

PRESS RELEASE

14.5.13



## Winners announced of Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards

The UK's most prestigious awards for live classical music

- Triple success for events in London 2012 Festival: Stockhausen 'helicopter' opera; community opera inspired by 1920 Olympic cycling hero and 20x12 New Music commissions all win awards
- Mezzo-soprano Sarah Connolly, pianist Steven Osborne and conductor Kirill Karabits amongst big name winners
- Britten Sinfonia and Classic FM celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> birthdays in winning style
- Composer Gerald Barry demonstrates the importance of "Being Earnest" by scooping Large-Scale Composition award; Rebecca Saunders wins her second Chamber-Scale Composition prize.
- Heath Quartet becomes first ensemble in 15 years to take Young Artists award. Philharmonia Orchestra cements its position as a world leader in the use of digital media with Audiences and Engagement award.
- Music in the Round's 360 degree approach to music making takes Chamber Music and Song award.

### Plus

- Royal Philharmonic Society celebrates its 2013 Bicentenary with series of International Awards to visionary music-makers on four continents
- RPS Chairman, John Gilhooly says *"making money never has and never should be the driving force for great art"*

Events in the London 2012 Festival have taken home the cultural silverware at this year's Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards, winning in three categories at the UK's most prestigious awards for live classical music.

Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medallist **Dame Janet Baker** presented the 'silver lyre' RPS Music Awards trophies to winners in 13 categories at a ceremony at London's Dorchester Hotel (Tuesday 14 May – evening). The RPS Music Awards, for outstanding achievement in 2012, are presented in association with BBC Radio 3.

BBC Radio 3 will broadcast a special awards programme on Sunday 19 May at 2pm.

Speaking at the Awards Ceremony, RPS Chairman **John Gilhooly** heralded an '*outstanding year*' for classical music despite the difficult economic climate. He cautioned about forgetting the 'true value of culture'

*“Making money never has, and never should be, the driving force for great art. The Philharmonic Society sent Beethoven £100 on his deathbed to ease his penury, and commissioned Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony, not because they expected or even hoped for a blockbuster success, but because they, quite simply, wanted to hear more of his music.*

*So, whilst mindful of the absolute need to unite with the government and funders in framing the positive economic arguments for expenditure on the arts, let's not allow creativity, vision, excellence, enjoyment and culture's potential to change lives to be lost in the debate, even in times of austerity”.*

## RPS Music Awards – The Winners

### London 2012 events strike gold

**Birmingham Opera Company's** sky-bound performance of Karlheinz Stockhausen's monumental six-hour opera cycle, *Mittwoch aus Licht*, staged in a former chemical plant in central Birmingham, won the RPS Music Award for Opera and Music Theatre. Featuring two choirs, flying solo instrumentalists, live electronic and acoustic music and a string quartet streamed live from four flying helicopters, the production was described by the distinguished RPS jury as “*bold in imagination and brilliant in accomplishment*” and delivered a third RPS Music Award in 12 years to the pioneering opera company.

In the Learning and Participation category, **Proper Job Theatre Company** and **Scunthorpe Co-operative Junior Choir** took the top prize for its outdoor community opera, *Cycle Song*. With a cast of 1200, *Cycle Song* was described by the RPS jury as an “*inspirational and educational adventure*”. Written by Ian McMillan and Tim Sutton, it was inspired by the life of local cycling legend Albert 'Lal' White. Steel

worker by day, White was often seen training by night, and at the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp won a silver medal in the 4000m cycling team pursuit.

***New Music 20x12***, PRS for Music Foundation's series of 20 commissions that celebrated the quality and imagination of new music in the UK in collaboration with Southbank Centre, BBC Radio 3 and NMC Recordings ran out the winners in the Concert Series and Festivals category. The jury commented that the ambitious programme, which featured performances nationwide, was “*a fitting legacy to an extraordinary year*”.

### **RPS Music Awards for Singer, Conductor and Instrumentalist**

In the individual performance categories, mezzo-soprano **Sarah Connolly** was a popular winner of the RPS Music Award for Singer for an outstanding year in which she exhibited “*exceptional musicianship and consistency over an increasingly wide range of styles; 2012 gave further revelations of her artistry from the baroque to the 20th century and extending to Wagner’s Ring*”. Scottish pianist **Steven Osborne** took the RPS Music Award for Instrumentalist for performances up and down the country that demonstrated his “*un-showy brilliance, integrity... and the unique magic of his sound ...*”. The dynamic young Ukrainian Principal Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, **Kirill Karabits** won the RPS Music Award for Conductor, praised for his “*charisma, imagination, scholarly intelligence and vivid communication*” and “*inspirational*” programming.

### **Ensemble; Creative Communication**

“*An ensemble fit for the 21st century*”, **Britten Sinfonia** joined an elite list of triple RPS Music Award winners by taking the Ensemble category (adding to its awards success in 2007 and 2009). The “*up for anything*” chamber orchestra is celebrating its 20th birthday this season, and launched its own choir and youth academy, and became a Barbican Associate Ensemble in 2012. **Classic FM**, which also celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2012, won the RPS Music Award for Creative Communication for its work in “*broadening the reach of classical music*” via its artistic collaborations and partnerships with regional orchestras, its website, CD label, and its wide-ranging accomplishments in music education.

### **Young Artists; Chamber Music and Song**

The **Heath Quartet**, rapidly emerging as one of the most original voices on the international chamber music scene, beat a strong and varied shortlist to take the RPS Music Award for Young Artists (the first ensemble to win since 1997). The quartet was praised for its “*exceptional calibre of playing and youthful enthusiasm with an ambitious programme of outreach*.” Sheffield-based **Music in the Round**, the biggest provider of chamber music outside London, which “*works indefatigably to create imaginative and eclectic programming and excellence in performance*” won

the RPS Music Award for Chamber Music and Song.

### **Composer Awards**

Irish composer **Gerald Barry** was awarded the RPS Music Award for Large-Scale Composition for his opera, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The opera, which received its UK concert premiere in 2012, was praised for “*smashing conventions alongside plates, and miraculously providing the most well-worn quotes with a freshness and originality*”. It receives its British stage premiere (featuring Ensemble category winners Britten Sinfonia) at the Royal Opera House Linbury Studio Theatre in June. Berlin-based British composer **Rebecca Saunders** won the RPS Music Award for Chamber-Scale Composition for a “*new kind of language*” explored in her string quartet, *Fletch*, premiered by the Arditti Quartet at Wigmore Hall in November 2012. She previously won the award in 2007 and is only the fourth composer to have claimed it more than once.

### **Audiences and Engagement**

Following a double-success at the RPS Music Awards in 2011, the **Philharmonia Orchestra**'s position as world leaders in the innovative use of digital media to engage new audiences was confirmed with the RPS Music Award for Audiences and Engagement for *Universe of Sound*. The project provided a “*thrilling, interactive experience for all ages*” at London's Science Museum, taking audiences into the heart of a virtual performance by a 123 strong orchestra of Holst's *The Planets* and a new companion work by Joby Talbot. *Universe of Sound* is currently on tour and can be seen at Birmingham Municipal Bank from 25 May – 16 June.

## International Royal Philharmonic Society Honorary Memberships Awarded

The Royal Philharmonic Society is celebrating its Bicentenary throughout 2013. To mark this auspicious moment, a series of international awards were made at the RPS Music Awards dinner to musical visionaries working on four continents.

In Association with the British Council and in partnership with The Guardian, Royal Philharmonic Society Honorary Membership was presented to:

- **Armand Diangienda**, a former airline pilot who founded a symphony orchestra in one of the poorest cities on earth, Kinshasa, DR of the Congo.
- **Dr Ahmad Sarmast**, the founder of Afghanistan's first national music school in Kabul.
- British viola player **Rosemary Nalden**, founder of Buskaid, who persuaded distinguished musicians to busk at British railway stations to raise funds for a string project in South Africa, and now directs the thriving Buskaid stringed instrument school and ensemble in Diepkloof, Soweto.
- International pianist (and former winner of the Leeds Piano Competition) **Ricardo Castro**, who established a flourishing youth music programme in Bahià, Brazil.
- **Aaron P. Dworkin**, the founder of the Sphinx Organization, which gives opportunities and assistance to aspiring Black and Latino musicians in the USA. Sphinx is based on a mission that, to be truly in tune, classical music must embrace diversity inherent in the society that it strives to serve.

A rare honour, the award has only been presented 131 times since the first honorary membership was made to composer Carl Maria von Weber in 1826. British Council Chairman, **Sir Vernon Ellis** joined **John Gilhooly** to present the certificates of membership.

Commenting on the international awards, RPS Chairman John Gilhooly said:

*"The recipients of these awards understand the fundamental importance of culture in society and its potential to change lives. It is for this reason that the Royal Philharmonic Society has chosen to honour them. Each has shown tenacity and vision, and each is driven by a "love of their art" which is very much in keeping with the founding principles of the RPS.*

*In the UK, the arts are often regarded as an unnecessary luxury. These awards are a salutary reminder of why culture matters."*

Sir Vernon Ellis comments: *"As keen supporters of the mission of the Royal Philharmonic Society we at the British Council are delighted to bring our own mission to this partnership – to build trust and understanding between the UK and the rest of the world through the sharing of knowledge, creativity and art. We are pleased to have enabled the new Honorary Members of the Society to be with us today to share their inspiring stories. Through such sharing, we become closer, and stronger"*.

## About the RPS Music Awards

Presented in association with BBC Radio 3, the RPS Music Awards are the highest recognition for live classical music in the United Kingdom. This year, they are presented as part of RPS200, a celebration of the Bicentenary of the Royal Philharmonic Society throughout 2013.

Awards in 13 categories are chosen by eminent independent juries from the music profession and are unique in the breadth of musical achievement they span – from performers, composers and inspirational arts organisations to learning, participation and engagement. This year's awards are for achievement in the UK during 2012. The list of winners since 1989 reads as a roll call of the finest living musicians.

## RPS Music Awards sponsors

The RPS Music Awards are presented in association with BBC Radio 3, with international support from the British Council. The Society is grateful to sponsors of individual awards: **Boosey & Hawkes, in memory of Tony Fell** (Chamber-Scale Composition); **BBC Music Magazine** (Conductor); **Peter Bull** (Young Artists); **Incorporated Society of Musicians** (Opera and Music Theatre); **Lalita Carlton-Jones** (Concert Series and Festivals); **Musicians Benevolent Fund** (Instrumentalist); **Rosenblatt Recitals** (Singer) **Yellow Car Charitable Trust** (Ensemble) and an **anonymous donor** (Large-Scale Composition).

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## RPS Music Awards Winners

Audiences and Engagement – Universe of Sound (Philharmonia Orchestra)

Chamber Music and Song – Music in the Round

Chamber-Scale Composition – Rebecca Saunders: *Fletch*

Concert Series and Festival – New Music 20x12 (PRS for Music Foundation)

Conductor – Kirill Karabits

Creative Communication – Classic FM

Ensemble – Britten Sinfonia

Instrumentalist – Steven Osborne

Large-Scale Composition – Gerald Barry: *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Learning and Participation – *Cycle Song* (Proper Job Theatre Company and Scunthorpe Co-operative Junior Choir)

Opera and Music Theatre – *Mittwoch aus Licht* (Birmingham Opera Company)

Singer – Sarah Connolly

Young Artists – Heath Quartet

## RPS Honorary Memberships in association with the British Council

Ricardo Castro

Armand Diangienda Wabasolele

Aaron P. Dworkin

Rosemary Nalden

Dr Ahmad Sarmast

## RPS Music Awards Winners – CITATIONS

Award	WINNER	CITATION
<b>Audiences and Engagement</b>	<p><b>Universe of Sound (Philharmonia Orchestra)</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:            Southampton's Musical Alphabet (Turner Sims)            The Big Concert (Sistema Scotland, Opening Night of London 2012 Festival)</p>	<p>The <b>Universe of Sound</b> partnership between the Philharmonia Orchestra, its principal conductor and the Science Museum provided a thrilling, interactive experience for all ages, continuing the orchestra's exploration of digital media to find and engage new audiences. Many of them attended the associated Planets:Live concert at the Southbank Centre, and the project is now touring with the Philharmonia and other orchestras in the UK and abroad.</p>
<b>Chamber Music and Song</b>	<p><b>Music in the Round</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:            Elias Quartet            Exaudi</p>	<p><b>Music in the Round</b> is a week-by-week, year-round festival of chamber music based in Sheffield, which works indefatigably to create imaginative and eclectic programming and excellence in performance. Reaching a wide range of regional venues and audiences, it provides an exemplary model of working and continues to draw inspiration from its versatile resident ensemble, Ensemble 360.</p>
<b>Chamber-Scale Composition</b> supported by Boosey and Hawkes in memory of Tony Fell	<p><b>Rebecca Saunders: <i>Fletch</i></b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:            Colin Matthews: <i>String Quartet No. 4</i>            Tansy Davies: <i>Nature</i></p>	<p>The winning work seems to open up for its composer, the potential for the exploration of a new kind of language, through the vividness of its images, the clarity and integrity of its writing and its thrilling sonic effects. The award goes to <b>Rebecca Saunders</b> for <b>Fletch</b>.</p>
<b>Concert Series and Festivals</b> donated by Lalita Carlton-Jones	<p><b>New Music 20x12 (PRS for Music Foundation)</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:            BBC Proms            Sound Festival (North East Scotland)</p>	<p>The Award goes to a project which combined an imaginative commissioning process with extensive dissemination, so that it was a truly national series for excellent new music. It was intelligent and brave, and brought new music to new audiences. As a response to the Olympics it was ambitious, had real artistic integrity and its achievement is a fitting legacy to an extraordinary year. The winner is <b>New Music 20x12</b>.</p>

<p><b>Conductor</b> supported by BBC Music Magazine</p>	<p><b>Kirill Karabits</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted: Andris Nelsons Richard Farnes</p>	<p>The award goes to a musician whose charisma, imagination, scholarly intelligence and vivid communication have touched audiences wherever he performs – whether with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, touring extensively throughout the South–West of England, or with other orchestras in London or at Glyndebourne. <b>Kirill Karabits’s</b> determination to explore and to excel enriches the British music world.</p>
<p><b>Creative Communication</b></p>	<p><b>Classic FM</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted: Jane Manning: <i>Voicing Pierrot</i> Tom Service for <i>Tom Adès: Full of Noises</i> and <i>Music as Alchemy</i> (Faber)</p>	<p><b>Classic FM</b> has a remarkable record in broadening the reach of classical music, bringing British and international artists to new audiences and developing game–changing partnerships with regional orchestras. This award recognises the station's achievements in its 20th–anniversary year, including its accomplishments in music education, the continuing success of its CD label, and its newly re–launched and energetically maintained website.</p>
<p><b>Ensemble</b> donated by the Yellow Car Charitable Trust</p>	<p><b>Britten Sinfonia</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted: Ex Cathedra Orchestra of the Royal Opera House</p>	<p>The winning ensemble has had innovation and excellence at its heart for 20 years. It is a master at partnerships and collaboration. In 2012, it became Associate Ensemble at the Barbican, its own professional choir completed its first season and it launched an Academy to nurture talented young musicians. The players continue to be up for anything, covering a huge and ever–expanding range of repertoire. They make up an ensemble fit for the 21st Century: <b>Britten Sinfonia</b>.</p>
<p><b>Instrumentalist</b> supported by the Musicians Benevolent Fund</p>	<p><b>Steven Osborne (piano)</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted: Colin Currie (percussion) Francesco Piemontesi (piano)</p>	<p><b>Steven Osborne’s</b> performances up and down the country this year have confirmed his pre–eminence among British pianists. His un–showy brilliance, integrity, and very wide repertoire have long marked him out, but what now emerges most strongly is the unique magic of his sound combined with a profound musical intelligence.</p>
<p><b>Large–Scale Composition</b> donated anonymously</p>	<p><b>Gerald Barry: <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i></b></p> <p>Also shortlisted: Harrison Birtwistle: <i>In Broken Images</i> Julian Anderson: <i>The Discovery of Heaven</i></p>	<p>The winning work is by a composer who inspires strong reactions. The forceful originality of this work smashes conventions alongside plates, and miraculously provides the most well–worn quotes with a freshness and originality. Liberation and exhilaration marked its London premiere last year. The award goes to: <b>Gerald Barry: for The Importance of Being Earnest</b>.</p>

<p><b>Learning and Participation</b></p>	<p><b><i>Cycle Song</i> (Proper Job Theatre Company and Scunthorpe Co-operative Junior Choir)</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:  <i>Anthem for a Child</i> (Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment)  Drake Music Scotland:  <i>Technophonia</i> by Oliver Searle (New Music 20x12)  LSO On Track at the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics</p>	<p>Cycle Song is an enormous, ambitious community opera with a score composed by Tim Sutton and libretto by Ian McMillan. It was driven by music and was spectacularly staged. The work is rooted in the communities of North Lincolnshire and the industrial heritage which binds them together. Inspired by a local Olympic hero and steelworker from 1920, Cycle Song shows what happens to a man committed to achievement and reaching his potential. An inspirational and educational adventure.</p>
<p><b>Opera and Music Theatre donated by the Incorporated Society of Musicians</b></p>	<p><b><i>Mittwoch aus Licht</i> (Birmingham Opera Company)</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:  Caligula (ENO)  English Touring Opera (autumn season)  Knussen doublebill (Aldeburgh/Barbican)</p>	<p>In an Olympian year, rich with strong productions of contemporary and 20th century opera, the jury chose Birmingham Opera Company for its remarkable production of Stockhausen's <i>Mittwoch aus Licht</i>: a world premiere, bold in imagination and brilliant in accomplishment, both hallmarks of this company's approach to reinventing opera for today.</p>
<p><b>Singer donated by Rosenblatt Recitals</b></p>	<p><b>Sarah Connolly</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:  Alice Coote  Bryan Hymel  Bryn Terfel</p>	<p>Few singers of the current generation have exhibited such exceptional musicianship and consistency over an increasingly wide range of styles. 2012 gave us further revelations of her artistry from the baroque to the 20th century and extending to Wagner's <i>Ring</i>. The winner is Sarah Connolly.</p>
<p><b>Young Artists donated by Peter Bull</b></p>	<p><b>Heath Quartet</b></p> <p>Also shortlisted:  Daniil Trifonov (piano)  Duncan Rock (baritone)</p>	<p>Violinists Oliver Heath and Cerys Jones, viola player Gary Pomeroy and cellist Christopher Murray make up the Heath Quartet and together they combine their exceptional calibre of playing and youthful enthusiasm with an ambitious programme of outreach. They engage audiences in venues big and small, and in 2012 they travelled extensively around the UK, bringing diverse music to both seasoned concert-goers and many who had never experienced a live classical ensemble.</p>

<p><b>Ricardo Castro – NEOJIBA, Brazil (Bahia Youth orchestras)</b></p>	<p>Ricardo Castro is an international soloist who has changed the lives of hundreds of children and young people in his native state of Bahia in Brazil through the collective practice of music making.</p> <p>When he won the Leeds International Piano Competition in 1993, Ricardo Castro's career path might have seemed set. But Ricardo has always believed in collaborative music-making. In 2007, inspired by the Venezuelan El Sistema, he took on the artistic leadership of the Bahia Youth Symphony Orchestra and set himself the challenge of building a network of youth orchestras across the state. This network, known as NEOJIBA, comprises four orchestras and a choir, with an age range from 7 to 29. It aims to highlight the potential of every young person, however disadvantaged, and regardless of their ethnic or cultural background.</p> <p>Through making music together at the highest level, these young people develop a shared sense of responsibility and a quest for excellence that also pays dividends in their personal, family and student life. "Cities need orchestras" says Ricardo, "as a model of how we are able to live together in peace."</p>
<p><b>Aaron P Dworkin – Sphinx, USA (diversity in the arts)</b></p>	<p>Violinist Aaron P Dworkin set out to change the face of US orchestras by inspiring and encouraging young Black and Latino musicians. In 1998 he founded the Sphinx Organization with the ambition that classical music should reflect the cultural diversity of society and play a role in the everyday lives of these young people. During that time the wide-ranging programme has reached more than 100,000 students in 200 schools nationwide, and given over \$2 million in scholarship awards. Sphinx Alumni have graduated from each of the top 10 music schools in the US and the number of black members of major USA orchestras has more than doubled.</p> <p>Aaron says "I am inspired every day by the talent, commitment and passion that is embodied in the young people we work with."</p>
<p><b>Rosemary Nalden – Buskaid, Soweto, South Africa</b></p>	<p>Rosemary Nalden started with the simple idea of asking professional musicians to raise money by busking. Over 20 years of huge personal investment and determination, she has brought music and teaching to hundreds of young people in Soweto. Starting with just a handful of students playing in a tiny church office, her new purpose-built music school is now bursting at the seams with students ranging in age from five to 29. They receive virtually free tuition and, crucially important to her, is that all the students learn to tutor the players less advanced than themselves.</p> <p>Rosemary is their coach, mentor, champion and, in many cases, maternal figure, offering the discipline and self-control required to better themselves and their music. The music school is also a refuge for many students who face difficulties associated with township life including extreme poverty, violence and exposure to drugs. Inside they find a very different world where the music of Bach and Rameau is given pride of place alongside the ubiquitous pennywhistles of kwela and hip-hop beats of kwaito.</p>

<p><b>Dr Ahmad Sarmast – Afghanistan National Institute of Music, Kabul, Afghanistan</b></p>	<p>Dr Ahmad Sarmast has brought back music to his country, silenced by the Taliban, by founding the first national music school in Afghanistan. The outline for his plan was drawn up while studying in exile in Melbourne, and he returned to his native country in 2008 determined to undo the impact of the years of war and discrimination against music.</p> <p>Two years of negotiation, fundraising and planning followed before the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM) opened in 2010. Ahmad’s vision is to empower Afghan children, regardless of class, ethnicity or gender and ANIM offers a general education, as well as specialist training in Afghan and Western Classical music.</p> <p>ANIM has a tremendous influence on the social and cultural life of Afghan society, and nurtures inter-cultural connections between Afghan musicians and students and their counterparts around the world: already there are plans to replicate its success across the country.</p>
<p><b>Armand Diangienda Wabasolele – L’Orchestre Symphonique Kimbanguiste, Democratic Republic of the Congo</b></p>	<p>Out of sheer passion for music and determination Armand Diangienda Wabasolele has created an orchestra from nothing, in one of the poorest cities on earth, against insuperable economic and social odds.</p> <p>A self-taught musician, Armand has built his symphony orchestra and choir, now 200 strong, from the ground up, literally transforming his home into a make-shift music school. People come from all over the city and for the most part travel on foot to get there; they play on home-made instruments. This orchestra’s very existence provides hope and promotes peace in a country full of poverty and war and it is also an oasis from the trials and tribulations most of these musicians face on a daily basis.</p> <p>Not content with creating the first symphony orchestra in central Africa, Armand’s ambition is to introduce his musicians to the outside world. “It will not be an amateur orchestra, but a professional orchestra” he says.</p>