

International OPERA AWARDS

WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR 2023 INTERNATIONAL OPERA AWARDS



Ukrainian baritone Nazar Mykulyak performs at International Opera Awards 2023 © Krzysztof Bieliński

- **Legendary American mezzo Marilyn Horne awarded Lifetime Achievement**
- **Sir Antonio Pappano wins Conductor Award for second time**
- **Nadine Sierra wins Opera Magazine Readers' Award in public vote**
- **Aigul Akhmetshina and Michael Spyres triumph in the Singer categories**
 - **Bayerische Staatsoper awarded Opera Company of the Year**

*****Please find a selection of images from the ceremony [here](#)*****

#OperaAwards2023

The world of opera came together in Warsaw tonight [9 November 2023] for a star-studded ceremony at **Teatr Wielki, Polish National Opera, Warsaw** at which the winners of the **2023 International Opera Awards** were revealed.

Featuring performances from the soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Polish National Opera as well as up and coming young singers, the ceremony was hosted by the BBC's **Petroc Trelawny** and livestreamed worldwide on [Opera Vision](#).

Now in its tenth year and firmly established as the most prestigious awards in the opera world, the International Opera Awards celebrate operatic talent from around the world over the past year, as well as raising funds and awareness for the Opera Awards Foundation which supports aspiring operatic artists.

The evening included a powerful and poignant tribute to last year's Opera Company winners (the houses of Lviv and Odesa) which were unable to host tonight's event due to the ongoing war in Ukraine: Ukrainian baritone **Nazar Mykulyak** performed an aria from Yuliy Meitus' opera *Stolen Happiness* – the first performance of this music west of Ukraine. The ceremony also included performances of excerpts of operas by Polish composer Stanisław Moniuszko from **Gabriela Legun**, **Juliana Grigoryan**, **Alejandro del Ángel** and **Łukasz Goliński** – all of whom are past winners or finalists of the prestigious Stanisław Moniuszko International Vocal Competition. All performances were conducted by **Andriy Yurkevych** and joined by the soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Polish National Opera.

Among the prizes, legendary American mezzo-soprano **Marilyn Horne** was awarded the **Lifetime Achievement Award**. Considered one of the finest mezzo-sopranos of all time - the Awards described her as *"one of the 20th century's supreme exponents of the vocal art"* - Marilyn Horne was a leading lady at the Metropolitan Opera for 26 years, performed in over 1300 recitals and released over 100 recordings. Since retiring from the concert stage, she has dedicated her time to educating young singers through the Marilyn Horne Foundation. Speaking to the ceremony in a pre-recorded speech, Marilyn said: *"I'm very pleased to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Opera Awards. Your organisation supports young singers – it's such a very difficult profession and they need all the help that they can get – so thank you very much for that."*

Other winners included **Sir Antonio Pappano** winning the **Conductor Award** for the second time, after being the first ever recipient of the award back in 2013. Accepting the award via a video acceptance speech from Rome, Sir Antonio said: *"I've had an incredible year, but it contains a lot of goodbyes – a goodbye from Santa Cecilia but also eventually at the end of this season a goodbye to Covent Garden... I've given everything to the artform, and it has given everything back to me. Thank you for this wonderful, wonderful surprise"*. The **Opera Magazine Readers' Award** was presented to American soprano **Nadine Sierra**, in the only award of the evening voted for by the public.

The **Bayerische Staatsoper** were also second time winners of the **Opera Company of the Year**, having previously won the accolade in 2018. The illustrious German company also won the **New Production Award** for their recent production of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*.

After his success in last year's Solo Recording category for his album *BariTenor*, **Michael Spyres** was this year awarded the **Male Singer Award**, whilst mezzo-soprano **Aigul Akhmetshina** won the **Female Singer Award**. The **Young Singer Award**, sponsored by Mazars, was presented to the ascendent Polish baritone **Andrzej Filończyk** – accepting the award in person, Filończyk said: *"I feel responsible to lead the young generation of singers to the very complicated future of the opera."*

The **2023 Good Governance Award for Leadership** was presented to **Stéphane Lissner**, Director of the Teatro San Carlo di Napoli, recognising over 35 years of inspiring and dedicated service to opera.

The **Philanthropy Award** was presented to **The Sullivan Foundation** in New York, who have been providing support to over 1100 young singers since 1957.

The Awards reflect the truly international scope of opera, on stage and through recordings, with nominees from over 26 countries. The full list of winners can be found below.

Harry Hyman, founder of the International Opera Awards, said: *“Huge congratulations to all our winners tonight, and to all of the nominees for everything they have done for the world of opera over the past year. It’s been wonderful to come together at the Teatr Wielki, Polish National Opera in Warsaw and celebrate the best of opera from across the globe. An important element of the Awards is to raise funds for bursaries for aspiring operatic talent, which will ensure the next generation can achieve their dreams of working in opera – and I can’t wait to see what our bursary recipients will achieve next.”*

The shortlist of nominees was compiled by an international jury of opera critics, administrators and performers from 20 different countries and chaired by John Allison, editor of *Opera* magazine (the Founding Media Partner of the Awards) and classical music critic of *The Daily Telegraph*. The winners of all categories, except the Readers’ Award, were also decided by the jury.

John Allison, chair of the Jury, said: *“It’s gratifying to see how the International Opera Awards keep growing, and this year’s gala in Warsaw at the Teatr Wielki, Polish National Opera is further evidence of that. Our excellent winners – and exciting shortlists – reflect the truly cosmopolitan nature of the art form and show that, despite the challenges faced by opera companies almost everywhere, opera is vibrantly alive.”*

The Awards, founded by philanthropist Harry Hyman in 2012, aim to raise the profile of opera as an art form, to recognise and reward success in opera and to generate funds to provide bursaries for aspiring operatic talent from around the world. Since 2012 over £600,000 has been raised by the Opera Awards Foundation, going to more than 125 bursary recipients from 25 countries.

The ceremony was [livestreamed worldwide on Opera Vision](#) and will be available to view on demand until 21 December 2023.

www.operaawards.org

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Notes to Editors

Please find a selection of images from the 2023 International Opera Awards ceremony [here](#).

Please find a selection of images of the winners of the 2023 International Opera Awards [here](#).

2023 International Opera Awards – Winners

CONDUCTOR

Antonio Pappano

DESIGNER

Lizzie Clachan

DIRECTOR

Barrie Kosky

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & IMPACT

La Monnaie De Munt

FEMALE SINGER

Aigul Akhmetshina

FESTIVAL

Festival d'Aix-en-Provence

LEADERSHIP

Stéphane Lissner

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Marilyn Horne

MALE SINGER

Michael Spyres

NEW PRODUCTION

War & Peace (Bayerische Staatsoper/Tcherniakov)

OPERA COMPANY

Bayerische Staatsoper

OPERA READERS' AWARD

Nadine Sierra

PHILANTHROPY

The Sullivan Foundation

RECORDING (COMPLETE OPERA)

Mercadante: Il proscritto (Opera Rara)

RECORDING (SOLO RECITAL)

Lisette Oropesa, French Bel Canto Arias (Pentatone)

REDISCOVERED WORK

Moniuszko: Jawnuta (Teatr Wielki, Poznań)

SUSTAINABILITY

Dutch National Opera

WORLD PREMIERE

Alexander Raskatov: Animal Farm (Dutch National Opera)

YOUNG SINGER

Andrzej Filończyk

Opera Awards Foundation

The Opera Awards Foundation was founded in 2012 by Harry Hyman. To date, the Foundation has more than 125 bursary recipients to help aspiring talent to achieve their career potential. There

are no restrictions on age or nationality, nor is support limited to singers: applications are encouraged from anyone working towards a career in opera who needs financial support to achieve their career goals.

<http://www.operaawards.org/foundation/>

Opera Magazine

Described by *The Daily Telegraph* as ‘the bible of the industry’, *Opera* magazine has been the world’s leading commentator on the lyric stage since 1950. Providing coverage of operatic events through a mixture of features, reviews (live performances, recordings, books) and analysis, plus monthly listings of events worldwide and its famous ‘We hear that’ section, the magazine has an unrivalled network of international correspondents, covering performances from around the globe.

<http://www.opera.co.uk>



About the Teatr Wielki, Polish National Opera

The Polish National Opera is Poland’s largest cultural institution with strategic importance for Polish culture. Its venue, Teatr Wielki (‘Grand Theatre’), is the largest theatre in Poland and one of the biggest performing arts venues in the world. It has been at the centre of opera and ballet history for over 170 years. Situated in the very heart of the Polish capital, it was originally erected in 1833. Destroyed during World War II, the opera house reopened in 1965, becoming one of the most opulent and best-equipped theatres in Europe.

The opera house is helmed by Waldemar Dąbrowski, an award-winning arts manager and a former Polish minister of culture who in the course of his career has founded theatre companies, orchestras, cultural institutions. In 2019 Waldemar Dabrowski won the International Opera Award in Leadership. The opera house’s artistic director is Mariusz Treliński, a world-class opera director and winner of the 2018 International Opera Award (Best Director). Leading the Polish National Ballet is Krzysztof Pastor, a choreographer whose pieces have been staged across the world by companies such as the Dutch National Ballet, the Washington Ballet, or the Israel Ballet.

Both the Polish National Opera and the Polish National Ballet can boast a robust cooperation with international partners. Their productions have been staged on almost every continent at such venues as the Metropolitan Opera in New York, La Scala in Milan, English National Opera in London, and the festivals in Salzburg, Bregenz and Baden-Baden.

Teatr Wielki is not only home to Poland’s top opera and ballet company. It also houses Poland’s first opera studio for aspiring singers and répétiteurs. Every three years the venue welcomes singers from all over the world for the International Stanislaw Moniuszko Vocal Competition.

www.teatr Wielki.pl

