

Magdalena Kožená and Sir Simon Rattle Awarded Antonín Dvořák Prize 2025

P r a g u e (10 June 2025) – The Academy of Classical Music has announced the winners of this year's Antonín Dvořák Prize: mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kožená and conductor Sir Simon Rattle. Both artists have greatly promoted Czech classical music on international stages, whether independently or through joint performances and recording projects. The laureates will receive their awards on 14 December 2025 during a gala ceremony in the Spanish Hall of Prague Castle.

Czech music has been central to the artistic careers of both awardees. Magdalena Kožená devotes considerable attention to Czech song repertoire—from Jan Dismas Zelenka through Antonín Dvořák, Leoš Janáček, and Bohuslav Martinů to composers of the 20th and 21st centuries such as Petr Eben and Ondřej Adámek—successfully performing these works on international stages. Sir Simon Rattle is among the most prominent international advocates for Czech music today, notably during his tenures as Chief Conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic and the London Symphony Orchestra.

Magdalena Kožená is one of today's most sought-after singers. Her diverse repertoire ranges from Baroque music through the Classical and Romantic periods to 20th-century works. Besides her acclaimed interpretations, she serves as a cultural ambassador for the Czech Republic, actively promoting Czech music and cultural heritage internationally through concerts and recordings. She also supports basic arts education in the Czech Republic and founded an endowment fund which organizes, among other initiatives, the nationwide ZUŠ Open festival for young performers.

Sir Simon Rattle began his professional career with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He gained widespread recognition during his tenure as Chief Conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic (2002–2018). Czech music significantly shaped his artistic sensibilities; as a seven-year-old, he listened to recordings of the Czech Philharmonic under Karel Ančerl, never imagining that over fifty years later he would become the orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor. His discography includes acclaimed recordings such as the complete set of Dvořák's Erben-inspired symphonic poems, Janáček's opera *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and the 2024 album *Czech Songs*, featuring works by Bohuslav Martinů, Antonín Dvořák, Hans Krása, and Gideon Klein, with Magdalena Kožená among the performers.

“The prestige of the Antonín Dvořák Prize is underlined by the ceremonial concert and award presentation in the Spanish Hall of Prague Castle. The Academy of Classical Music always selects laureates from among prominent figures and institutions whose contributions to Czech music and Antonín Dvořák's legacy



resonate with global audiences,” stated Robert Kolář, Director of the Academy of Classical Music.

Established in 2009 by the Academy of Classical Music with the support of the Karel Komárek Family Foundation, the Antonín Dvořák Prize recognises extraordinary artistic achievements or significant contributions to promoting and popularising Czech classical music both domestically and internationally. Laureates receive a glass cello sculpture designed by architect Jiří Pelcl and crafted by the renowned glassmakers at Moser.

Previous laureates include Josef Suk (2009), Ivan Moravec (2010), Jiří Kout (2011), Ludmila Dvořáková (2012), Jiří Kylián (2013), Jiří Bělohlávek (2014), Yo-Yo Ma (2015), Richard Novák (2016), Ivan Klánský (2017), Czech Philharmonic (2018), Gabriela Beňačková (2019), Jakub Hrůša (2020), Sir András Schiff (2021), Prague Philharmonic Choir (2022), Panocha Quartet (2023), and Barrie Kosky (2024).

Founded in 2002, the Academy of Classical Music promotes Czech music domestically and internationally. Since 2008, it has organised the Dvořák Prague Festival, awarded the Antonín Dvořák Prize since 2009, and co-organised the Concertino Praga International Radio Competition for Young Musicians since 2020.

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