



## Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Founded in 1946 by Sir Thomas Beecham, with his vision of bringing world-class performances of the greatest music written to the length of the country, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra continues to maintain Beecham's legacy by offering audiences in the UK and abroad the highest possible standards of music-making, accompanied by some of the most acclaimed artists of the day. Since its formation, the Orchestra has been directed by some of the world's finest conductors, most notably Rudolf Kempe, Antal Doráti, André Previn and Vladimir Ashkenazy. The RPO continues to thrive, undertaking a busy concert, touring and recording schedule, under the inspired leadership of Maestro Daniele Gatti (Music Director since 1996) and achieving unanimous acclaim from audiences and critics alike: *'Plays like a dream, with characterful wind soloists and much silvery, aristocratic string tone'* - The Times. The Orchestra is pleased to announce that from the beginning of the 2009-2010 season, Charles Dutoit will become Artistic Director and Principal Conductor, with Daniele Gatti continuing as Conductor Laureate.

The Orchestra is London-based with a residency at London's newest concert venue, Cadogan Hall, Sloane Square. Recent performances have included internationally acclaimed artists such as Sir Andrew Davis, Tasmin Little, Leonard Slatkin and the Joyful Company of Singers. Complementing the intimate and luxurious surroundings of its resident season, the RPO also performs regularly in the magnificent Royal Albert Hall, presenting works of great magnitude in a varied series designed to suit the immensity of this grand venue. Highlights of the current season range from popular classics such as Vaughan Williams' *The Wasps Overture*, Elgar's *'Enigma' Variations* and Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* to *Symphonic Rock* and *Filmharmonic*. In 2008, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra are delighted to return to the newly-refurbished Royal Festival Hall, where they will showcase a series of concerts of the highest calibre.

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra uses its schedule in the capital as the springboard for a comprehensive regional touring programme including residencies in Northampton, Croydon, Lowestoft, Wimbledon, Catford and Crawley. The Orchestra also plays to tens of thousands of people across the country in open-air concerts throughout the summer months each year.

As an international orchestra, the RPO has toured more than thirty countries in the last five years, including performances for the late Pope John Paul II in the Vatican and the President of China in Tiananmen Square. Recent tours have included a month-long tour to the USA with Pinchas Zukerman, the RPO's first ever tour to Egypt, performing in the Cairo and Alexandria opera houses with Leonard Slatkin, and performances in Spain, Italy and Germany.

The RPO extends its artistic work through a vibrant and innovative Community and Education programme. Using music as a powerful and motivating force, the RPO

works in a variety of settings including projects with young homeless people, youth clubs, the probation service, schools and families. RPO Community and Education projects promote live music-making, reflecting the diversity of the individuals involved, as well as the Orchestra's own background.

The RPO records widely for all the major commercial record companies, with no less than eight of its CDs featuring in the record charts last year. The Orchestra also has its own record label, which includes the popular *Here Come The Classics*™ series. These recordings reflect the versatility of the RPO's repertoire, ranging from popular orchestral and choral works to film classics and music from the musicals.

### **Press Quotes**

'Royal Philharmonic Orchestra ... remains a force to be reckoned with. Indeed, this was possibly the most satisfying concert I have attended this summer. This is clearly as dynamic a conductor-orchestra partnership as any in London at the moment.'

***Sunday Times***

'The Royal Philharmonic plays like a dream, with characterful wind soloists and much silvery, aristocratic strings tone.'

***The Times***

'Marked by passion and sumptuous, dark-hued lyricism.'

***The Telegraph***