

Press Release

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Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards

Shortlists announced for UK's only live classical music awards

This year, the RPS Music Awards wave the flag for the achievements of UK artists and ensembles, with more than three quarters of the shortlisted nominees drawn from home-grown talent. The shortlists also reveal that classical music is employing increasingly imaginative ways of invigorating new and existing audiences – be it through new technology, changes in concert formats, the use of unusual venues (from disused banks and churches to prisons) or an unblinkered approach to programming.

The annual RPS Music Awards are the UK's most prestigious recognition of achievement in the field of live classical music. Awards, in thirteen categories, are decided by independent panels consisting of some of the music industry's most distinguished practitioners, with a further award decided by the listeners of BBC Radio 3. The awards honour musicians, composers, writers, broadcasters and inspirational arts organisations. The list of previous winners reads like a Who's Who of classical music. This year the awards celebrate the achievements of artists, ensembles and arts organisations for the calendar year 2006.

Graham Sheffield, Chairman of the Royal Philharmonic Society comments:

"The UK's classical music sector is in strong form. Evidence for this positive diagnosis comes in the extraordinary array of UK and international talent in the 2007 Royal Philharmonic Society Awards shortlist. As you can judge, the profession is also being increasingly imaginative and inventive in reaching out to new audiences and increasing the diversity of its offer, without in any way "dumbing down". The RPS throws down the gauntlet to government and the funding bodies to acknowledge the outstanding and central contribution to contemporary British culture made by classical music – the artists, the composers, the innovative ideas, the education work, the use of technology to broaden reach and understanding. Classical music is one of this country's great strengths."

The RPS Music Award winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on Tuesday 8 May at the Dorchester Hotel, London, presented by Dame Josephine Barstow and hosted by BBC Radio 3's Sean Rafferty. Nicholas Hytner, Director of the Royal National Theatre, is the keynote speaker. A special programme devoted to the RPS Music Awards will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 at 7.00pm on Wednesday 9 May.

Further press information from:

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Gold Medal Members:

Claudio Abbado Janet Baker Pierre Boulez Alfred Brendel Elliott Carter
Colin Davis Plácido Domingo Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau Bernard Haitink
Charles Mackerras Simon Rattle Mstislav Rostropovich Joan Sutherland

Graham Sheffield Chairman
David Lowe Hon Secretary
Francis Bergin Hon Treasurer
Rosemary Johnson General Administrator

The Shortlist

- The shortlists give a nod to two outstanding Russian conductors who have taken the hot seats with two of London's finest orchestras: Valery Gergiev, in his first season as Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra and Vladimir Jurowski, Music Director of Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Principal Guest Conductor and (from September 2007) Principal Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Oliver Knussen, Conductor Laureate of the London Sinfonietta and Artist-in-Association to the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group completes the list for the Conductor Award, donated by the Martin Smith Foundation.
- Proving that big is not always best, the Ensemble Award shortlist features the outstanding young vocal ensemble Exaudi, the doyenne of period instrument ensembles, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Britten Sinfonia, champions of music from Dowland to Moondog, Bach to Berio.
- It's winds versus keyboards in the Instrumentalist category, supported by BBC Music Magazine, with oboist Nicholas Daniel and clarinettist Michael Collins lining up against pianists Stephen Hough and András Schiff.
- The Singer category, supported by the Rosenblatt Recital Series, is an all male affair, contested by tenors John Mark Ainsley and Jonas Kaufman, and baritone Roderick Williams.
- A strong shortlist for the Young Artists Award, donated by Peter Bull, features conductors Gustavo Dudamel (recently appointed as Music Director designate of the Los Angeles Philharmonic) and Vasily Petrenko, 30-year-old Principal conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and sopranos Kate Royal (winner of the 2004 Kathleen Ferrier competition) and Elizabeth Watts.
- The listeners of BBC Radio 3, voting online, have selected a mouthwatering shortlist for the BBC Radio 3 Listeners Award: conductor Colin Davis, pianist Paul Lewis, tenor Mark Padmore and Swedish soprano Miah Persson.
- Reflecting an increasingly egalitarian approach to opera, the shortlists for the opera and music theatre award features The Young Vic for Tobias and the Angel and The Young Vic and The Opera Group for The Enchanted Pig both by Jonathan Dove, Birmingham Opera Company's version of Don Giovanni, He Had it Coming, staged in a disused 1930s bank, Phyllida Lloyd's acclaimed production of Peter Grimes for Opera North and David McVicar's production of The Marriage of Figaro for the Royal Opera House.
- The British Music Information Centre, a leading resource for 20th and 21st century music in the UK is shortlisted for its touring concert series The Cutting Edge. The shortlist for the Concert Series and Festivals category, donated by the Victor Salvi Foundation, also features FuseLeeds 06, "where the classical avant garde cheerfully rubs shoulders with jazz, rock and electronica" [the Guardian] and the Spitalfields Winter and Summer Festivals, under the direction of composers Diana Burrell (winter) and Jonathan Dove (summer).
- The Dante Quartet, Royal String Quartet and Smith Quartet with John Tilbury contest the Chamber Music Award, supported by David W Bowerman.
- In the Creative Communication award, sponsored by The Guardian, the two outstanding nominations were Patrick Carnegy's book, Wagner and the Art of Theatre (Yale University Press) and Howard Goodall's four-part television series How Music Works (Tiger Aspect for Channel 4).

Education and Audience Development

- The Audience Development Award, in partnership with ClassicFM, features the Philharmonia/Royal Festival Hall's al fresco virtual orchestra PLAY.orchestra (56 plastic cubes, 3 hotspots, and the chance to create your own orchestral sound and download the results via Bluetooth); the East Neuk Festival, with a tantalising international line-up of ensembles and soloists performing in churches and small venues in rural Fife; and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's The Night Shift: late night, rule-free classical concerts.

- PLAY.orchestra also features on the Education Shortlist, sponsored by the Musicians Benevolent Fund, alongside the Cambridge Music Festival's Orchestra in a Village in association with the London Mozart Players, which saw composer Fraser Trainer making music with, and for, the residents of the Cambridgeshire village of Swavesey, and Music in Prisons' A Picture of Me – a project with women prisoners and young offenders in HMP Holloway.

Composers and composition

- For the Large-Scale Composition Award, former Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize winner Luke Bedford's new work for the London Sinfonietta, *Or Voit Tout en Aventure*, lines up alongside Steve Reich's *Daniel Variations*, premiered during the Barbican's Reich at 70 festival in September 2006 and Jonathan Harvey's *Proms/BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra premiere ... towards a pure land*.
- The Chamber-Scale Composition Award pits the distinguished composer Brian Ferneyhough against two composers from a younger generation, Claudia Molitor and Richard Causton.

A full list of shortlisted ensembles and artists is included at the end of this release.

Further press information from:

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Notes:

About the Royal Philharmonic Society

For almost 200 years the Royal Philharmonic Society has been the champion of the finest music making in the UK. The RPS was founded in 1813 with the aim of creating a future for music by supporting new music and young artists and recognising musical excellence. These aims remain true today, together with a desire to raise debate and discussion about the key musical issues of the day.

The Society's activities focus on young musicians and the creation and support of new music. The RPS has commissioned and performed new works since its first concert in 1813 (including Beethoven's 9th Symphony). Today, the RPS continues to have an active commissioning policy. This includes a collaboration with BBC Radio 3 to commission repertoire for the BBC's New Generation Artists, two annual composition prizes for composers under 29 and the Elgar Bursary for more mature composers.

The RPS recognises excellence at all levels of the profession – from the award of the prestigious RPS Gold Medal to the world's most distinguished musicians (one of music's highest honours), through to awards of scholarships and bursaries to some of the UK's most talented young musicians and, of course, the annual RPS Music Awards.

As the only independent voice for music in the UK, the Royal Philharmonic Society provides platforms for distinguished and often provocative speakers through its prestigious annual lecture and at special events for RPS members throughout the year.

Current RPS Gold Medal members include Claudio Abbado, Janet Baker, Pierre Boulez, Alfred Brendel, Elliott Carter, Colin Davis, Placido Domingo, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Bernard Haitink, Charles Mackerras, Simon Rattle, Mstislav Rostropovich and Joan Sutherland.

The RPS Music Awards in association with BBC Radio 3

Shortlists

Award	Shortlist
Audience Development in partnership with Classic fm	East Neuk Festival PLAY.Orchestra (Philharmonia Orchestra, Southbank Centre, Central St Martin's College of Art and Design) The Night Shift (OAE)
BBC Radio 3 Listeners Award	Colin Davis Paul Lewis Mark Padmore Miah Persson
Chamber Music donated by David W Bowerman CBE	Dante Quartet Royal Quartet Smith Quartet with John Tilbury (Huddersfield Residency)
Chamber-scale Composition	Richard Causton: Phoenix Brian Ferneyhough Fifth String Quartet Claudia Molitor ach du kleines Kabinett
Concert Series and Festivals donated by the Victor Salvi Foundation	BMIC Cutting Edge Fuse Leeds The Spitalfields Festival (winter and summer)
Conductor donated by the Martin Smith Foundation	Valery Gergiev Vladimir Jurowski Oliver Knussen
Creative Communication sponsored by the Guardian	Patrick Carnegy: Wagner and the Art of Theatre (Yale University Press) Howard Goodall: How Music Works (Tiger Aspect for Channel 4)

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<p>Education sponsored by The Musicians Benevolent Fund</p>	<p>A Picture of Me (Music in Prisons)</p> <p>Orchestra in a Village (Cambridge Music Festival with the London Mozart Players in Swavesey)</p> <p>PLAY.Orchestra (Philharmonia Orchestra, Southbank Centre, Central St Martin's College of Art and Design)</p>
<p>Ensemble</p>	<p>Britten Sinfonia</p> <p>Exaudi Vocal Ensemble</p> <p>Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment</p>
<p>Instrumentalist supported by the BBC Music Magazine</p>	<p>Michael Collins</p> <p>Nicholas Daniel</p> <p>Stephen Hough</p> <p>Andr�as Schiff</p>
<p>Large-scale Composition jointly supported by Peters Edition, Stainer & Bell and Josef Weinberger</p>	<p>Luke Bedford: or voit tout en aventure</p> <p>Jonathan Harvey:...towards a pure land</p> <p>Steve Reich: Daniel Variations</p>
<p>Opera and Music Theatre</p>	<p>Opera North: Peter Grimes</p> <p>Birmingham Opera Company: He Had it Coming</p> <p>The Royal Opera: The Marriage of Figaro</p> <p>The Young Vic for Tobias and the Angel and the Young Vic and The Opera Group for The Enchanted Pig</p>
<p>Singer donated by the Rosenblatt Recital Series</p>	<p>John Mark Ainsley</p> <p>Jonas Kaufmann</p> <p>Roderick Williams</p>
<p>Young Artists donated by Peter Bull</p>	<p>Gustavo Dudamel</p> <p>Vasily Petrenko</p> <p>Kate Royal</p> <p>Elizabeth Watts</p>