



30 January 2023

For immediate release

Víkingur Ólafsson receives the CoScan 2023

International Nordic Person of the Year Award

Icelandic pianist **Víkingur Ólafsson** has received the 2023 ‘International Nordic Person of the Year Award’ from [CoScan](#), the Confederation of Scandinavian Societies in the UK. The award recognises Ólafsson as “an extraordinary advocate for music across the generations,” and was presented by the Ambassador of Iceland, **His Excellency Sturla Sigurjónsson**, and Alexander Malmaeus, Chairman of CoScan, during a concert at London’s Royal Festival Hall on 28 January 2023, after Ólafsson performed the Schumann Piano Concerto with London Philharmonic Orchestra and Edward Gardner.

Chairman of CoScan, **Alexander Malmaeus**, continued:

“Iceland might be the country with the smallest population in the Nordic region, but it is bursting with musical talent from which we are all greatly enriched. Víkingur reaches new audiences with diverse musical tastes, and he has an incredible ability to make us listen freshly and gain something new from his every performance. We are thrilled that he has accepted the award.”

Víkingur Ólafsson commented: “Thank you so much to CoScan for this award.... which I consider my love letter to the UK. The north is a state of mind above everything else, and so if I have brought Nordic culture to the UK and Ireland, then something has been achieved.”

Previous recipients of CoScan’s International Person of the Year Award include football manager Sven-Göran Eriksson, conductor Sakari Oramo, Finnish racing driver Mika Häkkinen, and presenter Sandi Toksvig.

Víkingur Ólafsson is one of the most sought-after artists of today, and his previous awards include the Rolf Schock Prize for music (2022), Gramophone magazine Artist of the Year, Opus Klassik Solo Recording Instrumental (twice) and Album of the Year at the BBC Music Magazine Awards. He has made a profound impact around the world with his remarkable combination of the highest-level musicianship and visionary programmes. His recordings for Deutsche Grammophon – *Philip Glass Piano Works* (2017), *Johann Sebastian Bach* (2018), *Debussy Rameau* (2020) and *Mozart & Contemporaries* (2021) – have captured the public and critical imagination and led to career streams of over 400 million. Ólafsson’s latest album, *From Afar*, was released in October 2022.

About CoScan

[CoScan](#) was founded in 1950 and supports and represents all the major Anglo-Scandinavian societies in the UK, as well as friends of the Nordic countries living in the UK. It has a combined membership of many thousands of people and acts as a coordinating body for cultural exchange between the UK and Ireland on the one hand and the five Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, on the other: the embassies of the Nordic countries are its patrons.

The CoScan International Award was set up in 1994 to mark the achievement of outstanding merit by an individual, body or group related to one of the five Nordic countries, and who have caused the British and others outside the region to view the Scandinavian countries with increased affection and respect.

Previous recipients also include Norwegian chess champion Magnus Carlsen, Swedish astronaut Christer Fuglesang, Swedish diplomat Hans Blix, Swedish philanthropist Lisbet Rausing, and the Norwegian Scandi-noir writer, Jo Nesbø.

Contact

Dr Bridget Morris

Co-ordinator, Nordic Person of the Year Award

bridget.morris@coscan.co.uk +44 7445022182

www.coscan.org.uk

Samantha Holderness

Publicist to Víkingur Ólafsson

samantha@samanthaholderness.com +44 7816 893189

About Víkingur Ólafsson: <https://www.vikingurolafsson.com/>

Press photos: <https://www.harrisonparrott.com/artists/vikingur-olafsson>