

GRAMOPHONE

CLASSICAL MUSIC AWARDS 2018

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LEADING STARS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC GATHER IN LONDON FOR THE 2018 GRAMOPHONE AWARDS

THE 'OSCARs OF CLASSICAL MUSIC' HONOUR LEADING FIGURES FROM THE RECORDING WORLD

CEREMONY WATCHED LIVE BY AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE VIA MEDICI.TV

- **John Nelson's Erato set of Berlioz's Les Troyens, starring Joyce DiDonato, wins Recording of the Year**
 - **Neeme Järvi awarded Lifetime Achievement**
- **Violinist Rachel Podger named Artist of the Year**
- **Soprano Lise Davidsen awarded Young Artist of the Year**
- **Seattle Symphony Orchestra voted Orchestra of the Year in online poll**
- **Harmonia Mundi named Label of the Year in its 60th anniversary year**

#GramoAwards

gramophone.co.uk/awards/2018

FIND SELECTED PHOTOS OF THE AWARDS CEREMONY [HERE](#)

Leading classical musicians came together in central London tonight [Thursday September 13] to celebrate the very best recordings and artists of the last year. The *Gramophone* Awards 2018 – regarded as the ‘Oscars of classical music’ – reflected the robust health of the classical recording industry and the huge wealth of performing talent.

Fresh from her triumph at the Last Night of the Proms, saxophonist **Jess Gillam** joined star guitarist **Miloš Karadaglić** and soprano **Carolyn Sampson** in presenting the Awards, and many winners of the previously-announced Category Awards – including **Marianne Crebassa**, **Delphine Galou**, the **Arditti Quartet** and **Kaspars Putniņš** – were also present at the ceremony. There was also live music from Award winners past and present, including Crebassa performing Duparc’s *Au pays où se fait la guerre* from her *Solo Vocal* winning recording ‘Secrets’ and presenter Miloš performing Villa-Lobos’s *Prelude No 1*. A trio of winners closed the evening, with **Lise Davidsen** singing Richard Strauss’s *Morgen!* accompanied by the **Estonian National Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Neeme Järvi** and the solo violin part taken by **Marek Zwiebel** from the **Pavel Haas Quartet**, the winner of this year’s Chamber Category.

The prestigious *Recording of the Year* was bestowed upon the winner of this year’s Opera category, **John Nelson**’s recording of Berlioz’s *Les Troyens* on the Erato label. Praised for its stellar international cast – featuring **Joyce DiDonato**, **Michael Spyres** and **Marie-Nicole Lemieux** - *Gramophone* stated this recording represented ‘a thrilling new benchmark for this epic opera’. This Award was sponsored by Qobuz.

Legendary conductor Neeme Järvi was presented with the *Lifetime Achievement Award*, given for his extraordinary discography of over 400 releases of music by over 100 composers. Maestro Järvi is an iconic figure who has not only been a giant musical figure internationally but has only played a central role in the transformation of his home country Estonia.

In recognition of his status in his homeland, and under the aegis of Estonia100, the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra flew to London to perform with him and his son **Kristjan Järvi**. Video tributes to him were played at the award ceremony from musical greats including Dame Felicity Lott, Andris Nelsons, Truls Mørk and orchestras from Glasgow, Detroit, Gothenburg and Bergen. This award was sponsored by Presto Classical.

‘Queen of the Baroque violin’ **Rachel Podger** was awarded *Artist of the Year*, the culmination of an already highly successful 2018 for the violinist: as well as celebrating her 50th birthday, she reached No 1 in the Official Classical Charts with her acclaimed recording of Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*. A previous *Gramophone* Award winner in 2003 and 2016, Podger was recognised for her influential baroque recordings, joyous performances and contribution to music-making in Britain over the course of her career. After accepting her Award from long-time collaborator Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, Podger commented that she was ‘deeply grateful to *Gramophone* for giving me this prestigious Award’, before taking to the stage to perform a movement from Bach’s *Cello Suite No 1* arranged for violin.

Young Artist of the Year went to rising young soprano Lise Davidsen, just weeks after her critically-acclaimed performance at the BBC Proms and days before she makes her Royal Opera House debut in Wagner’s *Ring* cycle. Recognised for her stratospheric rise over the last few years, including an exclusive record deal with Decca Classics and widely-praised performances at Glyndebourne, Aix-en-Provence and Vienna in Richard Strauss’s *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Gramophone* noted that ‘hers is a name to remember, and a voice – once heard – you won’t forget’. Receiving her Award from Miloš Karadaglić – himself a former *Young Artist of the Year* winner – Davidsen stated ‘this is such an honour’. A performance of Sibelius’s *Black Roses* accompanied by pianist James Baillieu followed, proving Davidsen a deserving recipient of this prestigious prize.

The only award decided by the public, Orchestra of the Year, went to the **Seattle Symphony Orchestra**. Gaining an impressive 47.8% of the vote (in which over 24,000 ballots were cast), this win follows their *Gramophone* Awards nomination last year for their recording of Mahler's Symphony No 10. *Gramophone* magazine's editorial team praised the Orchestra's imaginative programming, progressive audience initiatives and transformation into an integral part of their home city's cultural life. This Award was sponsored by Apple Music.

Celebrating its 60th anniversary year, French label **Harmonia Mundi** was awarded Label of the Year. From the label's beginnings in 1958 when founder Bernard Coutaz set out to record historic organs to the present day with its newly launched harmonia#nova series, *Gramophone* praised the label for its long-term partnerships with some of the most admired artists working in the industry today, including Isabelle Faust, Alexander Melnikov and Paul Lewis. This Award was sponsored by Classical:Next.

James Jolly, *Gramophone*'s Editor-in-Chief, said at the Awards: *'Classical music is a sector that has been performing well in the UK when compared with other kinds of music. In the first six months of this year classical CDs, downloads and streaming have all outperformed the market. Classical streams were up by 45 per cent against total market growth of 37 per cent. Let's hope that this evening's focus on classical music plays its part in producing more figures like that.'*

The Gramophone Classical Music Awards were presented in association with Estonia 100, the BPI, medici.tv and Qobuz, with individual Awards sponsored by E.Gutzwiller & Cie, Banquiers, the PPL and PRS for Music, Presto Classical, Apple Music, Kings Place, Classical:Next, Mrs Joan Jones and idagio.

The medici.tv stream was sponsored by E.Gutzwiller & Cie, Banquiers and IMG Artists, and is available to view for 90 days [here](#).

Gramophone's Awards issue is published on September 14 and will contain full information on the Awards and Award winners.

Gramophone.co.uk/awards/2018