

Sakari Oramo honoured to receive prestigious CoScan International Award

17th October 2018 – Sakari Oramo, the current Chief Conductor of both the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, was delighted and honoured to be presented this evening with CoScan's renowned International Award 2018. Sakari accepted this prestigious award at a concert presented by the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican in London, which was also broadcast live on BBC Radio 3.



Sakari Oramo receiving the CoScan International Award 2018 from Mark Elliott, President and Eva Robards, Chairman at the BBC Symphony Orchestra concert at the Barbican
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Sakari was conducting three 20th century masterpieces, each composed in the shadow of World War II, in a concert of musical and emotional contrasts - a programme of 20th century greats, bookended by two great Russian symphonies. Shostakovich's startlingly buoyant Ninth Symphony couldn't be further from the sombre contemplation and mourning of Prokofiev's Sixth Symphony, a musical portrait of post-war 'wounds that cannot be healed'.

Mark Elliott, CMG, President of CoScan, introduced the organisation: "CoScan, the Confederation of Scandinavian Societies, includes all the main groups which bring together Scandinavians living in this country, and others here with a close interest in the region. Our total membership is several thousand across the United Kingdom. A few of us - like me - are British with a British partner. But most CoScan members have at least one family member born in one of the five Nordic countries. What we all have is great respect - even passion - for our part of Northern Europe, with a shared history and culture. The five Nordic embassies in London are our patrons, and we work together. Our member societies do all the usual things – lectures, film evenings, cultural outings – and CoScan keeps them in touch with each other. CoScan was founded more than 60 years ago and I have been President for over 15 years, but the person who really does the work is our Chairman Dr Eva Robards; and Eva will now tell you about the CoScan International Award."

Dr Eva Robards, Chairman of CoScan, described the award, "The CoScan International Award celebrates an achievement of outstanding merit by an individual, body or group related to one or more of the five Nordic countries. The award recognises those who have added public lustre to any of the Nordic countries and who have caused the British, and others outside the region, to view those countries with even greater affection and respect."

"The first recipient was the city of Lillehammer, for the extraordinary achievement in hosting the Winter Olympics in 1994. Among other recipients are:

- The Nordic Optical telescope
- The Øresund consortium – which built the bridge between Denmark and Sweden
- The Swedish diplomat Hans Blix - former Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency,
- The Swedish/Norwegian physicist Christer Fuglesang who participated in two spaceflight missions (including five spacewalks),
- Mika Häkkinen, the Finnish racing driver,
- The Swedish tennis star, Stefan Edberg,
- And last year, Danish presenter Sandi Toksvig"

Eva Robards then presented the award to Sakari saying, "Sakari Oramo, you are a most worthy winner of the CoScan International Award. Over many years you have raised the profile of Scandinavia's great musical riches in the UK, and indeed you have done the same for British musical culture in Scandinavia. In the 20th and 21st century, a large number of Finnish conductors have acquired international fame. You in particular have been visible to the UK's audiences. As Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra from 1998 to 2008, you worked to increase the appreciation of classical music among new audiences, and to inspire young musicians. For this you were awarded an OBE for services to music in Birmingham. And since 2013, you have been Chief Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra – bringing music from the Nordic countries (including symphony cycles of Finland's Jean Sibelius and Denmark's Carl Nielsen) to BBC Radio 3, and conducting the Last Night of the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall no less than three times. Maestro Oramo, we are proud to present the CoScan International Award of 2018 to you."

On receiving the award, Sakari Oramo replied, "I am delighted and honoured to accept this award from CoScan, the Confederation of Scandinavian Societies, an organisation linking and supporting Scandinavian and Nordic societies. I believe strongly that music, the most powerful of all art forms, affects our feelings and thoughts on all levels. For me to be able to bring the UK and the Nordic nations closer together through making music in London, Stockholm and around the globe, it is truly an honour and a privilege. Thank you very much indeed!"

-ENDS-

Notes for editors

Photographs

You can download hi-resolution photographs of Sakari Oramo receiving the award here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/535i71imc0lmy3n/AABkazrayem6-ogePTlrRWjda?dl=0>

Click on the hotlink above, and then click the 'Download' button on the top right-hand side of the DropBox webpage. You can then save the photographs to your preferred location.

Please attach the following credit to the photographs "BBC Symphony Orchestra".

You can also download additional hi-resolution photographs of Sakari here:

<https://www.harrisonparrott.com/artists/sakari-oramo>

About Sakari Oramo

Sakari Markus Oramo, OBE, is a Finnish conductor. He is the current Chief Conductor of both the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra.

You can read more about Sakari on his Wikipedia entry here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sakari_Oramo

About The BBC Symphony Orchestra

At the heart of British music for over 80 years, the BBC Symphony Orchestra performs an exciting, distinctive and wide-ranging season of concerts at the Barbican in its role as Associate Orchestra, offering everything from works at the heart of classical music to world premieres from today's finest composers. The BBC SO provides the backbone of the BBC Proms, performing around a dozen concerts each year, including the First and Last Nights. It performs throughout the world, and works regularly with its Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo, Semyon Bychkov, its Günter Wand Conducting Chair and Conductor Laureate Sir Andrew Davis. Strongly committed to twentieth-century and contemporary music, it has given recent premieres of works by Harrison Birtwistle, Betsy Jolas, George Walker and Raymond Yui. Central to its life are recordings made for BBC Radio 3 during sessions at its studios in Maida Vale, London, some of which are free for the public to attend. The vast majority of its concerts are broadcast on BBC Radio 3, streamed live online, and a number are televised, giving it the highest broadcast profile of any UK orchestra. Among ongoing learning projects are the BBC SO Plus Family scheme, which introduces families to live classical music, BBC SO Family Orchestra and Chorus, Total Immersion composer events, and work in local schools.

www.bbc.co.uk/symphonymorchestra

About CoScan

Established in 1950, CoScan (the Confederation of Scandinavian Societies) is a not-for-profit organisation that links and supports Scandinavian societies in the UK. With over 30 member societies and numerous individual members, it represents over 30,000 total members with links to Scandinavia.

CoScan's member societies and members maintain their Scandinavian links with lectures, film evenings, cultural outings, etc.

You can read more about CoScan here:

<http://www.coscan.org.uk/about/>

The prestigious CoScan International Award, recognises an achievement of outstanding merit by an individual, body or group related to one or more of the five Nordic countries. The award recognises those whose achievements in any field have added public lustre to any of the Nordic countries – who have caused the British and others outside the region to view those countries with even greater affection and respect.

Previous winners have included the tennis star Stefan Edberg and the comedian Sandi Toksvig.

You can read more about the CoScan International Award here:

<http://www.coscan.org.uk/international-award/>

For more information contact:

Tony Bray, CoScan

Email: tony.bray@coscan.org.uk

Mobile: +44 (0)7778 648082

You can hear Martin Handley's BBC Radio 3 commentary on the award here:

<http://www.coscan.org.uk/sakari-oramo-end-of-first-half/>

and here:

<http://www.coscan.org.uk/sakari-oramo-start-of-second-half/>