

**GRAMOPHONE CLASSICAL MUSIC AWARDS 2021**  
**'STAGGERINGLY HIGH STANDARD' OF RECORDINGS CELEBRATED IN CHALLENGING YEAR**

**Edward Gardner leads the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra in victorious  
'Recording of the Year' win for 'Opera' pick *Peter Grimes***

**Violinist James Ehnes named 'Artist of the Year'**

**Gundula Janowitz accepts 'Lifetime Achievement' celebrating a 40-year career**

**Double win for Egyptian soprano Fatma Said who scoops 'Young Artist' Award**

**Minnesota Orchestra win 'Orchestra of the Year' Award, as voted by the public**

**'Special Achievement' for Boston Modern Orchestra Project**

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*Selection of images available to download [here](#)*

**Tuesday October 5, 2021** - Today, the Special and Artist awards - as well as the prestigious Recording of the Year - were revealed at the Gramophone Classical Music Awards 2021.

The Awards were once again streamed online, filmed at the VOCES8 Centre, and hosted by *Gramophone's* Editor-in-Chief **James Jolly** and classical chart-topping pianist **Isata Kanneh-Mason**, who opened the Awards ceremony with a sparkling Gershwin Prelude, as featured on her most recent Decca Classics album *Summertime*.

The **Recording of the Year** accolade is given to the 'exciting, committed, necessary and brilliantly recorded' Chandos recording of Britten's *Peter Grimes*, featuring the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and Choirs under the baton of Edward Gardner. The cast is headed by Stuart Skelton as Peter Grimes and the late Erin Wall as Ellen Orford, alongside Susan Bickley, Roderick Williams, Catherine Wyn-Rogers, Robert Murray, James Gilchrist and Marcus Farnsworth. Genuinely surprised by the Award, Stuart Skelton said 'it's for Erin' before thanking the entire team that gathered in Bergen for the recording.

Speaking from the Schubert Sterbewohnung in Vienna ('the city of music'), Gundula Janowitz, recipient of the **Lifetime Achievement Award**, said: 'My ambition was always to serve music with the greatest commitment. My life with music has made me a happy person to this day. I thank you for it.'

In total, 18 awards were given to recording artists and ensembles who have shown resilience, innovation and adaptability in the face of another challenging year.

James Jolly added 'Despite everything we've been through since last year's Awards, it's a pleasure and an honour to pay tribute to such amazing musicians. We are genuinely blessed to live in an age of such talent and commitment, and to embrace artists from such different backgrounds and approaches as, for example, our two sopranos, Fatma Said and Gundula Janowitz. And, to confirm *Gramophone's* international standing, we've awarded for two magnificent American ensembles, the Minnesota Orchestra

and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. While our Recording of the Year, surely Britten's most performed opera, receives thrilling advocacy in Norway.'

To close the ceremony, **VOCES8** performed a deeply moving arrangement of the spiritual 'Deep River' arranged by Matthew Lynch, who also conducted members of **Chineke!**, Europe's first majority Black and ethnically diverse orchestra.

For the second year, the Awards were presented in association with **Apple Music**, **E Gutzwiller et Cie**, **Banquiers** and, as charity partner, **Help Musicians**. The Awards were streamed on *Gramophone's* website, YouTube and Facebook channels, by [medici.tv](https://www.medicivt.com) and by **Classic FM**, and will remain available to catch up for 90 days.

### 2021 Award-Winners

The soprano Gundula Janowitz receives the **Lifetime Achievement** Award for her remarkable achievements in live performance and recorded music, spanning more than four decades. To mark this special award, Deutsche Grammophon has remastered for Spatial Audio Janowitz's classic 1973 recording, with Herbert von Karajan, of Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* (described by David Bowie as 'one album that I give to friends and acquaintances continually. I know of no other piece of music, nor any performance, which moves me quite like this'). Newly coupled with the final scene from *Capriccio*, **listen to the album in Spatial Audio on [Apple Music](#)**.

James Ehnes, recipient of the **Artist of the Year** award (sponsored by Raymond Weil), ended 2020 with the release of the fourth instalment of his Beethoven violin sonata cycle on Onyx, which received ecstatic reviews in the pages of *Gramophone*: 'a life-enhancing cycle'. Now, with the instalment of a state-of-the-art studio in his Florida home, Ehnes has produced recordings of Bach and Ysaÿe recitals, offering 'lockdown gold' to listeners around the world. With a welcome return to the UK this week to perform at the Birmingham Symphony Hall with the CBSO, Ehnes's special award is, in host James Jolly's words, given to an artist 'at the pinnacle of their powers... who [has] approached their craft in the spirit of positivity and a palpable desire to share their music with audiences.'

Soprano Fatma Said, also the recipient of the 2021 Gramophone Award for Song, takes home the **Young Artist** award, sponsored by Classic FM. A former BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, Said is now a resident in London after undertaking training at the Hanns Eisler School of Music in Berlin and the Accademia del Teatro alla Scala, becoming the first Egyptian soprano to perform on its stage. For her debut recording *El Nour* on Warner Classics, *Gramophone* commended Said's 'engaging delivery' and 'bright, silvery soprano voice', and live reviews are equally complimentary: Mark Pullinger notes her 'confident stage manner and vivid storytelling' that mark her out as an already accomplished recitalist. Following on from her double award acceptance video, presented by Classic FM's Alexander Armstrong, Said introduced a clip of her debut performance at the Edinburgh International Festival earlier this year.

The 2021 **Special Achievement** award goes not to an individual, but a collective: The Boston Modern Orchestra Project, founded in 1996 by conductor Gil Rose. Twenty five years later, BMOP proudly advocates for new and neglected music by American composers writing in the 20th and 21st centuries. BMOP's success is largely due to Rose's tireless fundraising efforts, plus international recognition in the form of a prestigious Grawemeyer Award for composition in 2019, followed shortly by a Grammy Award in 2020 for Tobias Picker's opera *Fantastic Mr Fox*. Despite a reduced live programme over the last 18

months, BMOP's in-house label has continued to release new works, which follows the preservationist ambitions of BMOP and the team at its heart, and approaches 100 releases. As Rose said in his acceptance speech: 'We can't know where to go unless we do the work to find out where we've been.'

This year's **Concept Album** award goes to Christian-Pierre La Marca for *Cello 360*, his first collaboration with the Naïve label. *Gramophone* previously described this release as 'multi-genre, multi-century, multi-texture', showcasing the cellist and his instrument in all its multifaceted glory. The repertoire spans from Marin Marais's music for viols and cello, at the cusp of the 18th century, right through to the Covid-era work 'Timeless', created by La Marca and his partners from the 1163 collective, Marie-Amélie Seigner and Rayann - 'superbly engineered' and performed on an 1856 Vuillaume. As Charlotte Gardner concluded her review, 'I fail to see how a listen will leave you anything other than newly captivated by La Marca as a cellist and all-round musician'.

The **Spatial Audio** Award, new this year and presented with Apple Music, has been won by Stile Antico for their Decca Classics album *The Golden Renaissance*. With Spatial Audio, which employs Dolby Atmos technology, the sound surrounds you, coming not just from left and right but also from above, in front and behind you. Produced by Jeremy Summerly, engineered by Dave Rowell and with post-production by Brad Michel, the recording was praised by writer Peter Quantrill who wrote: 'the Spatial Audio element serves to bring the particular movement of sound in space a step closer to the listener at home'. Stile Antico's Kate Ashby also praised the Award, adding: 'There's something really special about hearing this music, which is more than half a millennium old, in the latest, cutting-edge audio technology.' [Listen on Apple Music](#)

The 2021 **Orchestra of the Year**, also presented with Apple Music, was won by the Minnesota Orchestra who took nearly a third of the 31,000 votes cast in this, the only public vote in the Awards. Thanks to Music Director Osmo Vänskä's 19 years in front of the orchestra, this Minneapolis-based ensemble has a cherished place in music-lovers' hearts, not just in the US, but worldwide, thanks to its magnificent series of recordings for BIS which include symphony cycles by Beethoven, Sibelius and, nearly completed, Mahler. Speaking from Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, Osmo Vänskä said 'I would also like to acknowledge all the other outstanding orchestras from around the world who were nominated. This past year was not an easy one in the performing arts, and I congratulate you for all the good work you are doing to keep music going in your own community. Through the pandemic, we stretched to find new ways to connect with audiences. Sometimes this brought us outside our comfort zone, but music is such a vital force that it must be part of how we make sense of the world, especially in challenging times.'

The **Label of the Year** award is given to Berlin-based Deutsche Grammophon, whose musical output - as the world's oldest established record label - spans 125 years. Its distinctive yellow label adorns the covers of releases by some of the world's top names in classical music, including recent Gramophone Award winners Jan Lisiecki, Víkingur Ólafsson, Yuja Wang and Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla. With the recent arrival of DG Stage, a premium concert streaming platform, and the adoption of Dolby Atmos audio for many of its new and remastered releases, Deutsche Grammophon continues to show a dedication not only to its artists, but to the modernisation and longevity of its recorded output.

**Listen to all the winners' playlists in lossless and in Spatial Audio (where available)  
on Apple Music here: [applemusic.com/gramoawards](https://applemusic.com/gramoawards)**

**Gramophone's Awards issue is out on October 6 featuring details of all 2021 winners**

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### Notes to Editors

#### **About Gramophone Awards**

The annual **Gramophone Classical Music Awards**, the world's most influential classical recorded-music prizes, were launched in 1977 by *Gramophone* magazine (founded in 1923 by Sir Compton Mackenzie). The Awards celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017. Available internationally, *Gramophone* publishes a bespoke edition of the magazine for North America. *Gramophone's* full, searchable archive of magazines from 1923 to the latest issue is available digitally for iPad and other tablet devices, smartphone or computer.

[www.gramophone.co.uk](http://www.gramophone.co.uk)

#### **About medici.tv**

[medici.tv](http://medici.tv) is the global leader in classical music video streaming. For over 10 years, its exceptional selection of events streaming live and available on-demand has appealed to music lovers, professionals, and institutions throughout the world. Heralded by *The New York Times* as 'the closest thing to a classical Netflix', [medici.tv](http://medici.tv) brings live classical music to passionate fans worldwide. Since its founding in 2008, it has captured the performances of leading classical artists, ensembles, and orchestras in great concert halls, festivals, and competitions the world over. As the largest online platform for classical music, it offers over 150 live performances throughout the year and the world's largest VOD catalogue of more than 3000 videos of concerts, ballets, operas, jazz programmes, documentaries, master classes, behind-the-scenes footage and interviews, streamed in High Definition. [medici.tv](http://medici.tv) is available on all your screens – TV (via Airplay or Chromecast), computer, tablet and smartphone.

#### **VOCES8 Centre & VOCES8 Foundation**

The VOCES8 Foundation is proud to support *Gramophone* for its second online Awards ceremony. Inspiration and transformation are watch words for the Foundation as it delivers world class performances, and excellence through its innovative, inclusive education and community projects to ensure 'Music Education For All'. Nestled in the heart of the City of London in its home the VOCES8 Centre, the Foundation's diverse music offerings and collaborations are led by renowned ensembles VOCES8, Apollo5 and its dedicated education team. Encompassing the VOCES8 Method publications and programmes such as the VOCES8 Scholars, Young Leader and Foundation projects in the UK, USA, Germany, France and Japan, the Foundation has an annual Summer School and festival at Milton Abbey and its digital delivery includes the Foundation's own Digital Academy and LIVE From London Festivals. The Foundation's entrepreneurial and community spirit is fostered by the Co-Founders of VOCES8, brothers Paul and Barnaby Smith, whose belief in social responsibility fuels all they do.

<https://voces8.foundation/>

VOCES8 and the VOCES8 Foundation were the first in the classical music world to respond digitally at a worldwide level to the Covid crisis, and LIVE from London was born. Created as a specific response to the pandemic, and as a new format to enable audiences to experience 'live' music at home and to connect beyond their homes, LIVE from London's four festivals have been viewed in over 75 countries around the world. LFL's original, imaginative, community-inspired approach has featured events and collaborations not possible on a concert platform in the traditional sense, and its unique economic model has supported fellow artists and arts organisations at a time of crisis.

<https://voces8.foundation/livefromlondon>