

PRESS RELEASE

19 December 2007

BBC announces eclectic nominations for coveted classical awards

BBC Music Magazine has today announced a glittering shortlist for the coveted **BBC Music Magazine Awards 2008**, featuring many of the big names in international music alongside a number of rare gems.

The star-studded list includes the stunning French soprano **Natalie Dessay** with Bellini; pianists **Martha Argerich** and **Mitsuko Uchida** mastering Shostakovich and Beethoven respectively; cellist **Steven Isserlis** with his new benchmark recording of 'the cellist's bible', Bach's Solo Cello Suites; and British tenor **Mark Padmore** with a ravishing Handel recital.

Among the more unfamiliar nominations is Swedish Mezzo **Anne Sofie von Otter's** *Terezin*, an extraordinary exploration of the composers incarcerated in the Terezin concentration camp, who produced a unique musical legacy while awaiting their deaths; the newly formed, semi-professional **Arakaendar Bolivia Choir** with the first-ever recording of Bassani's *Missa Encarnacion*; and **Paul McCreesh** and the **Gabrieli Consort's** *Road to Paradise*, featuring choral memorials to JF Kennedy, Linda McCartney, and John Tavener's *Song for Athene*, which was sung at Diana, Princess of Wales's funeral.

Oliver Condy, Editor of *BBC Music Magazine*, commented: "The classical record industry has excelled itself this year – our nominations include several new landmark recordings of well-known works by the classical world's big guns. But the list also has some wonderfully unusual, touching and inventive discs of unknown artists and composers, and this is what makes this year's shortlist so exciting – it will be fascinating to see how they fare against the seasoned artists."

The nominations are announced in the January issue of *BBC Music Magazine*, on sale today. The public are able to vote for their favourite recordings at www.bbcmusicmagazine.com/awards from 19 December 2007 until 28 February 2008, and all voters will be entered into a prize draw to win a superb Arcam Hi-Fi and Monitor speakers plus all 18 nominated discs, a prize worth £5,000 in total. With votes up over 100% year on year in 2007 to around 40,000, the *BBC Music Magazine Awards 2008* are expected to pull in another big audience.

Now in its third year, the Awards has also attracted attention from a wide retail audience with several specialist online retailers including Crotchet, Europadisc, MDT and Presto Classical joining HMV Online in promoting the nominations. iTunes will also be welcomed back as a download retailer, and HMV will once again promote the nominations in all of its major stores. Extracts of all of the nominated recordings are available to listen to and the full recordings to buy on the awards website.

Following the success of last year's podcast series, which received over 25,000 downloads, Radio 3's Petroc Trelawny will once again be hosting a series of seven podcasts around the nominations, to be broadcast on a weekly basis during the voting period. The series will be available to subscribe to on the website and at iTunes.

A key promotional campaign will run in December and January, with adverts appearing in a number of major magazine titles including *Radio Times*, *Good Food*, *Good Homes*, *Homes & Antiques* and *BBC History Magazine*, reaching a total audience of over three million readers.

The most outstanding recordings in each of the six categories, as voted by the general public, along with the winners of the five panel-judged categories, will be announced at an awards ceremony to be held on 9 April 2008, on board the MV Silver Sturgeon on the River Thames. The event will be by invitation only and will be hosted by Radio 4's James Naughtie.

Full details of the *BBC Music Magazine Awards 2008*, including the judging panel, selection criteria, nominees and extracts, can be found at www.bbcmusicmagazine.com/awards.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

BBC Music Magazine is the world's best-selling classical music magazine, with a monthly circulation of 47,091 (ABC Jan-Dec 2006). The *BBC Music Magazine Awards* launched in 2006, and in its second year attracted around 40,000 votes from the general public. *BBC Music Magazine* is published by BBC Magazines Bristol.

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