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**Rising Star Bolai Cao Premieres Composition by
Oregon Composer Bryan Johanson
in Salem and Portland**

(Portland, OR) Portland Piano International is proud to announce the third work composed through its Commissioning Project and performed in cooperation with its already-established Rising Stars program. Performances in Salem and Portland will feature Chinese pianist Bolai Cao playing the world premiere of a composition by Portland composer Bryan Johanson. This new work is titled *Essercizi* and is inspired by the sonatas of Italian composer Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757).

Mr. Cao will perform both Johanson's *Essercizi* and several sonatas by Scarlatti. Mr. Johanson will also be present at the performances. Each performance is free and open to the public. In addition to *Essercizi*, Mr. Cao will perform several etudes by Frédéric Chopin and *Reminiscences de Don Juan* by Franz Liszt.

Scheduled performances are:

February 12, 2016	7:30 pm	Terwilliger Plaza 2545 SW Terwilliger Blvd	Portland, OR
February 13, 2016	2:30 pm	Salem Public Library 585 Liberty St SE	Salem, OR
February 14, 2016	4:00 pm	Portland Piano Company 711 SW 14th Avenue	Portland, OR

Portland Piano International is focusing on the power of new works by helping build the solo piano repertoire for the 21st century and beyond. Mr. Johanson's work is the third of twelve compositions to be premiered over the next two years. The first six Oregon composers have been selected and the remaining six will be chosen in 2016.

The two-year Commissioning Project is funded through a Creative Heights Grant from The Oregon Community Foundation. Portland Piano International was selected as one of only 13 organizations statewide for the first round of these new grants, which were established through the Fred W. Fields Fund.

Portland Piano International thanks the generous sponsors who have made the Rising Star series possible: Autzen Foundation, Jackson Foundation, Oregon Cultural Trust, Herbert A. Templeton Foundation and U.S. Bank.

About Bolai Cao

Born in 1997, Bolai Cao started learning the piano at age 4. He entered primary school affiliated with the Central Conservatory of Music (studying with Professor Zhang Xinning) at the age of

10, the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts at the age of 13 (studying with Professor Huang Yilun), and was admitted to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia at the very young age of 14 due to his outstanding piano skills. Presently, he is studying at the Institutute with Gary Graffman.

Over the years, he has won special gold and silver medals in many important young pianist competitions, including a first place finish in the Professional Group III and the special prize of the professional groups of the 12th Xing Hasi Cup National Junior Piano Competition in 2008. He also won first place in the IX International Competition for Young Pianists in memory of Vladimir Hirowitz in 2011, second place in the Ettlingen International Competition for Young Pianists in 2012 and second place in the 7th annual International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians in 2012.

At the age of 13, Bolai Cao began giving solo piano recitals in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai and Zhuhai. From 2012-2013, he was invited to perform at several music festivals held inside and outside China. He released his first solo piano recital album at the age of 14 in China.

About Bryan Johanson

Born and raised in Portland, Bryan Johanson is a classical guitarist who is an award-winning composer. He has won major awards from the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival and School, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, UCLA and The Esztergom International Guitar Festival. Johanson studied composition with Charles Jones and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer William Bolcom. Johanson's compositions feature three symphonies, concertos for violin, cello and piano, numerous chamber works, song cycles and choral works, as well as compositions for solo instruments including the classical guitar. Bryan has studied with the likes of Christopher Parkening, Alirio Diaz, and Michael Lorimer and has performed with orchestras, chamber music groups, choirs, and in solo recitals throughout the United States and Canada. He is a member of the Oregon Guitar Quartet, a group for which he has created numerous original compositions and arrangements. He currently lives in Portland with his wife Victoria and daughter Molly.

Portland Piano International is dedicated to presenting the finest pianists in the world in recital settings and outreach activities for the purpose of enriching and educating our community. Funders and sponsors include the Oregon Community Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, Regional Arts & Culture Council, Work for Art, James F. and Marion Miller Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, Portland Piano Company, Higgins Restaurant, Portland State University and All Classical Media.

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