



PRESS RELEASE

David Afkham: Winner of the first ‘Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award’

(Salzburg, 9 August 2010) The jury of nine chose David Afkham from a range of 81 candidates aged between 22 and 35 in a multi-stage selection process. “David Afkham presented a unique demonstration of his ability and is a worthy winner of the first ‘Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award,’” commented jury chairman Franz Welser-Möst.

Afkham convinced the entire jury in Lisbon while conducting the Gulbenkian Orchestra, partner to the ‘Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award’, with his talent and ability to lead an orchestra to a first-class musical performance.

“I am delighted not only that such a worthy prize winner was selected, but also that we managed to inspire 81 young conductors to submit their application for the very first ‘Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award’,” said Nestlé Chairman Peter Brabeck-Letmathe in praise of the decision to create this prize and the music community’s rapid response to it. “Conductors and company managers have a great deal in common, with both facing the challenge of incorporating individual parts into one big entity and to present one vision, one voice, one direction,” he continued.



NESTLÉ AND SALZBURG FESTIVAL YOUNG CONDUCTORS AWARD

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David Afkham

David Afkham is Assistant Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, a post he has held since winning the 2008 International Donatella Flick Conducting Competition. He is also Assistant Conductor for the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester and is a Conductor Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

This Summer saw his debuts at the helm of the London Symphony Orchestra and the Tonhalle Orchester Zurich. Highlights over the coming seasons include the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Orchestre National de France, the Seoul Philharmonic, the Hamburger Symphoniker, MDR Sinfonieorchester Leipzig, Gulbenkian Orchestra Lisbon, the Real Filharmonia de Santiago, and Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, as well as return projects with the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester and Los Angeles Philharmonic.

David Afkham was the first recipient of the "Bernard Haitink Fund for Young Talent", and he continues to work regularly with his mentor Bernard Haitink on major projects with the Chicago Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw and Berliner Philharmoniker.

Born 1983 in Freiburg, Germany, David Afkham received his first piano and violin lessons at the age of six. At 15, he entered his native city's University of Music to pursue studies in piano, music theory and conducting. He won first prize in the solo-piano category of the 2002 "Jugend Musiziert" German National Piano Competition. He then completed his conducting training at the Liszt School of Music in Weimar. He is a conducting fellow of the "Richard Wagner Association" Bayreuth and a member of the "Conductor's Forum" of the German Music Council.

'Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award'

The aim of the 'Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award' is to provide highly gifted young conductors with a valuable boost in their career. "The discovery and inclusion of young conductors in the programme of the Salzburg Festival is an important element for me," said Markus Hinterhäuser, Artistic Director of the Salzburg Festival, on the motivation to create this prize as part of the Salzburg Festival.

David Afkham, winner of the 'Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award' 2010, will conduct a concert with the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester on 14 August 2010, 11 a.m., in the Felsenreitschule. The prize also includes a sum of 15,000 euros, and will be awarded annually to a young conductor aged between 22 and 35. Aside from the classical-romantic repertoire, there is a special focus on the interpretation of contemporary music, with this year's concert programme also reflecting this focus. David Afkham himself was responsible for selecting the pieces.

Programme

György Ligeti:	Atmosphères
Ludwig v. Beethoven:	Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 37
Dmitri Shostakovich:	Symphony No. 10 in E Minor, Op. 93

Soloist: Till Fellner

Jury of the 'Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award'

Pierre Boulez (Patron)

Franz Welser-Möst (Chairman of the Jury, Music Director of the Cleveland Orchestra, General Music Director Designate of the Vienna State Opera)

Peter Alward (Managing Director of the Salzburg Easter Festival)

Andreas Bausdorf (Proxy of the Managing Director of the German Orchestra Union (Deutsche Orchestervereinigung))

Lorenzo Fasolo (former Intendant Ferrara Musica and Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Artistic Consultant Lingotto Musica)

Markus Hinterhäuser (Artistic Director of the Salzburg Festival)

Brian McMaster (Former Director of the Edinburgh International Festival)

Alexander Meraviglia-Crivelli (General Secretary of the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester)

Luís Pereira Leal (Senior Advisor to the Music Department of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation)

Mitsuko Uchida (Pianist)

Entry criteria

1. Curriculum vitae including photograph
2. DVD including written statement on the interpretation of the piece performed (personal approach)
3. Complete repertoire list with a special focus on music from the 20th and 21st centuries
4. List of completed projects
5. List of future projects
6. References

For inquiries or to request photos:

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