



Press Release

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Graham Hall, long-standing timpanist of Sinfonia Viva, awarded prestigious RPS/ABO Salomon Prize for orchestral musicians.

The award, to be presented on 2 March at a Derby Cathedral concert, recognises a 34-year association with Sinfonia Viva, as musician, players' representative and an accomplished arranger and orchestrator

Graham Hall, a founding member and until recently, Principal Timpanist of Derby-based Sinfonia Viva, has been awarded the RPS/ABO Salomon Prize, for his "hugely dedicated service to Sinfonia Viva over many years: as a timpanist, player and Musicians Union rep; and also as highly skilled arranger who has supported the orchestra's extensive outreach work, and in doing so has inspired his fellow musicians to join him in going the extra mile".

He will be presented with the prestigious award, which celebrates the outstanding contribution of orchestral players to the UK's musical life, at a Sinfonia Viva concert on Wednesday 2 March at Derby Cathedral – his 56th birthday. The programme, conducted by Duncan Ward, features Graham's "most ambitious arrangements to date" of Mahler's 1st Symphony, and Ravel's *String Quartet in F major*.

The UK boasts many of the world's finest orchestras, many of which have trophy cabinets bursting with awards in testimony to their brilliance on the concert platform and in the recording studio. Yet, the contribution of individual musicians within an orchestra often goes unnoticed.

The Salomon Prize* was created by the Royal Philharmonic Society and Association of British Orchestras in 2011 to celebrate the 'unsung heroes' of orchestral life; the orchestral players that make our orchestras great. The award is named after Johann Peter Salomon, violinist and founding member of the Philharmonic Society in 1813. Each year, players in all orchestras across the UK are asked to nominate a colleague who has been 'an inspiration to their fellow players, fostered greater spirit of teamwork and shown commitment and dedication above and beyond the call of duty'. **Graham Hall** is the

fifth recipient of the prize, and the first player from a chamber orchestra. He follows in the footsteps of outstanding musicians from the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, The Hallé and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Graham was nominated for the Salomon Prize by his fellow players at Sinfonia Viva, where he was Principal Timpanist for many years. He served on the Orchestra's Board as player representative and latterly the Musicians' Union representative until he suffered a stroke 14 months ago. With the support of Sinfonia Viva, he has been "re-orchestrating" his life by developing his music preparation work and remains a key part of Sinfonia Viva's musical life.

Graham Hall comments:

"I am honoured that my colleagues at Sinfonia Viva have nominated me for the RPS/ABO Salomon Prize. It is important for musicians to have a voice in an Orchestra and there are specific challenges for smaller orchestras whose players are freelance and work in many different guises. Although we are not working with each other on a daily basis, we are a tight band of players who share the same work ethos and commitment to Viva. I feel great emotional attachment to Viva. It was the first professional orchestra that I played for and gave me my chance at a young age."

Peter Helps, Sinfonia Viva Chief Executive comments:

"Graham has a special ability to enable what we all want to achieve – the betterment of the Orchestra and good conditions for the artists on whom we all depend. He has approached his roles as rep and player with commitment, integrity and passion and is an invaluable ambassador and advocate for the Orchestra – embracing the development of the organisation. Graham has also been increasingly undertaking music arranging work for the Orchestra. These are increasingly accomplished and often contain much that reflects his cheeky and cheery approach to life. He has not enjoyed the best of health recently but his determination to return to playing and music arranging has been an inspiration for us all."

About Graham Hall

Graham Hall studied at the Royal Academy of Music under James Blades. On leaving London he taught for two years in his home city of Nottingham as a peripatetic percussion tutor before going freelance as a player in 1984. He has worked with many orchestras in the UK as well as Sinfonia Viva, including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of Opera North, where he held the position of Sub Principal Percussion for nearly 25 years.

royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk/awards/salomon
vivaorch.co.uk

2nd of March concert details at <http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/see-us-live/2016-03-02-derby/>

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***The annual £1000 Salomon Prize is named after renowned violinist Johann Peter Salomon*, one of the founding members of the Philharmonic Society in 1813.**

Notes:

Johann Peter Salomon was born in Bonn and was the second son of Philipp Salomon, an oboist at the court in Bonn. His birth home was at Bonngasse 515, coincidentally the later birth home of Beethoven. At the age of thirteen, he became a violinist in the court orchestra and six years later became the concert master of the orchestra of Prince Heinrich of Prussia. He moved to London in the early 1780s, where he worked as a composer and played violin both as a celebrated soloist and in a string quartet. He made his first public appearance at Covent Garden on 23 March 1781 and became a central figure in London Orchestral life for over 30 years.

Salomon brought Joseph Haydn to London in 1791-92 and 1794-95, and together with Haydn led the first performances of many of the works that Haydn composed while in England. Haydn wrote his symphonies numbers 93 to 104 for these trips, which are sometimes known as the Salomon symphonies (they are more widely known as the London symphonies). Salomon is also said to have had a hand in providing Haydn with the original model for the text of The Creation.

He was one of the founder members of the Philharmonic Society and led the orchestra at its first concert on 8 March 1813. Salomon died in London in 1815, of injuries suffered when he was thrown from his horse. He is buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.

The Salomon Prize is named in honour of this versatile and influential musician.

The Royal Philharmonic Society unites the music profession and its audiences to create a vibrant future for music: supporting and working creatively with talented young performers and composers, championing excellence, and encouraging audiences to listen to, and talk about, great music. The Society has been at the heart of music for over 200 years, with direct links to Beethoven (it commissioned the composer's Ninth Symphony), Mendelssohn, Wagner and many of the iconic figures of classical music.

CHAMPIONS OF EXCELLENCE: The Society sets the standard and lets the world know about the finest classical music making. From its historic Gold Medal to the annual RPS Music Awards for live music, recognition by the RPS is a guarantee of outstanding music achievement.

YOUNG MUSICIANS: The RPS invests in talented young performers at the start of their careers, offering much needed funding to buy instruments, teaching tailored to their individual needs, or the chance to be mentored by an experienced, established performer.

COMPOSERS: The Society supports new music through commissioning new work, repeat performances, workshops, residency schemes and encouraging interaction between composers and audiences.

AUDIENCES: The RPS is a voice for music, putting music at the centre of cultural life. Whether a regular listener or just beginning to explore classical music, the RPS encourages people to listen and talk about music through a series of events, talks and debates.

The Association of British Orchestras (ABO) was founded in 1947 as the Orchestral Employers' Association, primarily to negotiate with the Musicians' Union and other bodies on behalf of its membership, which consisted almost entirely at that time of those orchestras receiving annual funding from the newly established Arts Council of Great Britain. In 1982 it took on limited company status, becoming the Association of British Orchestras. With membership ranging from symphony orchestras to chamber orchestras, youth ensembles to concert halls, its mission is enable and support a vibrant, innovative, collaborative and sustainable orchestral sector, and to champion professional orchestras in the UK in their ambition to perform music to the highest artistic standards for the widest possible audience. Its vision is of a society where orchestral music is valued as a core component of contemporary life and culture.

#orchestraseverywhere