

Press Release

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Conductor Charles Dutoit awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medal

One of classical music's highest honours, the Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medal, has been awarded to the Swiss conductor Charles Dutoit. He becomes the 103rd recipient since the medal was founded in 1870 in celebration of the centenary of the birth of Beethoven (London's Philharmonic Society commissioned Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and enjoyed a close association with the composer).

The medal will be presented to **Charles Dutoit** at the **BBC Proms, on Thursday 17 August** as part of a concert at the Royal Albert Hall (and live on BBC Radio 3) by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.* Charles Dutoit is Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and conducts a programme that includes Saint-Saën's 3rd Symphony, commissioned by the Philharmonic Society in 1886.

In awarding the medal, which bears the effigy of Beethoven and is awarded for the most outstanding musicianship, the Society said: *"For over 50 years, Maestro Dutoit's passion, energy, knowledge and uncompromising standards have demanded the highest level of performance from the musicians that he has conducted across five continents. He has a curiosity and determination to explore repertoire, respect for his musicians and an essential honesty to his music making. His advocacy for music education, particularly supporting and encouraging young conductors and soloists has engaged generations of performers"*.

Charles Dutoit joins a distinguished list of current RPS Gold Medallists including **Marta Argerich, Janet Baker, Daniel Barenboim, Alfred Brendel, Plácido Domingo, Bernard Haitink, György Kurtág, Antonio Pappano, Thomas Quasthoff, Simon Rattle, András Schiff, John Tomlinson** and **Mitsuko Uchida**.

Distinguished conductors previously awarded the RPS Gold Medal include: **Thomas Beecham; Bruno Walter; Arturo Toscanini; Felix Weingartner; Adrian Boult; John Barbirolli; Herbert von Karajan; Leonard Bernstein; Georg Solti; Colin Davis; Pierre Boulez; Claudio Abbado; Charles Mackerras** and **Nikolaus Harnoncourt**.

philharmonicsociety.uk

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- ***Note to Editors: Despite sharing a name, the Royal Philharmonic Society and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra are independent organisations.***

About Charles Dutoit

Captivating audiences throughout the world, Charles Dutoit is one of today's most sought-after conductors, having performed with all of the major orchestras on most stages of the five continents.

Charles Dutoit is Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (he will become RPO Honorary Conductor for Life in October 2019 in recognition of his outstanding musical contribution to the orchestra over five decades). He also recently celebrated his thirty-year artistic collaboration with the Philadelphia Orchestra, who in turn bestowed upon him the title of Conductor Laureate. He collaborates every season with the orchestras of Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, New York and Los Angeles, and is also a regular guest on the stages in London, Berlin, Paris, Munich, Moscow, Sydney, Beijing, Hong Kong and Shanghai, amongst others.

Charles Dutoit's more than 200 recordings for Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI, Philips and Erato have garnered multiple awards and distinctions, including two Grammys.

For twenty-five years, he was Artistic Director of the Montréal Symphony Orchestra, a dynamic musical team recognised the world over. From 1991 to 2001, he was Music Director of the Orchestre National de France and in 1996, was appointed Principal Conductor – and soon thereafter Music Director – of the NHK Symphony Orchestra (Tokyo), where he is now Music Director Emeritus. He was Music Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra's season at the Mann Music Center for ten years and at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center for twenty-one years.

Charles Dutoit's interest in the younger generation has always held an important place in his career and he has successively been Music Director of the Sapporo Pacific Music Festival and Miyazaki International Music Festival in Japan, as well as the Canton International Summer Music Academy in Guangzhou. **Between 2009 and 2017, he was Music Director of the Verbier Festival Orchestra who recently bestowed upon him the title of Conductor Emeritus.**

When still in his early twenties, Charles Dutoit was invited by Herbert von Karajan (himself an RPS Gold Medallist) to conduct the Vienna State Opera. He has since conducted at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, Metropolitan Opera in New York, Deutsche Oper in Berlin, Rome Opera and the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires.

In 1991, he was made Honorary Citizen of the City of Philadelphia; in 1995, Grand Officier de l'Ordre national du Québec; in 1996, Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the government of France, and in 1998, he was invested as Honorary Officer of the Order of Canada. In 2007, he received the Gold Medal of the city of Lausanne, his birthplace, and in

2014, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the ICMA (International Classical Music Awards).

He holds Honorary Doctorates from the universities of McGill, Montréal, Laval and the Curtis School of Music.

A globetrotter motivated by his passion for history and archaeology, political science, art and architecture, Charles Dutoit has travelled in all 196 nations of the world.

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.

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