

LONDON SINFONIETTA WINS PRESTIGIOUS RPS MUSIC AWARD FOR ENSEMBLE

London Sinfonietta has won the Ensemble category at this year's RPS Music Awards, the UK's most prestigious accolade for live classical music.

The Ensemble Award goes to London Sinfonietta for the consistent excellence of its music-making, the diverse range and imaginative quality of its programming, the variety of its ground-breaking projects including the first London Sinfonietta Academy in 2009, and its encouragement of young creators of new music combined with its championing of established composers – all of which puts it in a class of its own. – Rosemary Johnson, Executive Director, The Royal Philharmonic Society

I'm pleased and proud for the organisation that London Sinfonietta has won this important award - a testament to the extraordinary performances by the musicians and the role they have to play in nurturing the next generation of composers and performers. We have great plans for the future - and all this work is supported by a great Board and an outstanding management team. I'm grateful to the Royal Philharmonic Society for this recognition, and to The Yellow Car Charitable Trust who donated the award. – Andrew Burke, Chief Executive, London Sinfonietta

Landmark performance projects

The acknowledgement from the RPS comes in a hugely successful season for London Sinfonietta. High profile performances keep the ensemble at the top of its game with an international reputation for excellence. Highlights of the season so far include performances with John Adams and Steve Reich, a major celebration of the work of George Benjamin in his 50th year, the highly acclaimed Southbank Varese 360° festival and a successful tour of Australia which saw the ensemble collaborate with Aborigine musicians.

Innovative new work

Exploring new ways of creating and presenting contemporary classical music is also at the core of London Sinfonietta's programme. Recent innovative projects include a new site specific work created in response to the Midland Goods Shed for the Reveal festival and the brilliant new collaboration between London Sinfonietta players and hot indie pop band Micachu & The Shapes.

Supporting performing talent for the future

London Sinfonietta is delighted to also announce that this Award coincides with a significant funding decision from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation who have awarded £90,000 over a period of three years to support London Sinfonietta Academy - an intensive course of rehearsals, workshops, masterclasses and a final performance specialising in contemporary classical music.

London Sinfonietta Academy participants are selected from UK-wide open auditions with the ensemble's Principal Players, and following this process, up to 30 of the UK's finest young musicians come together at Kings Place, the London Sinfonietta's headquarters, to further their performing

experience and training alongside some of the world's finest contemporary classical musicians. The Academy is the only one of its kind to concentrate on the specific challenges posed by contemporary repertoire and performance. This year, London Sinfonietta will also offer three young conductors, at the very start of their careers, an unparalleled opportunity to take part in the Academy and work with one of the world's leading contemporary music ensembles alongside conductor Elgar Howarth. The culmination of the second London Sinfonietta Academy can be seen in a live performance at Kings Place on 8 July.

New audiences and new participants

The ensemble's work creating opportunities for new audiences to engage with this inspiring music grows apace. The ensemble's 'Collective' gives young people the chance to make events with the ensemble. January saw the launch of the Kings Cross branch of this group – the KX Collective - which provides creative, curating and performing experience for teenagers in Islington and Camden. The LS Collective, another group of young London-based college students, curate their first full concert night at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 3 June ('Shadowworks') with the world premiere of a new work by Larry Goves.

This season has seen the introduction of exclusive digital content. Current publications include podcasts and video interviews with composers such as John Adams, Harrison Birtwistle, George Benjamin, Jonathan Harvey and Frederic Rzewski.

Notes to Editors:

London Sinfonietta is one of the world's leading contemporary music ensembles with a reputation built on its virtuosity, ambitious programming and commitment to placing new music at the heart of contemporary culture. Since 1968 it has commissioned almost 250 works from some of the greatest composers, and actively supports emerging talent. Its innovative Blue Touch Paper scheme gives today's composers the opportunity to develop ideas without the pressure of a public performance. The London Sinfonietta Academy provides young instrumentalists with the unparalleled experience of working and performing with some of the world's finest contemporary musicians. Its headquarters are at Kings Place and it is Resident at Southbank Centre.

The London Sinfonietta Academy is also generously supported by The Fenton Arts Trust, The Garrick Charitable Trust, Leo and Regina Hepner, Musicians Benevolent Fund and The Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation.

London Sinfonietta's work is sustained and encouraged by the generosity of many collaborators, individuals, trusts, foundations and other grant-making bodies. London Sinfonietta is immensely grateful to Arts Council England and PRS for Music Foundation for their ongoing support and to all the funders that help make its work possible.

For more information and high-res images please contact:

Maija Handover at sounduk, 020 7375 0025 or maija@sounduk.net

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