

Press Release

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Marin Alsop awarded Honorary Membership of the Royal Philharmonic Society

The American conductor **Marin Alsop** has been made an Honorary Member of the Royal Philharmonic Society in recognition of her outstanding services to music. She is the 137th recipient since the first honorary membership was made to Carl Maria von Weber in 1826. She joins a distinguished list of conductors to have previously received the award, which includes **Mark Elder, Lorin Maazel, Rafael Kubelik, Charles Mackerras, John Eliot Gardner, Pierre Boulez, Vernon Handley, Bernard Haitink** and **Arturo Toscanini**.

The presentation of the certificate of Honorary Membership was made by RPS Trustee, composer **Colin Matthews**, on stage at the Royal Albert Hall during the BBC Proms concert on Thursday 4 September 2014. Marin Alsop conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra in works by John Adams and Mahler, and the concert was broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Four.

In its full citation, the Council of the Royal Philharmonic Society says:

“Marin Alsop is an inspiring and distinguished artist who is also a role model for the 21st century musician. She is as widely recognised for her imaginative programming as for her deep commitment to education and to the development of audiences of all ages.

As a Music Director, a position she currently holds in Baltimore and Sao Paolo, her energy and precision produce thrilling music making. She is a generous collaborator who creates a palpable sense of enjoyment and teamwork from her musicians and a warm and direct connection with her audiences.

From the outset she has taken professional development into her own hands: learning from the inside how to lead, direct and administer by forming her own ensembles, most notably in 1984, Concordia - the Orchestra dedicated to exploring repertoire of all kinds which she directed for 18 years. Wherever she goes she strives for greater engagement in classical music. In 2002 she set up the ‘Taki Concordia Conducting Fellowship’ through which she mentors, promotes and encourages young women conductors in the early stages of their careers; while in Baltimore she opens possibilities across the community from the ‘Rusty Musicians’ who get a chance to play with the Symphony, to OrchKids which offers more than 700 children from the city’s more deprived areas, instruments and after-school lessons.

All of her performances here in the UK bring a special sense of occasion and the Royal Philharmonic Society is proud to honour her this evening.”

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Notes:

About Honorary Membership of the Royal Philharmonic Society

Honorary Membership of the Royal Philharmonic Society is given in recognition of outstanding services to music. Illustrious Honorary Members have included **Rossini (1839), Brahms (1882), Clara Schumann (1887), Stravinsky (1921), Aaron Copland (1970), Paul Sacher (1991) and Lady Evelyn Barbirolli (2001)**. Recent recipients have included founder of El Sistema **José Antonio Abreu (2008) Sir Brian McMaster (2009) Graham Johnson, Fanny Waterman (2010) George Benjamin, Tony Fell, Mark Elder (2011) John Stephens (2012), Dr Ahmad Sarmast, Rosemary Nalden, Aaron Dworkin, Ricardo Castro, Armand Diangienda (2013) and Martin Campbell-White (2014)**.

About the Royal Philharmonic Society

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.