



Press Release

London: Tuesday, March 03, 2015

SIR SIMON RATTLE APPOINTED MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The London Symphony Orchestra announced today the appointment of Sir Simon Rattle as its Music Director.

He will take up his appointment in September 2017, following in the footsteps of previous Principal Conductors including André Previn, Michael Tilson Thomas, Sir Colin Davis and Valery Gergiev. As Music Director he will be involved in every aspect of the LSO's work as well as championing the importance of music and music education.

At the announcement of his appointment, Simon Rattle said: "During my work with the LSO over the last years, I noticed that despite the Orchestra's long and illustrious history, they almost never refer to it. Instead, refreshingly, they talk about the future, what can they make anew, what can they improve, how can they reach further into the community. In terms of musical excellence, it is clear that the sky's the limit, but equally important, in terms of philosophy, they constantly strive to be a twenty-first century orchestra. We share a dream in which performing, teaching and learning are indivisible, with wider dissemination of our art at its centre. I cannot imagine a better or more inspiring way to spend my next years, and feel immensely fortunate to have the LSO as my musical family and co-conspirators."

Simon Rattle outlined his vision for universal access to music, with children and young people at its heart. He called for new standards in making world-class music available to all. He stated his aim that every musician should be engaged in composing, improvising, mentoring and performing; that the creation of new music will be central to the process, working with leading composers and teachers; and that his appointment will generate new partnerships between London and the whole country to confirm the UK as a world leader in the arts.

Simon Rattle is currently Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Berliner Philharmoniker, where he was appointed in 2002. His first appearance with the London Symphony Orchestra was in October 1977, at the age of 22. He conducted the LSO at the opening ceremony of London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, memorably performing *Chariots of Fire* with Rowan Atkinson. Most recently, in January this year, he was acclaimed for his two concerts with the LSO of Schumann, Stravinsky, Webern, Berg and Ligeti at the Barbican Centre.

Lennox Mackenzie, Chairman of the LSO, said: "I am thrilled that Sir Simon Rattle has accepted our invitation to lead the Orchestra into the future. On behalf of our whole Orchestra, we welcome him as our Music Director at this hugely important moment in the LSO's history. I would also like to offer the Orchestra's sincere thanks to Valery Gergiev who has been the LSO's Principal Conductor since

2007 and who steps down from his position at the end of this year.”

Kathryn McDowell, Managing Director of the LSO, said: “This is the realisation of a dream, to bring Simon Rattle back to his home country to lead the extraordinary musicians of the LSO. We look forward to a new chapter of ambitious music-making that reaches deep into the communities we serve and touches people’s lives with the power of music.”

Sir Nicholas Kenyon, Managing Director of the Barbican Centre, said: “We are delighted to welcome Sir Simon Rattle to the LSO, our resident orchestra since the Centre opened. The presence of a world-class orchestra at the heart of this world-class arts centre, serving the widest range of audiences across London and beyond, has been an indispensable part of the Barbican’s success. We look forward to a period of thrilling development as Simon Rattle takes the LSO to ever greater heights of musical achievement and service to the community.”

Professor Barry Ife, Principal of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, said: “Sir Simon Rattle’s commitment to the next generation of musicians and to music education is world renowned. His appointment as Music Director of the LSO is an exciting opportunity, particularly for the students of the Guildhall School who regularly perform alongside the LSO’s musicians.”

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For press images please visit <http://lso.co.uk/press>

Notes to Editors

Born in Liverpool, Sir Simon Rattle studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Between 1974 and 1977 he was Assistant Conductor at the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Bournemouth Sinfonietta. He made his opera debut at Glyndebourne Festival in 1977, since then he has worked with opera houses including English National Opera, The Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Netherlands Opera and leading international orchestras.

In 1980 he was appointed, a rising star of the classical music world, as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor to the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, where he was Music Director from 1990 to 1998. Under his leadership the orchestra gained a reputation as one of the finest in the world, and in partnership with the City he successfully opened Symphony Hall, Birmingham’s acclaimed concert hall in April 1991.

Between 1981 and 1994 he was Principal Guest Conductor Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Since 1992 he has been Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Artistic Advisor to the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. Among his international awards are the Order of the Federal Republic of Germany (2009) and Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur (2010). He was awarded a knighthood by Her Majesty the Queen for his services to music in 1994 and received the Order of Merit in the New Year’s Honours 2014.

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The London Symphony Orchestra is widely regarded as one of the world's leading orchestras. The LSO has an enviable family of artists, including LSO Principal Conductor Valery Gergiev, Michael Tilson Thomas and Daniel Harding as Principal Guest Conductors, and long-standing relationships with some of the leading musicians in the world – Leonidas Kavakos, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Mitsuko Uchida and Maria João Pires amongst others.

The LSO is proud to be Resident Orchestra at the Barbican, where it performs around 70 concerts a year. The LSO also enjoys successful residencies in New York, Paris and Tokyo. Regular tour destinations include the Far East, North America and all the major European cities. This season also saw the Orchestra's first tour to Australia in 30 years, and an extensive tour of the United States with Michael Tilson Thomas is planned for March.

The LSO is set apart from other international orchestras by the depth of its commitment to music education, reaching over 60,000 people each year. LSO Discovery enables the Orchestra to offer people of all ages opportunities to get involved in music-making. LSO On Track, a long-standing project involving young musicians from across London, has given a platform to talented teenagers to appear in the London Olympic Stadium, at outdoor concerts in Trafalgar Square, and also on Abbey Road recordings side-by-side with LSO musicians.

The LSO is at the forefront of using digital technology to share its performances and education projects with people worldwide, through initiatives such as LSO Play (play.lso.co.uk).

The Orchestra is a world-leader in recording music for CD, film and events. LSO Live is the most successful record label of its kind, with recordings available globally on CD, SACD and online. The LSO has also recorded music for hundreds of films, including *Philomena*, *The Imitation Game*, four of the *Harry Potter* films, *Superman* and all six *Star Wars* movies.

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