

Siemens and Hallé Orchestra select shortlist in international conductors competition

- **Young conductors competition sponsored by Siemens Arts Program and Hallé Orchestra of Manchester (UK) to run until February 22**
- **Shortlist includes ten outstanding talents from nine countries**
- **Winner to receive two-year engagement and cash prize of £15,000**
- **Conducting per avatar as digital component used for first time**

Ten outstanding young conductors have been selected for the shortlist in the Siemens Hallé International Conductors Competition. A total of 287 musicians from 55 countries entered the competition, which is a collaboration between the Siemens Arts Program and the Hallé Orchestra of Manchester (UK). The ten shortlisted conductors, comprising three women and seven men, come from nine different countries. An overview of the semifinalists is available at the end of this press release.

In the finals, which will take place in Manchester on February 22, the competing conductors must demonstrate their mastery of a very broad repertoire of works by composers such as Beethoven, Brahms, Britten and Verdi. In the final round, the top four competitors will conduct the Hallé Orchestra before a large audience in the church of Hallé St. Peter's. The best young talent will be offered a two-year engagement as Assistant Conductor to Sir Mark Elder, the Hallé Orchestra's Music Director. The first prize includes an appointment as Music Director of the Hallé Youth Orchestra and a monetary award of £15,000. The winner will also have an opportunity to advance his or her career through a large number of guest appearances worldwide.

"The position of Assistant Conductor has already helped a long line of aspiring stars in the conducting world achieve decisive success. We're pleased to collaborate with

Siemens on this project. Our partnership makes it possible to present the competition to an international audience and bring the best musical talents to Manchester,” said John Summers, Chief Executive of the Hallé Orchestra.

Digital component used for first time: Conducting via avatar

A special feature of the competition is the performance of a digital task. In a so-called digital challenge, the competing conductors direct works by Richard Wagner and Igor Stravinsky in front of a camera that records their movements and displays them to the orchestra as an avatar on a screen. This digital component poses an extraordinary challenge – one that tests a conductor’s personality more than his or her musical abilities. This is the first time that a device of this type has been included in a conductors competition. The component, which was developed in cooperation with the Siemens UK Graduate Programme, is just one of Siemens’ and Hallé’s many joint projects.

“Our partnership with the Hallé Orchestra is something special. Not only does the orchestra share our passion for excellence, it’s also a key part of our commitment to the city of Manchester. With its unique digital challenge, this competition is a wonderful example of the ways in which technology and art can cooperate and profit from one another in order to create something new and innovative,” said Carl Ennis, CEO of Siemens UK.

Siemens building solutions create optimal conditions for instruments

There is yet another link to Siemens at the event location: the Anglican church of Hallé St. Peter’s has been equipped with Siemens infrastructure solutions. By making it possible to precisely control the temperature and humidity in every room, these solutions create optimal conditions for storing and playing musical instruments. The building solutions also reduce CO₂ emissions and cut energy costs by up to 35%.

“Conducting an orchestra and managing a business have a lot in common. Siemens has always placed a high value on culture and the arts. That’s why we’re constantly exchanging ideas with musicians and artists – just as we do with scientists and engineers,” said Stephan Frucht, Artistic Director of the Siemens Arts Program.

In addition to Stephan Frucht and John Summers, the seven-member jury of the conductors competition comprises Sir Mark Elder (Music Director of the Hallé Orchestra), Carola Reul (Managing Director of the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie), Geoffrey Owen (Hallé Orchestra's Head of Artistic Planning), Julia Albrecht (Director of the Artistic Management Department at Konzertdirektion Schmid) and Arna Kristín Einarsdóttir (Managing Director of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Canada) – all highly respected experts in the musical world.

This press release and additional material is available at sie.ag/2OYUpKM

More information about the competition is available at

www.conductors-competition.com and at www.siemens.com/artsprogram

The following conductors were shortlisted for the competition:

Rodolfo Barráez, 26

Birthplace: Venezuela

Residence: Germany

Barráez won the OFUNAM International Orchestra Conducting Prize in Mexico in 2018. His upcoming engagements include appearances with the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, the Jalisco Philharmonic Orchestra, the Minería Symphony Orchestra and the Bogotá Philharmonic Orchestra.

Diogo Costa, 30

Birthplace: Portugal

Residence: Portugal

Costa trained at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. His engagements have included appearances with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Porto Symphony Orchestra Casa da Música and the Portuguese Symphony Orchestra.

Chloé Dufresne, 28

Birthplace: France

Residence: France

Dufresne studied at the École Normale de Musique de Paris and is completing her master's degree at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, while serving as principal conductor of the Orchestre Inter-Universitaire de Paris.

Jonas Ehrler, 27

Birthplace: Switzerland

Residence: Switzerland

Having completed his conducting studies at the Zurich University of the Arts, Ehrler made his debut over the past season with the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège, the Orchestre de Chambre de Genève and the Ensemble Modern season.

Andres Kaljuste, 37

Birthplace: Estonia

Residence: United Kingdom

Following his studies at the Sibelius Academy in Finland, Kaljuste has conducted, among others, the Estonian Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, with whom he will open the 2020 Estonian Music Days Festival.

Delyana Lazarova, 34

Birth: Bulgaria

Residence: Switzerland

Lazarova received the James Conlon Conducting Prize at the prestigious Aspen Music Festival in 2019. She has worked with the Hradec-Kralove Philharmonic Orchestra in the Czech Republic, the Thessaloniki State Symphony Orchestra in Greece and the Meiningen and Konstanz Symphony Orchestras in Germany.

Antoine Petit-Dutailis, 23

Birthplace: France

Residence: France

Petit-Dutailis joined Alain Altinoglu's conducting class at the Conservatoire de Paris in 2017 and has worked with the Regional Orchestra of Avignon, the Ensemble Intercontemporain and the Miskolc Symphony Orchestra in Hungary.

Elinor Rufeizen, 32

Birthplace: Israel

Residence: United States

A recipient of the Bruno Walter Memorial Scholarship and Charles Schiff Conducting Award, Rufeizen recently graduated from The Juilliard School with a master's degree in orchestral conducting, having studied with mentors Alan Gilbert and David Robertson.

Joel Sandelson, 25

Birthplace: United Kingdom

Residence: United Kingdom

Sandelson is currently a Leverhulme Conducting Fellow at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Assistant Conductor to Thomas Dausgaard at the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. He previously studied conducting at the Royal Academy of Music under Sian Edwards.

Francisco Valero-Terribas, 44

Birthplace: Spain

Residence: Spain

Valero-Terribas studied at the Conservatorio Superior de Música "Joaquin Rodrigo" de Valencia. He has been Assistant Conductor at the Palau de les Arts Opera House in Valencia and Musical Director at the Contemporary Music Academy with the National Youth Orchestra of Spain.

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