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Cultural Programs of the National Academy of Sciences

****MEDIA ADVISORY****

Black Hole Symphony to Perform at the National Academy of Sciences

WASHINGTON — Experience the unfolding story of black holes as engines of gravity, light, and creation through a groundbreaking fusion of art, science, and music! A live performance of Black Hole Symphony will take place at the National Academy of Sciences on Sunday, Nov. 5, 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

WHAT: Black Hole Symphony — an immersive new production from the Museum of Science, Boston, and the Multiverse Concert Series, in collaboration with the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics and Black Hole Initiative — takes you on a symphonic journey through space-time. The symphony is performed by a chamber orchestra and accompanied by stunning, immersive visuals by the Museum of Science, Boston's Charles Hayden Planetarium animators. Composer David Ibbett has sonified the light of black hole galaxies as musical notes and chords woven into a dramatic electro-symphonic score that reveals a hidden universe beyond the scope of our eyes. Audiences are plunged into deep space, riding relativistic jets of plasma, guided through the dense dust torus, broad-line clouds, and ultimately reaching the blazing accretion disk on the event horizon of a supermassive black hole.

WHO: **David Ibbett**, composer and conductor

Johnny Mok, cello

Ryan Shannon, violin

Agnes Coakley-Cox, soprano

Vince LeRow, audio engineer

Dan VanHassel, electric guitar

Stephanie Ray, flute/piccolo

Anna Barnacka, scientist from the Harvard Center for Astrophysics

S. James Gates Jr., NAS member and theoretical physicist from the University of Maryland, College Park

WHEN: Sunday, Nov. 5, 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.

WHERE: National Academy of Sciences, Fred Kavli Auditorium, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

TICKETS: Free; Photo ID and registration required: <https://blackholesymphony.eventbrite.com>

Available for interviews:

David Ibbett is a composer, educator, and musical advocate for science. Based in Boston, he is a professor of music at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts, and he directs the Multiverse Concert Series, a project that combines music and science in live performance. Ibbett composes electro-symphonic music, a fusion of classical and electronic styles that interweaves influences from songs, symphonies, pop, rock, and electronica. Musical strands are met with inspiration from the work of scientists, resulting in sonified data, musical metaphors for scientific concepts, and experimental sound and images from contemporary research. In 2020, Ibbett was the first guest

composer at Fermilab, the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, and in 2023, Ibbett was named the first resident composer at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.