



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

For Immediate release: 24 January 2012

Animators challenged to bring life back into Silent Movie music

Animators everywhere are being challenged to bring to life a unique collection of silent movie scores that have been recorded by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and form part of Birmingham's world-class archive and special collections, which will be housed at the new Library of Birmingham (opening 2013).

The *Silent Movies Animation Challenge* is a partnership between the CBSO, Birmingham Library & Archive Services and Animation Forum West Midlands, and is open to anyone with a passion for animation. Using the scores recorded by the CBSO, animators are being asked to create a unique piece of work that will reawaken the spirit of the 'golden era of cinema' – between 1915 and 1929.

Stephen Maddock, CBSO chief executive, said: "These 'iconic' pieces of music hold a special place in Birmingham's rich cultural heritage. We've been privileged to and have had a lot of fun recording some of the titles, which include: Indian War Dance, Dramatic Love Scene, Cottage Love Scene, Conspiracy and The Smugglers.

"Through the *Silent Movies Animation Challenge* we hope to give the music a sense of purpose once more. We're looking for talented individuals, who don't need experience, just inspiration, to create a short piece that resonates with the music and the era but also has a flavour of the city that has 'rediscovered' this musical treasure in its archives."

Mike Whitby, Leader of Birmingham City Council said: "These rare scores were rediscovered last year during ongoing preparations for the move to the Library of Birmingham in 2013. This is quite possibly one of the largest and most important collections in the UK and contains pieces that haven't been heard for almost 100 years. It's thrilling to think that we're bringing this slice of cinematic history to life

press release

through the recordings and also through working with animators who will be creating a future legacy for this work.”

Animators are invited to create a short animation, using the streamed pieces of music on the [CBSO SoundCloud page](#), including the word Birmingham or an image of the city. A panel of experts and enthusiasts including the CharacterShop’s Andy Guest, The Brothers McLeod’s Myles McLeod, Dice Production’s Louis Hudson and Skillset’s Saint John Walker & Rebecca Davies will judge the entries. Finalists will have their work screened - accompanied by the Orchestra - at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Friday 20 April 2012 as part of the **Friday Night Classics: Classic Chaplin** night. The winning animator will receive a place on the *Introduction to Final Cut Pro X* course at Birmingham City University’s NTI Birmingham, as well as a money-can’t-buy placement at the award winning animation studio, *The CharacterShop*, in Birmingham.

David Allen, Animation Forum West Midlands’ manager: “This challenge offers animators a very unique prospect of having their work screened alongside a live orchestra in true silent cinema style. The Midlands has a wealth of animation talent, and we can’t wait to see what people come up with.”

Closing date for entries is **2 April 2012**. Entries should be sent as a .mov file via Dropbox to rgreen@cbso.co.uk or posted on a DVD data disc to Ruth Green, CBSO Centre, Berkley Street, Birmingham, B1 2LF. For full details and terms & conditions go to the CBSO Facebook page or animationforumwm.co.uk.

The CBSO’s **Friday Night Classics: Classic Chaplin** takes place on Friday 10 April 2012, 7.30pm, at Symphony Hall. Tickets can be bought in person at the Symphony Hall box office, by phone on 0121 7890 333, or online at www.thsh.co.uk

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For further information, comment and images about the CBSO please contact:
Ruth Green, Communications Manager on: 0121 616 6511 or 07813 162334, rgreen@cbso.co.uk
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For more information about the silent movie scores and about the Library of Birmingham please contact Sarah Watson on sarah@colmangetty.co.uk or on 020 7631 2666.

Note to Editors

1. **CBSO.** In 2020 the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra will celebrate its centenary. Since the inaugural concert, conducted by Sir Edward Elgar in November 1920, the CBSO has grown into a 90-piece ensemble with a worldwide reputation.

As the resident orchestra of Birmingham's Symphony Hall, the CBSO performs around 130 concerts each year and is in constant demand to appear at venues around the world. *Ignite*, the CBSO's programme to engage audiences and the community, includes a world-famous family of four choruses, chamber groups, a youth orchestra and an education programme that in total reaches upwards of 50,000 people each year.

The CBSO has a sizable discography, with many recordings having won international prizes. Under Andris Nelsons the CBSO has released critically acclaimed discs with *Orfeo* featuring music by Tchaikovsky, Richard Strauss and Stravinsky.

2. **About the Library of Birmingham**

The Library of Birmingham will be a major new cultural destination, rewriting the book for 21st century public libraries. It opens in 2013.

The Library of Birmingham will provide a showcase for the city's internationally important collections of archives, photography and rare books. New facilities including state-of-the-art gallery space will open up public access to the collections for the first time. It will also be home to a BFI Mediatheque, providing free access to the National Film Archive. Other facilities will include a new flexible studio theatre, an outdoor amphitheatre and other informal performance spaces, a recording studio, and dedicated spaces for children and teenagers. By harnessing new technology, everyone from Birmingham to Beijing, Bangalore and beyond will be able to access the Library of Birmingham's world-class resources. More than three million visitors are expected each year, and millions more online.

Described by its architect Francine Houben as a 'people's palace', the Library of Birmingham will be highly accessible and family-friendly. It will deliver excellent services through collaboration between the library, The Birmingham Repertory Theatre, partners and communities. It will provide a dynamic mix of events, activities and performance together with outstanding resources, exhibitions and access to expert help for learning, information and culture. As a centre of excellence for literacy, research, study, skills development, entrepreneurship, creative expression, health information and much more, the Library of Birmingham will change people's lives.

3. **Animation Forum West Midlands** (www.animationforumwm.co.uk) is a networking group for animators and animation professionals in the West Midlands. Supporting the region's animation industry since 2007, it is managed by Birmingham City University's NTI Birmingham, and was previously funded by the University and Screen WM. The Forum has over a 1,000 members – including all of the region's major animation studios, and helps animators into work through organising popular networking events throughout the year, industry blog and a jobs board.