

PRESS RELEASE embargoed until 23:00 on 26 January, 2017

**AWARDS RECOGNISE INNOVATION, FINANCIAL ACUMEN, INDEPENDENCE,
AND DIVERSITY IN CLASSICAL MUSIC AT ANNUAL ABO CONFERENCE**

Bournemouth, 27 January 2017 - The sixth annual ABO/Rhinegold Awards took place last night, shining the spotlight on the managers who contribute so much to the success of the UK's classical music-making behind the scenes. The awards were presented at the annual ABO conference dinner in Bournemouth Pavilion by Anne-Marie Minhall, Classic FM presenter. The winners will be profiled by Rhinegold Publishing's *Classical Music* magazine during the course of 2017. The ABO Award, unique among the many prestigious awards and prizes in the music world because its recipient is nominated by the member orchestras themselves, was presented by Kathryn McDowell, ABO chair, to Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE. This year the ABO board decided to create ABO Special Awards for two long-serving orchestra directors who also served with distinction on the ABO Board, Roy McEwan OBE and David Whelton OBE.

The conference, this year hosted by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, saw the launch of the ABO's survey of the UK's orchestral sector, *The State of Britain's Orchestras in 2016*, highlighting the unsustainable nature of the present funding situation, warning of the 'double funding whammy' as orchestras perform more and reach more people, but earn less. BBC Radio 3 broadcast the BSO's concert with Principal Conductor Kirill Karabits live and delegates from across the country came to discuss the theme of 'disruption' with sessions on diversity, digital and Brexit. Classic FM, the ABO's Principal Media Partner since 2003, also hosted a session.

ABO/RHINEGOLD AWARDS

Artist Manager of the Year

Kathryn Enticott, Director, Enticott Music Management

Concert Hall Manager of the Year

Neil Bennison, Music Programme Manager, Royal Concert Hall Nottingham

Orchestra Manager of the Year

Bob Riley, Chief Executive, Manchester Camerata

ABO AWARD

Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE

ABO SPECIAL AWARDS

Roy McEwan OBE, former Chief Executive, Scottish Chamber Orchestra

David Whelton OBE, former Managing Director, Philharmonia Orchestra

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Citations included below

CITATIONS

Artist Manager of the Year

Kathryn Enticott, Director, Kathryn Enticott Artist Management

The winner of the ABO/Rhinegold artist manager of the year has been nominated for several years...and finally has made it. Those who have followed her career might have imagined that when she left a large artist management office and set up her own boutique concern, the breadth of her imagination and creativity would somehow be constrained. Not a bit of it. By all accounts, Leif Ove Andsnes's first Rosendal Chamber Music Festival in Norway last year simply wouldn't have happened without her incredible dedication. Such activity isn't icing on the cake, it helps build reputations for both artist and artist manager...and down the line that benefits everyone, orchestras included.

Little wonder that 2016 BBC Young Musician Sheku Kanneh-Mason - surely a star in the making - was happy to sign with this small artist management rather than look elsewhere. On top of all this, in 2016 this artist manager in her day-to-day work provided a string of British orchestras with exceptional instrumentalist and conducting talent.

Concert Hall Manager of the Year

Neil Bennison, Music Programme Manager, Nottingham Royal Concert Hall

Neil Bennison's time as music programme manager at Nottingham's Theatre Royal and Royal Concert Hall has been about gradually and tirelessly building up relationships with orchestras and audiences to the point that the people of Nottingham have no reason to envy larger British cities with their own symphony orchestras. A Hallé residency is complemented by visits from the Philharmonia, BBCSO, Royal Northern Sinfonia, CBSO, LPO, BBC Phil, RLPO, Opera North, OAE and others.

Crucially, this hasn't been achieved in the context of lavish public funding – instead, Bennison has made Nottingham Classics financially self-sufficient, with a 2015/16 record breaking average attendance of 1,800, which represents 72% capacity of a hall arguably too large for the UK's 29th city.

Innovative season ticket packages, commuter concerts, family participation projects have all contributed to audience figures and outreach. Meanwhile, the informal 'After Hours' series, run in partnership with Orchestras Live with the dual purpose of engaging younger audiences and promoting contemporary music, took its first steps outside the Royal Concert Hall in 2016 with the London Sinfonietta's 'Masters of Minimalism' at Nottingham Contemporary, the city's contemporary art gallery – a concert which sold out to a largely new audience.

The nomination identified 'a success story of a professional arts manager who combines commercial rigour with artistic ambition in a way that is rare, distinctive and a beacon for others to follow'. The judges enthusiastically agreed.

Orchestra Manager of the Year

Bob Riley, CEO, Manchester Camerata

It takes courage to let go of fixed views and old ways. Bob Riley, CEO at Manchester Camerata for over a decade, stands out as a hero of change and innovation, one who knows that nothing stays the same forever and understands the importance of innovation and experiment. His work, driven by a determination to 'redefine what an orchestra can do', has attracted national and international attention, thanks not least to a series of pioneering projects open to new audiences. Above all he is moved by an unconditional belief in orchestral music's power to touch audiences of all ages and backgrounds, to inspire and, by inspiring, unite.

Bob was nominated for the ABO/ Rhinegold Orchestra Manager Award for two projects in 2016. The first delivered Hacienda Classical, Manchester Camerata's collaboration with the DJs who gave heart to the legendary Hacienda club and life to its acid house and rave scene. They reworked 80's electronic dance classics into a continuous 90-minute orchestral score, the first of its kind, which played to around 40,000 people last year. Tickets for the project's trip south to the Royal Albert Hall in March sold out within minutes, while 98% of its Manchester audience were new to Camerata gigs. The band's media profile expanded in line with the growth in its meaty new audience figures, landing national BBC news coverage, a Channel 4 documentary and a five-star review in *The Times* for Hacienda Classical at Bridgewater Hall.

Bob's enterprise and energy led to the second big Manchester Camerata story of 2016, a world-first in dementia research that directed clinical music therapists and specially-trained Camerata musicians to work with people living with dementia and their carers through group music therapy. The project arose from a partnership with the University of Manchester, Lancaster University and the Economic Social Research Council, which produced the funding for a three-year PhD research programme to measure the Camerata's work with dementia.

Manchester Camerata, under Bob Riley's dynamic leadership, is set fair to realise its radical new vision for what an orchestra can be, of how its work can enhance the lives of many, not just the few.

ABO AWARD

Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE

An ex-sprinter and half the size of her double bass, our winner has gained a reputation as one of the finest exponents of her instrument today. She studied at the Royal Academy of Music and with Franco Petracchi in Rome, and soon found herself in demand internationally.

She is a founder member of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and held the position of Principal double bass there for 30 years. She is Professor of Double Bass Historical Studies at the Royal Academy of Music, where she was made a Fellow in 1998.

As a broadcaster, she presented BBC Radio 3 Requests for four years, guests for the TV Proms and was Jury member of the BBC 2 series Classical Star. She presented a two part series for BBC Radio 4 in 2015 which brought to life the stories and music of black composers and musicians from the eighteenth century, whose vivid presence on the classical music scene have slipped through the net! She was also the 'mentor' for the 2016 BBC 4 TV series 'All Together Now, the Great Orchestra Challenge', showcasing the amazing talent of British amateur orchestras.

She is a trustee of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, Mayor's Music Fund, Tertis Foundation and a Council Member of the Royal Philharmonic Society. She served on the board of the ABO from 2008 to 2013, during which time she created the ABO/RPS 'Salomon Prize' which celebrates the "unsung heroes" working in the ranks of British Orchestras.

She was awarded an MBE for services to Music in the 2001 Queen's Birthday honours and was awarded the Black British Business Awards Person of the Year in 2016. Most recently she has become best known as the Founder, Artistic and Executive Director of the Chineke! Foundation, which supports, inspires and encourages Black and Minority Ethnic classical musicians working in the UK and Europe. The Chineke! Foundation champions change and celebrates diversity in the classical music industry through its two orchestras, the Chineke! Orchestra and Chineke! Junior Orchestra, as well as its educational and outreach work. Ultimately, the Chineke! Foundation aims to give classical BME musicians a platform on which to excel, and by such methods increase the representation of BME musicians in British and European orchestras.

She is a dedicated advocate of the importance of music in everyone's lives and is committed to teaching and sharing her love of music.

ABO SPECIAL AWARDS

Roy McEwan OBE retired from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in Summer 2016 after a remarkable 23 years as Chief Executive. During that time he has carefully nurtured the SCO's long-lasting creative relationships with internationally renowned soloists, conductors, composers and recording companies; created high profile international touring; and sustained the development of SCO Connect's projects in education and the community. The SCO tours the nation far and wide with over 90 concerts a year – more than any of Scotland's other music organisations - while overseas touring has been pioneering and far-reaching. As well as performing in celebrated concert halls and festivals throughout Europe, the USA and Far East, the SCO was also the first British orchestra to tour to India in 2009. Stable recording relationships are also a touchstone of the SCO's successful profile. With Mackerras the SCO produced many critically acclaimed recordings of Mozart Operas as well as a Grammy-nominated set of Brahms Symphonies, and the relationship with Linn has produced 25 recordings and counting. Artistic integrity and audience development are maintained by Creative Learning projects which Roy has integrated into the main season programme, creating vital opportunities for young people. Over the last season the SCO reached more than 9000 young people through different projects including those for babies and toddlers, primary school children, a fusion band for teenagers and workshops for secondary school pupils studying music.

Roy served twice on the ABO board from 1993 to 2003 and then again from 2014 to 2016. He was awarded an OBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours List 2011 for services to music.

David Whelton OBE also retired in summer 2016 after an astonishing 29 years as Managing Director of the Philharmonia Orchestra.

David has created a programme that now sees the Philharmonia perform over 160 concerts a year, at its UK residencies – which include London's Royal Festival Hall, in Bedford, Leicester, Basingstoke and Canterbury, and at the Three Choirs Festival – as well as overseas. His legacy includes the highly successful Théâtre du Châtelet residency in Paris, new music series *Music of Today* directed by Unsuk Chin, and more recently the critically-acclaimed Salonen series at the Royal Festival Hall. The Philharmonia's award-winning digital projects including *RE-RITE*, *Universe of Sound* and *iOrchestra* are bringing the next generation to classical music.

David served on the ABO board from 1996 to 2003. He was awarded an OBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours List 2015 for services to music.