

Press Release

For release: 12 October 2011

**Royal Philharmonic Society at the
Battle of Ideas**

***From the Sublime to the Ridiculous:
Can we measure the value of the arts?***

Saturday 29 October, 10.30am

Students Union, Royal College of Art

**presented by the Royal Philharmonic Society, in partnership with the Institute of
Ideas**

The Royal Philharmonic Society returns to the Institute of Ideas weekend of political, social and cultural debate, the Battle of Ideas, with a panel discussion probing whether, in a time of pressing economic concern, we can apply objective measures to value the arts? Can the arts really deliver well-being and community cohesion and can science determine the long-term effect of cultural exposure? How do we define 'value for money' when it comes to discussing the public's experience of the arts and how they value it? Should we even try?

Leading figures from the arts, science and education will be presenting their views, answering questions and offering suggestions about whether culture can, and should, be quantified. The debate panel features:

Dr Tiffany Jenkins – Director of the arts and society, Institute of Ideas; author of *Contesting Human Remains in Museum Collections: the crisis of cultural authority*.

Dr Dave O'Brien – Lecturer and researcher on UK cultural policy and public administration, City University London; author of *Measuring the value of culture: a report to DCMS*

Graham Sheffield - Director, arts, British Council and former Chairman of the RPS

Dr Paul Thompson – Rector and Vice-Provost, Royal College of Art

Harry Witchel – Discipline leader, physiology, Brighton and Sussex Medical School: author, *You are What You Hear*.

Allan Miller (chair) – co-director, NY Salon; co-founder, London's Truman Brewery

The debate is produced by Tom Hutchinson for the Royal Philharmonic Society and Tiffany Jenkins for the Institute of Ideas.

This is the third year that the Royal Philharmonic Society has presented a debate at the annual Battle of Ideas. The RPS has a commitment to encourage a greater understanding of music and to further discussion about the issues that may influence classical music's future by providing high profile platforms for cultural leaders. This is reflected through the keynote speech at the prestigious RPS Music Awards each May, in RPS Lectures, and in platform discussions and debates at the ABO Conference and throughout the year.

www.royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk

BATTLE OF IDEAS

The Battle of Ideas, the Institute of Ideas annual festival of political, cultural and social debate takes place on Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 October at the Royal College of Art, London. The weekend features 75 debates and 350 speakers on a vast range of subjects and aims for a 'public conversation' that interrogates orthodoxies and debates challenges facing society. Further information and tickets from www.battleofideas.org.uk

Further press information from:

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Notes:

About the Royal Philharmonic Society

The Royal Philharmonic Society [RPS] is one of the two oldest music societies in the world. It was formed on 24 January 1813 with the aim 'to promote the performance, in the most perfect manner possible of the best and most approved instrumental music', which it did principally by giving regular public orchestral concerts in London, including through two world wars.

Today the RPS seeks to create a future for music through the encouragement of creativity, the recognition of excellence and the promotion of understanding. The Society's artistic activities focus on composers and young musicians and through a programme of audience development, awards and lectures it seeks to raise the public consciousness of the finest music making today and to create a forum for debate about the direction of classical music. Current recipients of the society's highest honour, the RPS Gold Medal, are: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Janet Baker, Bernard Haitink, Alfred Brendel, Colin Davis, Elliott Carter, Pierre Boulez, Simon Rattle, Placido Domingo, Joan Sutherland, Claudio Abbado, Charles Mackerras, Daniel Barenboim, Henri Dutilleux and Thomas Quasthoff.