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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**May 10 release of *The Passion***

**Jeffrey Brooks' new works for amplified chamber orchestra  
reveal a long road of struggle and perseverance**



**featuring performances by the Bang on a Can All-Stars and Contemporaneous  
conducted by David Bloom**

**Album released as a collaboration between  
Cantaloupe Music and innova Recordings**

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New York, NY & St. Paul, MN -- **innova Recordings** and **Cantaloupe Music** announce the **May 10, 2019** joint release of ***The Passion***, a new album featuring the music of composer **Jeffrey Brooks**, recorded by the **Bang on a Can All-Stars** and **Contemporaneous**, and conducted by **David Bloom**. *The Passion* includes the world premiere recordings of *After the Treewatcher*, *Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother*, and *The Passion*. The album was produced and recorded by Damian leGassick and recorded at the Power Station at BerkleeNYC in May 2018, and is the first joint release between Cantaloupe Music and innova Recordings.

*The Passion* signals composer **Jeffrey Brooks**' resurgence with these three major works for amplified, large mixed ensemble, while also reuniting him with his roots. It represents a multi-year commitment by Bang on a Can to commission Brooks, and is the first recording devoted solely to his music. All three works on this album were commissioned over a period of five years by the Thelma Hunter Fund for Bang on a Can, and premiered at the annual Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival at MASS MoCA and the Bang on a Can Marathon in New York City.

"This is Jeffrey Brooks' very first portrait album, and we're thrilled to release it," says Pulitzer-winning composer **Julia Wolfe**, one of the three co-founders and co-artistic directors of Bang on a Can. "He's been creating hard-driving, highly rhythmic, super colorful works in the Twin Cities, and we wanted to help bring his original and powerful voice to a broader listening public. You can hear a real gusto and razor-sharp focus in the way David Bloom conducts a superstar Bang on a Can/Contemporaneous ensemble; together they reveal all the quirky, off-kilter, ecstatic grooves and melodies in Brooks' music."

For all the feelings of loss, pain and mourning that Brooks explored in composing these three pieces for *The Passion*, the music itself is indeed buoyant, even boisterous, and profoundly uplifting. This is a triptych that celebrates life in spite of struggle, and puts Brooks' expansive creative palette on full display, with an emphasis on movement.

"I think there's music that you can really get your head around intellectually or emotionally," Brooks observes, "and then there's music that you can just experience physically, with the subwoofers going through your body—like dance music. The music I try to write has all three components, and to me, music that makes you want to move is a good thing. People shouldn't be sitting down when they listen to this CD."

Brooks says that hearing **Michael Gordon**'s piece *The Treewatcher* was a seminal, life-changing moment for him—so much so that in 2012, while sitting on his front porch and thinking of the next piece he should write, *The Treewatcher* came to mind. Brooks hadn't heard the piece since its 1980 premiere, but he set to work reimagining it on his own terms. At Gordon's suggestion, he worked from memory to maintain the hypnotic quality of the original, while shifting it slowly and steadily. The piece concludes in a nod to the original, which ended with **David Lang** hitting a hotel desk bell for 20 seconds.

*Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother* is a tribute to Brooks' close friend, the late British composer **Steve Martland**. It starts with a scratchy vinyl recording of the J.S. Bach work of the same name, invoking a nostalgia that gives way to waves of guitar feedback and drums. The work soon morphs and the band fires on all cylinders with instructions to play loud, reflecting Martland's love of rock music and dance clubs.

The last work in the trilogy is *The Passion*, a spiritual tour de force that focuses on suffering, but unlike the Baroque oratorios, it tells a deeply personal story of the daily suffering of everyday people: the terminally ill, the parent who had to give up their own dreams, victims of mental illness, exploited and undocumented workers.

"There's a quality of endurance and perseverance in something that I believe is a just enterprise, which is composing music," Brooks says. "It's a big responsibility, and I work really hard on my pieces. I don't write

them quickly, and there's an element of persevering, a *struggle*, that comes through. And I think that's what you're hearing as the positive feeling in *The Passion*. You *can* persevere in this, and that's a worthwhile goal in itself."

**Jeffrey Brooks** is an American composer living in Minneapolis. He began composing at an early age, eventually going on to study at Tanglewood and Yale University, where he earned Masters and Doctoral degrees. His primary teachers include Louis Andriessen, Gilbert Amy and Martin Bresnick. Brooks is associated with the post-minimalist composers of Bang on a Can. He was closely involved in shaping the aesthetic profile of the early festivals in the 1980s. His music fits the Bang on a Can image in terms of rhythmic drive, single-minded approach to form, and use of amplified instruments, but his work is also characterized by attention to counterpoint and an almost Neoclassical sensibility.

**innova Recordings** serves the needs of visionary composers and performers by offering artistic and technical guidance throughout the recording and publication process; amplifying the reach of new musical ideas through access to our marketing and distribution networks; and by actively working together to maximize professional impact. Together we champion a curated body of original and compelling American musical voices to the listening public.

innova is dedicated to forward-looking (and *-hearing*) work that pushes and challenges the boundaries of contemporary music. The label's releases are less dictated by record-bin-constraints or typical notions of marketability, but by the integrity of the work, its originality, conceptual richness and technical quality, and the artist's willingness to support and promote the release.

With over 600 titles, innova albums and artists have been nominated for - and won - Pulitzers, Grammys, and Emmys. They have received plaudits from publications from the New York Times to Czech Republic's His Voice magazine, from the Wire in London to the Los Angeles Times, Italy's Kathodik and everywhere in between.

**Cantaloupe Music** is the record label created and launched in March 2001 by the three founders of New York's legendary Bang on a Can organization—composers Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe—with Bang on a Can managing director Kenny Savelson. Cantaloupe has made a massive impact in the new music community, and has been recognized by critics and fans worldwide for its edgy and adventurous sounds.

The label's mission has been to provide a home for contemporary classical and post-classical music that is, in the words of Michael Gordon, "too funky for the academy." Throughout its nearly 20-year history, Cantaloupe has repeatedly received accolades from the New York Times, National Public Radio, the New Yorker, the Washington Post, the Boston Globe, The Guardian (UK), The Wire (UK), Newsday, Mojo magazine, Gramophone, Billboard, Stereophile and Time Out New York. With over 100 titles in an ever-growing catalog that features recordings by the Bang on a Can All-Stars (Bang on a Can's flagship ensemble), So Percussion, Alarm Will Sound, Kronos Quartet and many more, the label is home to the lion's share of recorded music written by Gordon, Lang and Wolfe, and has also released key recordings of recent works by John Luther Adams (including *Become Ocean*, which won a Grammy in 2015), as well as Glenn Kotche, Derek Bermel, Caleb Burhans, Florent Ghys, Kate Moore, Michael Harrison, Toby Twining and an even wider range of emerging young composers.

**Bang on a Can** is dedicated to making music new. Since its first Marathon concert in 1987, Bang on a Can has been creating an international community dedicated to innovative music, wherever it is found. With adventurous programs, it commissions new composers, performs, presents, and records new work, develops new audiences, and educates the musicians of the future. Bang on a Can is building a world in which powerful new musical ideas flow freely across all genres and borders. Bang on a Can plays “a central role in fostering a new kind of audience that doesn’t concern itself with boundaries. If music is made with originality and integrity, these listeners will come.” (*The New York Times*)

Bang on a Can has grown from a one-day New York-based Marathon concert (on Mother’s Day in 1987 in a SoHo art gallery) to a multi-faceted performing arts organization with a broad range of year-round international activities. “When we started Bang on a Can, we never imagined that our 12-hour marathon festival of mostly unknown music would morph into a giant international organization dedicated to the support of experimental music, wherever we would find it,” write Bang on a Can Co-Founders Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe. “But it has, and we are so gratified to be still hard at work, all these years later. The reason is really clear to us – we started this organization because we believed that making new music is a utopian act – that people needed to hear this music and they needed to hear it presented in the most persuasive way, with the best players, with the best programs, for the best listeners, in the best context. Our commitment to changing the environment for this music has kept us busy and growing, and we are not done yet.”

In addition to Bang on a Can’s new **LOUD Weekend** at MASS MoCA, current projects include **The People’s Commissioning Fund**, a membership program to commission emerging composers; the **Bang on a Can All-Stars**, who tour to major festivals and concert venues around the world every year; recording projects; the **Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival at MASS MoCA**, a professional development program for young composers and performers led by today’s pioneers of experimental music; **Asphalt Orchestra**, Bang on a Can’s extreme street band that offers mobile performances re-contextualizing unusual music; **Found Sound Nation**, a new technology-based musical outreach program now partnering with the State Department of the United States of America to create **OneBeat**, a revolutionary, post-political residency program that uses music to bridge the gulf between young American musicians and young musicians from developing countries; cross-disciplinary collaborations and projects with DJs, visual artists, choreographers, filmmakers and more. Each new program has evolved to answer specific challenges faced by today’s musicians, composers and audiences, in order to make innovative music widely accessible and wildly received. Bang on a Can’s inventive and aggressive approach to programming and presentation has created a large and vibrant international audience made up of people of all ages who are rediscovering the value of contemporary music.

**Contemporaneous**, conducted by **David Bloom**, is an ensemble of 22 musicians whose mission is to bring to life the music of now. Recognized for its dedication to “ferocious, focused performance” (*The New York Times*) and for its “captivating and whole-hearted commitment” (*I Care If You Listen*), the ensemble performs and promotes the most exciting work of living composers through innovative concerts, commissions, recordings, and educational programs.

Based in New York City and active throughout the United States, Contemporaneous has been presented by such institutions as Lincoln Center, Park Avenue Armory, PROTOTYPE Festival, Merkin Concert Hall, MATA Festival, St. Ann’s Warehouse, and Bang on a Can, and has worked with such artists as David Byrne, Donnacha Dennehy, Iarla Ó Lionáird, Dawn Upshaw, and Julia Wolfe.

**Track List:**

The Passion | Music by Jeffrey Brooks | innova Recordings & Cantaloupe Music

Bang on a Can All-Stars & Contemporaneous | David Bloom, conductor

Release date: May 10, 2019

[1] *After the Treewatcher* (7:54)

[2] *Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother* (11:08)

[3] *The Passion* (21:31)