Philharmonia Orchestra launches 70th anniversary season with gala concert and new recording with Christoph von Dohnányi

- Gala concert on 27 September 2015 at Royal Festival Hall marks 70 years since Orchestra's founding

- Philharmonia Orchestra and partner label Signum Records release new recording of Bruckner Symphony No. 9 (edition Leopold Nowak, 1951), conducted by Christoph von Dohnányi and recorded live at the 2014 Salzburg Festival

- Anniversary exhibition opens at Barbican Music Library on the 70th anniversary – to the day – of the Philharmonia Orchestra’s first ever concert

The Philharmonia Orchestra opens its 70th anniversary season with a special gala concert at the Royal Festival Hall on Sunday 27 September 2015. Honorary Conductor for Life Christoph von Dohnányi conducts Beethoven’s 'Choral' Symphony, with soloists Charlotta Larsson (soprano), Ruxandra Donose (mezzo-soprano), Robert Dean Smith (tenor) and James Rutherford (bass), and the Rodolfus Choir and Philharmonia Voices. Martin Helmchen performs the Schumann Piano Concerto in the first half.

Founded by legendary EMI producer Walter Legge, the Philharmonia Orchestra made its debut at Kingsway Hall, London, on 27 October 1945, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Seventy years to the day since that debut performance, a free exhibition about the Orchestra’s history opens at the Barbican Music Library on Tuesday 27 October 2015. Further details on the exhibition will be announced shortly.

As one of the most the most recorded orchestras in the world, the Philharmonia also marks its 70th anniversary with a new album release, the latest in its series of recordings with partner label Signum Records. In the first of this series recorded outside the UK, Christoph von Dohnányi conducts the 1951 Leopold Nowak edition of Bruckner Symphony No. 9, recorded at a critically-acclaimed concert in Salzburg’s Großes Festspielhaus on 7 August 2014:

“Dohnányi’s interpretation of the work has unparalleled power, leading the brass section through the work, not overpowering the essential contribution of the woodwinds in the boldly dissonant harmony of the adagio, free of mysticism and not toning down the dissonant clash of sound of the scherzo.”

Salzburger Nachrichten, July 2014
This new recording follows Bruckner Symphony No. 4, also conducted by Dohnányi, which the Orchestra and Signum released in May 2012. The new disc will be released on 28 August 2015.

Contact & links

For Philharmonia Orchestra archive photography, press tickets for 27 September and review copies of Bruckner Symphony No. 9 release, please contact:

Tim Woodall
Head of Sales and Marketing, Philhamonia Orchestra
tim.woodall@philharmonia.co.uk

- Philharmonia Orchestra 70th anniversary Gala concert
- Philharmonia Orchestra/Signum Records discography
- Further information will be released shortly about the 70th anniversary exhibition.

Notes for editors

Philharmonia Orchestra

The Philharmonia Orchestra is one of the world’s great orchestras. Acknowledged as the UK’s foremost musical pioneer, with an extraordinary recording legacy, the Philharmonia leads the field for its quality of playing, and for its innovative approach to audience development, residencies, music education and the use of new technologies in reaching a global audience. Together with its relationships with the world’s most sought-after artists, most importantly its Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor Esa-Pekka Salonen, the Philharmonia Orchestra is at the heart of British musical life. The Orchestra has been resident at Southbank Centre, London, since 1995. Click here for full biography.

The 27 September 2015 gala concert is supported by Trustees from Philharmonia Trust.

Christoph von Dohnányi

Born into a family of musicians and scientists in Berlin in 1929, Christoph von Dohnányi studied Music at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich and received the city’s Richard Strauss Prize for conducting, enabling him to study in the United States with his grandfather, Ernst von Dohnányi. He has a long-standing relationship with the Philharmonia Orchestra. Beginning in 1994 as the Orchestra’s Principal Guest Conductor, he served as Principal Conductor for ten years from 1997, before being appointed Honorary Conductor for Life in 2008.

Philharmonia Orchestra/Signum Records

Since 2008, the Philharmonia Orchestra and Signum Records have in partnership released new live recordings of Philharmonia concerts with its key conductors. Critically-acclaimed discs include a Mahler cycle with Lorin Maazel (with the final instalment, of Symphony Nos. 7-9, soon to be released), the definitive recording of Schoenberg's Gurrelieder conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen, and the complete Brahms symphonies with Christoph von Dohnányi. Click here for the full discography.