



Press Release

For release: Friday 27 February 2015

John Cushing, Principal Clarinet of Royal Scottish National Orchestra for 36 years, awarded prestigious RPS/ABO Salomon Prize for orchestral musicians.

John Cushing, who recently retired as Principal Clarinet of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra after more than three decades with the orchestra, has been awarded the RPS/ABO Salomon Prize, a prestigious award celebrating the outstanding contribution of orchestral players to the UK's musical life. John Cushing was presented with the prize on stage at Usher Hall, Edinburgh on Friday 27 February during a concert of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven conducted by Roger Norrington.

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; this year is the bicentenary of his death. 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'. **John Cushing** is the fourth recipient of the prize, following in the footsteps of outstanding musicians from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, The Hallé and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

The Salomon Prize citation from the RPS and ABO reads:

"The players of the RSNO describe John Cushing as a powerful communicator, a natural leader and an incredible musician and colleague. He has shown outstanding service to the RSNO, joining in 1978 and has provided support, commitment and a generosity of character that is second to none. Whether serving on the RSNO Board as the Player

Director, in education work or as a soloist, he constantly seeks to share his passion for music. He has been a touchstone of the orchestra and the Salomon Jury wishes him all the best on his retirement."

About John Cushing

John Cushing was appointed Principal Clarinet with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra in 1978. Since then he has appeared as soloist with the Orchestra on many occasions, and has an extensive Concerto repertoire, including James Macmillan's *Ninian*, which was written for and dedicated to him, and released on the BIS label to great critical acclaim.

As well as performing the world debut of the *Ninian Concerto*, John has given several other world and Scottish première performances of works for solo clarinet and chamber ensemble, including pieces by Sweeney, Adams, Ted Kirk and again James Macmillan, this time a piece for clarinet alone – *From Galloway* which is also dedicated to him.

John Cushing has a particular interest in chamber and contemporary music. Over the years he has been a member of and played with groups as diverse as Paragon, Allander and Hebrides Ensembles, many string quartets and the clarinet, soprano and piano trio Vocalise. He is currently particularly busy in the Phoenix wind trio with Katherine Bryan (flute) and David Hubbard (Bassoon) as well as the wind quintet Primi whose players are members of both the RSNO and Halle.

John has taught clarinet at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama since 1978 and gives masterclasses and recitals throughout the country, primarily with pianist Scott Mitchell.

royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk/awards/salomon
rsno.org.uk

Further press information from:

Sophie Cohen on 020 7428 9850 07711 551 787

sophiecohen@blueyonder.co.uk

Named after renowned violinist Johann Peter Salomon, one of the founding members of the Philharmonic Society in 1813, the annual £1000 Salomon Prize, sponsored by Selina and David Marks, will be awarded each year to a musician who has shown commitment and dedication above and beyond the expected service asked by their orchestra over a single concert season. They will have been "an inspiration to their fellow colleagues and engendered a greater spirit of teamwork within the orchestra".

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