Press Release
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Winners announced of 2011 Royal Philharmonic Society [RPS] Music Awards

presented in association with BBC Radio 3

- **Government funded initiative on song at RPS Music Awards**
- **Dynamic young chamber orchestra takes Ensemble prize in only its sixth year**
- **Pianist who regained the use of his right hand after four decades wins Instrumentalist award**
- **Antonio Pappano, Iván Fischer, Susan Bickley and Alina Ibragimova amongst the winners**
- **Composer James Dillon becomes most celebrated winner in RPS Music Awards history**

- **Composer George Benjamin made Honorary Member of the Royal Philharmonic Society**
- **RPS Music Awards keynote speaker, playwright Mark Ravenhill, calls for arts institutions to "get out of the business lounge"**

A national singing programme that reaches nearly 90% of primary school in the UK and aims to give every child the chance to sing has emerged as one of the winners in the UK's most prestigious awards for live classical music.

The Royal Philharmonic Society [RPS] Music Awards, presented in association with BBC Radio 3, celebrated achievements in live classical music during 2010 at a glittering awards ceremony at London's Dorchester Hotel [evening, Tuesday 10 May], hosted by BBC Radio 3's Katie Derham and Andrew McGregor. Awards were presented by the pianist Imogen Cooper. A special programme devoted to the awards will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 at 2pm on Sunday 15 May.

Sing Up was launched as a four-year programme in 2007 with a £40 million Government investment, and received an additional one-year, £4 million cash injection in the recent Government Spending Review. It took the RPS Music Award for Education, with the jury urging the government to *"support this work that is the envy of other countries in Europe and across the world, beyond 2012".* Pupils from St Mary's RC Primary School in Kensal Town, a Sing Up Platinum Award-winning school, performed during the evening.

Sing Up was in tune with the youthful note to several of this year's award winners. The **Aurora Orchestra**, in only its sixth year, romped home with the RPS Music Award for Ensemble, hailed for its ability to *"convey joy and freshness at the highest standard of musical excellence"*. 25-year-old violinist **Alina Ibragimova** took the RPS Music Award for Young Artists for a "*landmark year*" of "*stunning*" concerts across a broad range of repertoire, from Beethoven at the Wigmore Hall to the premiere of Huw Watkins's *Violin Concerto* at The Proms. **English National Opera**'s under 30's membership scheme, **Access all Arias**, which has attracted 15,700 members through targeted marketing and ticket discounts, and ENO/Punchdrunk's immersive performance of *The Duchess of Malfi* scooped the RPS Music Award for Audience Development.

Antonio Pappano, Music Director of the Royal Opera House collected the RPS Music Award for Creative Communication with **BBC4** for ***Opera Italia***, his *"tour de force"* journey through the history of Italian opera. The **Royal Opera House** also claimed the Opera and Music Theatre award for its production of Wagner's epic *Tannhäuser*. *"Consummate artist"* mezzo-soprano **Susan Bickley** took the RPS Music Award for Singer.

Having regained the use of his right hand after a four decade struggle with a neurological condition, 82 year old American pianist **Leon Fleisher** won the Instrumentalist category for his *"extraordinary"* performances at 2010 Aldeburgh Festival. There were also distinguished winners in the two composition categories. **James Dillon** became the most celebrated winner in RPS Music Awards history, picking up his fourth award for his epic orchestral work ***Nine Rivers***, two decades in the making and performed for the first time in its entirety in 2010 (Large-Scale Composition category). **Brian Ferneyhough** travelled from the USA to collect his award for Chamber-Scale Composition for his electrifying ***String Quartet No. 6***, *"one of the essential experiences in*

contemporary music". **Southbank Centre** took the RPS Music Award for Concert Series and Festivals for its profile weekend of the German composer **Helmut Lachenmann**, with the jury noting the *"palpable sense of excitement among the audience"* during the *"risky"* weekend.

In 1824, the Royal Philharmonic Society sent money to Beethoven to commission his 9th symphony and a brace of awards at this year's ceremony were made for outstanding interpretations of the composer's music. The **Takács Quartet** was a popular winner of the RPS Music Award for Chamber Music for its highly acclaimed complete cycle of Beethoven String Quartets on London's South Bank and Hungarian conductor **Iván Fischer** won the RPS Music Award for Conductor for his performances of Beethoven symphonies with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment which the jury commented "*are seared onto the memories of all those present".*

Composer and conductor George Benjamin, described by the RPS as *"a consummate musician who enriches our lives"* was made an **Honorary Member of the Royal Philharmonic Society,** for the **"***virtuosity, integrity, care and consideration he brings to everything he does, whether as a pianist, teacher, spellbinding speaker, programmer or internationally acclaimed conductor".*

Honorary Membership of the Royal Philharmonic Society is given in recognition of outstanding services to music and has been awarded fewer than 130 times since the first Honorary Membership was made to Carl Maria von Weber in 1826. Illustrious Honorary Members have since included Rossini (1839), Brahms (1882), Clara Schumann (1887), Stravinsky (1921), Aaron Copland (1970), Paul Sacher (1991) Lady Evelyn Barbirolli (2001) and most recently, the founder of El Sistema, José Antonio Abreu (2008) Sir Brian McMaster (2009) and Graham Johnson (2010).

John Gilhooly, Chairman of the Royal Philharmonic Society comments:
"The Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards are able to respond to the zeitgeist, but prefer to set the agenda. They reward serious, imaginative projects which broaden the understanding and enjoyment of music and trumpet the outstanding brilliance of distinguished musicians, composers and young artists at the very top of their game. There is much to be said for intellectual rigour in a time when serious ideas can often struggle to get a hearing. The RPS is committed to creating a vibrant future for classical music through a careful, rigorous and artistically bold approach – something which is mirrored in the work of all tonight's winners."

A special programme devoted to the RPS Music Awards will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on Sunday 15 May, 2-4pm

Roger Wright, Controller, BBC Radio 3 and Director, BBC Proms comments:
"This set of awards is a celebration of the classical music world, not least the value of live music and new work. I am delighted by the recognition given to James Dillon, a composer who has long been supported by both Radio 3 and the Proms. Live music is at the heart of Radio 3 and our recent announcement of the groundbreaking schedule of live music every week night on Radio 3 is just one example of our shared values with the Royal Philharmonic Society and our desire to share live performances with millions of our listener."

In his keynote speech, playwright Mark Ravenhill cautioned arts organisations against a 'business lounge' mentality. He highlighted a 'strange schizophrenia' which sees the arts sell themselves as an exclusive 'brand' and at the same time 'agonise about access', and called on the arts to better define what they do, and why they do it: *"On the right day, I love a business lounge. But it's an uncomfortable model for theatres and concert halls. And it's one I believe we should resist. Great art is made from a great paradox: it is grounded in the local, the specific, the ephemeral and yet it achieves the metaphysical and cheats time and place.…Making art and running cultural institutions is a joyously complex messy business. It's always going to be a balancing act between money and art, high aspirations and low cunning…. I don't know what the model for our cultural institutions should be over the next decades but I would suggest a starting place: put down the complimentary croissant, turn off CNN and get out of the business lounge. Let's fly."*

Sponsors
The RPS Music Awards are presented in association with BBC Radio 3. The society is grateful for BBC Radio 3's continuing support – the seventh year that the awards have been presented in association with BBC Radio 3 - and to its individual award sponsors, donors and supporters: **BBC Music Magazine, David W. Bowerman CBE, Peter Bull, The Guardian, the Musicians Benevolent Fund, Rosenblatt Recital Series**, the **Yellow Car Charitable Trust** and an anonymous donor.

RPS MUSIC AWARDS 2011
in association with BBC Radio 3

Jury Citations

Award	Winner	Winners citation
Audience Development	**ENO: new audience initiatives** Shortlisted: The Royal Opera: Ludd and Isis	English National Opera's Access all Arias free membership scheme for students and under 30s, has over 5 years attracted 15,700 members through targeted marketing and ticket discounts. This, together with the marketing of imaginative collaborations with other companies – in 2010 The Duchess of Malfi with Punchdrunk in a warehouse – is developing new audiences for the company's wide repertoire.
Chamber Music and Song donated by David W Bowerman CBE	**Takács Quartet** Shortlisted: Jonas Kaufmann Transition Projects	The Takács Quartet's complete cycle of Beethoven String Quartets at the South Bank in 2009/10 was a tour-de-force. They brought a unique insight, maturity and uncompromising excellence to these performances, making this one of the great musical events of recent years. In addition, they appeared at a wide range of venues throughout the UK, and passed on their expertise through their teaching at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. This award recognizes their contribution and commitment to exceptional chamber music performance in the UK.
Chamber-Scale Composition	**Brian Ferneyhough: String Quartet No. 6** Shortlisted: Larry Goves: Virtual Airport Rebecca Saunders: Murmurs	Brian Ferneyhough's Sixth String Quartet is the latest instalment of one of the most important quartet oeuvres of our time. It's music that electrifies the familiar combination of a couple of violins, a viola, and a cello with fizzing, splintering energy: 20 minutes of music that both shatters conventions and builds on the achievements of Ferneyhough's five previous quartets. It's one of the essential experiences in contemporary music.
Concert Series and Festivals	**Southbank Centre: Helmut Lachenmann Weekend** Shortlisted: BBCSO: Martinů Symphonies cycle North York Moors Chamber Music Festival	The Southbank Centre's decision to devote a weekend to the music of Helmut Lachenmann might have seemed risky, but thanks to fine performances and peripheral events, the risk paid off. The event gave a sense of the composer's significance as a key figure, and was marked by palpable excitement among the audience and a sense of the lasting aesthetic appeal of Lachenmann's work.
Conductor supported by BBC Music Magazine	**Iván Fischer** Shortlisted: Semyon Bychkov Esa-Pekka Salonen	Iván Fischer's visits to the UK are regular but all-too rare, always invigorating, often life-changing. The performances he gave of Beethoven symphonies with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in 2010 are seared onto the memories of all those present. His inspired originality, penetrating intelligence and intensely questing spirit have left an indelible mark on the ensemble, and the wider musical community.
Creative Communication supported by the Guardian	**BBC4: Opera Italia** Shortlisted: Philip Ball: The Music Instinct (Bodley Head)	A combination of compelling narrative, a starry cast of the world's great opera singers and a fresh and dynamic presentation. At the centre is Antonio Pappano an artist at the top of his game, who is revealed as a brilliant communicator in so many ways: storyteller, vocal coach, singer, pianist and conductor. The BBC's Opera Italia is a tour de force in every way.
Education	**Sing Up** Shortlisted: Glyndebourne: Knight Crew Southbank Centre: The Bernstein Project	The winner of this year's Education award has introduced quality singing to millions of children in English primary schools for the first time – work that is the envy of other countries in Europe and across the world. We urge the government to continue support beyond 2012 for this year's Education Award winner – Sing Up.
Ensemble donated by the Yellow Car Charitable Trust	**Aurora Orchestra** Shortlisted: City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain	From a south American capoeira group to Central St Martins College of Art and Design, the range of their artistic collaboration is staggering. They convey joy and freshness at the highest standard of musical excellence. And in just five short years they've carved out a niche in the country's musical life which is unique: - the Aurora Orchestra.

Instrumentalist supported by Musicians Benevolent Fund	**Leon Fleisher** Shortlisted: Elizabeth Kenny Lawrence Power	The RPS Instrumentalist award goes to Leon Fleisher. He has been an outstanding musician since his debut performance at 8. He faced a neurological condition at 36 that led him to embrace conducting, teaching and commissioning music for the left hand, and, regaining the use of the right hand after four decades, his extraordinary performances at Aldeburgh in 2010 proved beyond doubt that he has re-emerged as one of the greatest pianists of his generation.
Large-Scale Composition donated anonymously	**James Dillon: Nine Rivers** Shortlisted: Hans Abrahamsen: Wald Helmut Lachenmann: Schreiben Howard Skempton: Only The Sound Remains	The Award goes to James Dillon's Nine Rivers for Its sheer ambition and the consistency of creative thought sustaining it. With its central keystone movement finally in place, both dividing and uniting the whole, this was an epic conceptual journey, two decades in the making, and an important personal voyage for its composer.
Opera and Music Theatre	**The Royal Opera: Tannhäuser** Shortlisted: RSAMD/Scottish Opera: War and Peace Welsh National Opera: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg	In a year of Wagnerian excellence, the jury chose the Royal Opera's Tannhäuser for its outstanding musical calibre. Under Semyon Bychkov's inspired conducting, a superb cast and chorus led by Johan Botha in radiant vocal form, delivered a production of exceptional originality.
Singer donated by Rosenblatt Recitals	**Susan Bickley** Shortlisted: Christian Gerhaher Brindley Sherratt	The award goes to Susan Bickley for her openness and bravery in tackling every kind of repertoire with commitment, flair and interpretative insight. Whatever the challenge, her voice retains focus and gleam. Her clarity of text is second to none and you can guarantee that even the back row of the gods will hear every word… She is a consummate artist.
Young Artists donated by Peter Bull	**Alina Ibragimova** Shortlisted: Benjamin Grosvenor Stile Antico	Still only 25 years old, the violinist Alina Ibragimova has consistently garnered five-star reviews, displaying artistic integrity across a broad range of repertoire. 2010 was a landmark year for her, with a number of high-profile engagements and stunning performances of Beethoven Sonatas at Wigmore Hall, solo Bach at Birmingham Town Hall and the world premiere of Huw Watkins' Violin Concerto at the BBC Proms.
Honorary Membership	George Benjamin	It is now 30 years since the 20 year-old George Benjamin blazed in to public view with a performance of his Ringed by the Flat Horizon at the BBC Proms. Since then he has won audiences over worldwide with his finely crafted and uncannily beautiful, expressive music. But George brings the same virtuosity, integrity, care and consideration to everything he does: whether as a pianist, teacher, spellbinding speaker, programmer or internationally acclaimed conductor. He is a consummate musician and enriches our lives. The Royal Philharmonic Society is proud to make George Benjamin an Honorary Member.

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