTACT

For more information or to book Jane Eyre, please contact:  
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