philharmonia orchestra

PRESS RELEASE

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA LAUNCHES EUROPE'S FIRST FULLY INTEGRATED ORCHESTRAL DOWNLOAD SHOP

The Philharmonia Orchestra has announced the launch of its new online download shop **(www.philharmonia.co.uk/shop).** The shop will sell the highest possible quality MP3s of new live recordings by the Philharmonia Orchestra; at a bitrate of 320 Kilo bits per second, the download quality will be 40% higher than most recordings available through iTunes.

Unlike competitor orchestral sites, which use either 3rd parties or secondary e-commerce bolt-ons for their online recordings distribution, the Philharmonia Orchestra's Online Shop is the first in Europe to be fully integrated into the Orchestra's main website, allowing customers to purchase tickets and MP3s in a single basket, and use a single login and search facility to explore every aspect of its site, from concerts information and biographies to the wealth of education resources in its interactive Sound Exchange website. The Shop is designed to be informative, flexible and easy to use for everyone, both seasoned downloaders and novices, with personalised assistance available both online and by phone for people downloading and creating their own CDs for the first time.

The Philharmonia Orchestra has been making professional recordings of many of its most important live concerts since February 2006, when its players voted to allow live performances to be recorded on a royalty-only basis. At its launch the site will offer new recordings of 36 works by 18 composers, with artists including Christoph von Dohnányi, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Andrew Davis, Charles Dutoit, and András Schiff, as well as a small number of historic recordings, notably an unforgettable performance of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15 conducted by Kurt Sanderling, at his final UK concert appearance in September 2000.

Chairman and Co-Principal Trumpet of the Philharmonia Orchestra, Alistair Mackie, commented:
"This initiative is about quality and accessibility. By making great Philharmonia performances available online, and as the highest possible quality MP3s, the Orchestra is able to reach millions of people across the world who have grown up on the Orchestra's historic recordings, but are rarely able to experience us live."

David Whelton, the Orchestra's Managing Director, added:
"Since the decline of the recording industry in the 1990s, some of our most wonderful artistic partnerships, with conductors at the pinnacle of their artistic lives, have not been documented. This initiative allows us to capture those extraordinary performances for posterity as well as for today's audiences."

The Philharmonia Orchestra Online Shop is live for press previews from Thursday 29 November, before its launch on **Monday 3 December**. All customers visiting the shop between its opening and Christmas can download a free recordings of "Nimrod" from Elgar's *Enigma Variations,* conducted by Martyn Brabbins, celebrating both the launch of the Shop and the culmination of the Orchestra's celebrations marking the 150th Anniversary of Elgar's birth.

www.philharmonia.co.uk/shop

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