



PRESS RELEASE
JOKE SCHAUVLIEGE
FLEMISH MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, NATURE AND CULTURE
Saturday 29 March 2014

René Jacobs wins Flemish Culture Award for Classical Music 2012-2013

Today, Flemish Minister for Culture Joke Schauvliege presented musician and conductor René Jacobs with the Flemish Community Award for Classical Music 2012-2013. The presentation took place during the birthday edition of the KlaraFestival at Bozar in Brussels. The jury praised Jacobs' striking ability to fascinate an audience with widely varying tastes. According to the jury, this gift to unite people runs like a connecting thread through his many talents.

René Jacobs (°1946) read classical studies at university and music at the Royal Conservatory of Ghent. In 1977, he became a full-time musician, performing both as a soloist and with his ensemble 'Concerto Vocale'. After that, he lectured at different international schools. He went on to have a successful opera career, first as a singer and then as a conductor, while acting as a pioneer by pursuing authenticity on the international opera scene. It is no coincidence that René Jacobs is referred to as a 'brilliant musician' and 'a world-class conductor'. His famous pupil Andreas Scholl attested to the fact that Jacobs understands the art to make musicians and students sing and play 'as if their lives depended on it'. Yet he is always looking to improve his work and make it more accurate and relevant. He never presumes to own the truth. Jacobs keeps questioning his own findings, however widely approved they were in the past. Each time again, he invites his audience to 'prick up their ears' for Bach, Händel, Mozart, Monteverdi... Only recently, he treated his audience to a sparkling and again thoroughly renewed version and more profound interpretation of Bach's St Matthew's Passion, a work he has been carrying with him since his early childhood.

One of René Jacobs' remarkable qualities is that he knows how to captivate a very heterogeneous audience. As a conducting classicist he couples action with knowledge and analysis with synthesis. As a learned singer he strikes a delicate balance between science and intuition, between erudition and ecstasy. As patriarch of the music scene, he keeps discovering and offering opportunities to young, yet great talent.

Flemish Minister for Culture Joke Schauvliege said: "René Jacobs is a silent virtuoso. He links music and text to theatrical performance in such a convincingly intense and often surprising way that his audience is only too willing to get carried away by his work."

KlaraFestival (15 through 29 March 2014)

The KlaraFestival is the flagship of the Flanders Festival Brussels and is organised each year in Brussels, Antwerp and Bruges, in cooperation with leading cultural players, such as Bozar, De Munt, Flagey, Kaaitheater, deSingel and the Concertgebouw. For more than ten years now, the KlaraFestival has bundled together better quality classical music into a dazzling programme in which innovation, adventure and deepening go hand in hand with national and international top-class orchestras, ensembles, soloists and conductors. Boundaries are explored, the old repertoire is revitalised and unusual combinations are tried out. At all times, artistic excellence is the primary goal. Due to the easily accessible communication aimed at a broad public, concerts are always highly attended.

More information at www.klarafestival.be

Culture Awards Flanders 2012 -2013

A jury of experts pays tribute to individuals or an organisation that in the course of the past season made a notable contribution to cultural life in Flanders. The Flemish Culture Awards create public awareness of the laureate at a major event in the sector, which generates attention and appreciation for both the sector and the winner.

A cash prize of €12,500 is connected to the Culture Award. The Government of Flanders sets aside €20,000 for the Flemish Community Award for General Cultural Achievement. Each laureate receives the bronze statuette 'La ultima isla' by Philip Aguirre.

More information is available at: www.cultuurprijzen.be and www.vlaanderen.be/cultuurprijzen