

 **MUSIC MAGAZINE**
AWARDS 2010

**CONDUCTOR SEMYON BYCHKOV AWARDED
DISC OF THE YEAR FOR WAGNER'S OPERA *LOHENGRIN***

BBC Music Magazine today announced its **Disc of the Year** at an Awards ceremony at Kings Place, London. **Wagner's *Lohengrin***, performed by the **WDR Symphony Orchestra, Cologne**, conducted by **Semyon Bychkov**, won the coveted prize and the Opera Award. The Award was presented by actor **Simon Callow**.

Voted for by the public and an expert jury of critics, this recording represents the best of more than 1,500 recordings reviewed by *BBC Music Magazine* in 2009.

Russian conductor Semyon Bychkov is an acclaimed Wagnerian and has enjoyed a highly successful 12-year tenure as music director of Cologne's WDR Symphony Orchestra. His Award coincides with the 35th anniversary of the day he arrived as a refugee in Vienna with just \$100 in his pocket.

Semyon Bychkov commented: *'It is with a feeling of profound gratitude that I received the news that our *Lohengrin* was the BBC Music Magazine Disc of the Year. The project was realised with the utmost love and dedication by everyone involved, and that it has now been recognized by the voting public as well as music critics means that we succeeded in conveying the timeless qualities of Wagner's masterpiece. There can be no greater satisfaction for an interpreter than being able to touch the listener.'*

Other winners receiving Awards included Moldovan violinist **Patricia Kopatchinskaya** for her radical interpretation of Beethoven's Violin Concerto (Orchestral Award), the British **Elias String Quartet** (Newcomers of the Year) and the **Jerusalem Quartet**, winning the Chamber Award for the second time for their disc of Haydn Quartets. **Antonio Pappano** won the Choral Award for his masterful reading of Verdi's Requiem with the National Academy of St Cecilia, Rome, featuring Rolando Villazon among the soloists. Distinguished pianist **Murray Perahia** won the Instrumental Award for his Beethoven Piano Sonata disc and Dutch mezzo-soprano **Christianne Stotijn** the Vocal Award with her disc of Tchaikovsky Songs with pianist Julius Drake.

Oliver Condy, Editor of *BBC Music Magazine*, commented: *'The music on each of our winning discs has been performed and recorded with astonishing skill and devotion – it's a privilege to experience music-making of such brilliance. Any one of our 18 nominations would have been worthy discs of the year, such was the strength of this shortlist, but I'm delighted that Wagner's powerful opera now has such a towering champion in conductor Semyon Bychkov, one of today's true greats.'*

The **BBC Music Magazine Awards** are the only classical music awards in which the main categories are voted for by the public. The magazine's website received more than 30,000 votes to select the winners in each of the six categories: Orchestral, Choral, Opera, Vocal, Chamber and Instrumental. Nearly 300 five-star reviewed discs were whittled down by an expert jury to the 18 nominations. Four awards were awarded by the jury for best Newcomer, Premiere Recording, DVD and Technical Excellence in Recording.

The Awards were hosted by the magazine's editor **Oliver Condy** and *Today's* **James Naughtie**. Artists and representatives from across the classical music industry, alongside celebrity guests, including actor **Simon Callow**, **Gareth Malone** of BBC's *The Choir* fame, **John Sessions** and 100 *BBC Music Magazine* readers, attended the exclusive awards ceremony.

BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE AWARDS 2010 WINNERS

DISC OF THE YEAR (Opera)

Opera: Semyon Bychkov with the WDR SO, Cologne

Wagner: *Lohengrin* (Profil)

A recording that stands testament to the understanding Bychkov has built up with his WDR orchestra over the past 12 years. *Lohengrin* boasts a stellar cast including Johan Botha (Lohengrin), Adrienne Pieczonka (Elsa), Petra Lang (Ortrud), Falk Struckmann (Telramund), most of whom began their *Lohengrin* voyage with Bychkov in Spain, and continued with him to the Vienna Staatsoper before committing *Lohengrin* to disc.

'Bychkov elicits a glow from his orchestra which illuminates this powerful, spacious performance. Johan Botha embodies the title role with unforced grandeur, tender and heroic. Bychkov's Cologne forces, focused and involved, are vividly captured in surround-sound. A Lohengrin for our time.'

Orchestral: Patricia Kopatchinskaja & Philippe Herreweghe, Orchestre des Champs-Élysées

Beethoven: *Violin Concerto* (Naïve)

Moldovan-born violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja surprised everyone with this stunning account of Beethoven's Violin Concerto, complete with her multi-tracked violin version of Beethoven's own cadenza written for piano. A successful departure for a highly original artist better known for her performances of new music.

'Kopatchinskaja's warmly recorded account of the Beethoven Violin Concerto must be one of the most stimulating and provocative that has ever been committed to disc.'

Choral: Antonio Pappano with the National Academy of Santa Cecilia, Rolando Villazon, Anja Harteros, Rene Pape & Sonia Ganassi

Verdi: *Messa da Requiem* (EMI)

This outstanding performance of Verdi's famous Requiem boasts top soloists and the highly-committed Roman forces with whom Pappano has worked for 15 years. Pappano, also Music Director of the Royal Opera House, has a long relationship with EMI, hit recordings including *Tristan und Isolde* and last year's acclaimed *Madame Butterfly* and, as Music Director of the Orchestra of the National Academy of Santa Cecilia, Tchaikovsky Symphonies 4, 5 & 6 and Respighi's *Roman Trilogy*.

'For a performance that oozes colour, depth and emotion this is hard to beat.'

Vocal: Christianne Stotijn & Julius Drake

Tchaikovsky: *Romances* (Onyx)

The Dutch mezzo-soprano is best known for her interpretation of Mahler, both in recital and in highly-acclaimed performances conducted by Bernard Haitink, whose protégé she has been. Christianne Stotijn was a BBC New Generation Artist and recipient of a Borletti Buitoni Trust Award (2005).

'Christianne Stotijn is that artist in a thousand whose personality shines through everything she does.'

Chamber: Jerusalem Quartet

Haydn: *String Quartets* (Harmonia Mundi)

This recording of Haydn String Quartets marks the Jerusalem's third disc of Haydn quartets. The Quartet first featured on the cover of *BBC Music Magazine* in 2000, when they were still juggling quartet-playing with service in the Israeli army. Exclusive artists with Harmonia Mundi, in 2007 they won the Chamber Award for their recording of Shostakovich String Quartets Nos. 6, 8 and 11. The Quartet was a recipient of the first Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award (2003).

'The Jerusalem Quartet's second recording of Haydn Quartets is an absolute triumph.'

Instrumental: Murray Perahia

Beethoven: *Piano Sonatas, Opp. 26, 14 & 28* (Sony)

Signed exclusively to Sony for the past 37 years, Perahia's large discography includes classics of the repertoire by Bach, Mozart, Schumann and Chopin. Perahia recently embarked on an ambitious project to edit the complete Beethoven Sonatas for the *Henle Urtext Edition*, and this latest recording marks his return to the Romantic repertoire following the injury to one of his fingers. Since the launch of *BBC Music Magazine*, Perahia has received no fewer than sixteen 5-star reviews.

'A masterly recital, and one whose undemonstrative performances enable the music to speak for itself.'

Newcomer: Elias String Quartet

Quartets by Mendelssohn, Mozart and Schubert (Wigmore Hall Live).

Formed at the Royal Northern College of Music, the Elias String Quartet have been resident at the Britten Pears School, the New England Conservatory, Kettle's Yard and Sheffield's Music in the Round. In 2009 they were selected for BBC Radio 3's New Generation Artists scheme and this year were a recipient of a Borletti-Buitoni Award.

'The Elias is the best young quartet I've come across in years.'

Premiere Recording: Imogen Holst, String Chamber Music (Court Lane Music)

The music of Gustav Holst's daughter, Imogen, has rarely been heard but this recording reveals a remarkable talent. Most of her life was spent serving her father's legacy, music education and Benjamin Britten. The youthful Court Lane musicians have created a disc of beguiling chamber music that should be better known.

'Holst proves to have had superb technical command, plus a memorable and individual voice – and the performances by Court Lane Music are beautifully strong and sympathetic.'

Technical Excellence: Bergen Philharmonic Choir & Orchestra/Andrew Litton

Mendelssohn Symphony No. 2 (Lobgesang) (BIS)

Robert von Bahr's acclaimed Swedish label has built up an impressive catalogue of important recordings, including the complete Sibelius edition. This recording, part of a complete Mendelssohn Symphonies series, documents Andrew Litton's very successful relationship with the Bergen Philharmonic in brilliantly balanced and supremely high-quality surround sound.

'The warmth and richness of the Bergen strings, excellent choir and soloists, and a dramatic reading from Litton, all vibrantly captured on surround sound.'

DVD (Performance): Mariinsky Orchestra and Ballet/Valery Gergiev

Stravinsky - The Firebird; The Rite of Spring (Bel Air Classiques BAC 041 - DVD format)

This DVD documents the amazing reconstruction of the original 1913 production of *The Rite of Spring* performed with electric inspiration by the Mariinsky Ballet under Valery Gergiev, and never before seen on a commercial DVD.

'A spectacular DVD, filmed live at the Mariinsky has sensational sound and visuals, the BluRay capturing every nuance of Gergiev's orchestra in natural surround sound to match the vivid, sumptuous colours of the staging. This is a revelation.'

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PHOTOS &
COPIES OF ANY OF THE WINNING RECORDINGS:**

Ginny Macbeth or Philipp Carl

philipp@macbethmediarelations.co.uk

020 7700 5959

NOTES TO EDITORS:

The **BBC Music Magazine Awards** were launched in 2006 with the aim of recognising the best in classical music worldwide, by giving the public a chance to vote for their favourite performances of the year. Now in their fifth year, the *BBC Music Magazine Awards* are renowned in the industry as a prestigious annual event rewarding the highest achievements in international classical music recording.

The Jury panel consists of *BBC Music Magazine* Editor (Oliver Condy) and Reviews Editor (Daniel Jaffe), together with regular contributors John Allison (chief music critic, *Sunday Telegraph*), Malcolm Hayes (critic and author of *20th-Century Music*), Michael Tanner (opera critic, *The Spectator*), Andrew McGregor (presenter, BBC Radio 3's *CD Review*), and Barry Witherden (contributor *The Wire*, *Jazz Review* and *The Rough Guide to Classical Music*). The non-voting chair of the jury is Helen Wallace, Consultant Editor to the magazine.

BBC Music Magazine is the world's best-selling classical music monthly. Covering all aspects of live events, broadcast and recordings, each issue carries an exclusive CD of a complete work and provides a comprehensive and expert guide to classical music. *BBC Music Magazine* has a monthly circulation of 42,810 (ABC Jan-Dec 2009) and is published by BBC Magazines Bristol, a subsidiary of BBC Worldwide Ltd.

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