

4 March 2010

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PRIZE-WINNERS OF THE THIRD
INTERNATIONAL GUSTAV MAHLER CONDUCTING COMPETITION**

BAMBERG 4th March - the Jury of the International Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition 2010 publicly announced the competition winners:

1st Prize	(€ 20,000 -)	Ainārs Rubiķis, Latvia (born 14 July 1978)
2 nd Prize	(€ 10,000 -)	Aziz Shokhakimov, Uzbekistan (born 3 October 1988)
3rd Prize	(€ 5,000 -)	Yordan Kamdzhakov, Bulgaria (born 16 October 1980)

No fourth prize has been awarded.

Ainārs Rubiķis – Biography

Born in 1978 in Riga, Ainārs Rubiķis attended his native city's cathedral choir school and later studied at the Latvian Music Academy. His career has encompassed a very wide range of conducting engagements, from choral to orchestral. He has taken part in master classes with, among others, Mariss Jansons and Zoltan Nagy. Since 2008 Ainārs Rubiķis has been employed at the Latvian National Opera, where he has conducted 'Die Zauberflöte' and 'Don Giovanni'. As assistant to Cornelius Meister he prepared performances of Wagner's 'Siegfried'. In 2000 he became director of DeCoro, the Latvian University Choir, and in the 2005/2006 season he led the Flemish Radio Choir on a tour of Belgium and France. In 2000 he won 2nd prize at the International Choirmasters' Competition in Riga and in 2005 not only won 2nd prize at the competition for young choral conductors in Tallin but was also awarded the Tallin Philharmonic Chamber Choir's special prize.

Founded by the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra and its Principal Conductor, Jonathan Nott, with the patronage of the composer's grand-daughter, Marina Mahler, the International Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition takes place every three years in the orchestra's home city of Bamberg in Southern Germany. For the 2010 competition the orchestra received nearly 300 applications from young conductors around the world – totaling over 800 applications from more than 60 countries since the first competition took place in 2004.

Tonight Jonathan Nott, Principal Conductor of the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra and President of the Jury commented: *"I am absolutely delighted that Ainārs Rubiķis has won this year's Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition. From the outset we have committed ourselves to finding and nurturing genuine musical talent: not necessarily the next conducting super-star but rather to unearth someone who we believe will grow and contribute substantially to music-making in the future. This year, as with Gustavo Dudamel in 2004, we have found an exceptional conductor who has barely had the chance to conduct outside his native land prior to coming to Bamberg; what a wonderful journey Ainārs Rubiķis is about to embark on!"*

Since its conception the International Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition has been credited not only for its exceptionally high standard but also for its friendly and supportive atmosphere. No matter if a candidate makes it through to the finals or not, each participant is given additional time by the jury and orchestral members where further advice and guidance is offered.

Commenting from Sweden, where he is currently rehearsing with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Gustavo Dudamel said *"Can you imagine how much this competition has meant to me? It was amazing! It wasn't just the competition but Bamberg all around was simply amazing. The city, its Baroque beauty, the people and their charm, and the opportunity to learn both about music and my fellow young conducting colleagues. This is what makes the place so special!"*

On Friday 5th March at 19.00 Ainārs Rubiķis will conduct the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra - Bayerische Staatsphilharmonie, in a final public concert of Mahler Symphony no. 4 in G major with

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soprano Christine Landshamer. The concert will begin with the official prize giving by the President of the Jury - Principal Conductor, Jonathan Nott.

This year's Jury comprised Jonathan Nott (Principal Conductor of the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra and President of the Jury), Herbert Blomstedt (Honorary Life Conductor of the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra), John Carewe (Conductor), Jonathan Mills (Director of the Edinburgh International Festival and Composer), Matthias Pintscher (Composer and Conductor), Wolfgang Fink (General Manager of the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra), Jan Nast (Managing Director of the Sächsische Staatskapelle Dresden) and Luuk Godwaldt, (member of the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra).

In the spirit of the preceding competitions the requested set repertoire traced an unbroken line uniting the traditional canon, modern classics and contemporary music. Alongside works by Mahler (Symphony No. 4 and a selection from the songs for voice and orchestra with soprano Christina Landshamer), Haydn (Symphony No. 104 D major Hob. I:104) and Webern (Five Pieces for Orchestra op. 10), the repertoire for the Competition concentrated on two contemporary compositions – works by Matthias Pintscher ("towards Osiris", 2005) and Jörg Widmann ("Con brio", 2008).

The International Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition is supported by a generous donation from the Friends of the Bamberger Symphoniker and the company Brose Fahrzeugteile GmbH & Co. KG in Hallstadt. In addition the orchestra wishes to thank the Oberfrankenstiftung for their engagement and support of the prize winners.

All news, press releases, photos and biographies are available on the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra's website in both German and English:

www.bamberger-symphoniker.de

www.bambersymphony.com

For further press information:

*Lucy Maxwell-Stewart, Red House Productions
Mobile: + 46 (0)70 38 80 255
Email: lucy@redhousepr.com*

*Matthias Hain, PR Manager, Bamberger Symphoniker
Matthias.Hain@bamberger-symphoniker.de
Tel: + 49 (0)951 – 96 47 100
Mob: + 49 (0)171 65 89 016*