

STEPHEN LAYTON Conductor



Stephen Layton is one of the most sought-after conductors of his generation. Often described as the finest exponent of choral music in the world today, his ground-breaking approach has had a profound influence on choral music over the last 30 years. Layton is regularly invited to work with the world's leading choirs, orchestras and composers. His interpretations have been heard from Sydney Opera House to the Concertgebouw, from Tallinn to São Paolo, and his recordings have won or been nominated for every major international recording award. He has two Gramophone Awards (and a further ten nominations), five Grammy nominations, the Diapason d'Or de l'Année in France, the Echo Klassik award in Germany, the Spanish CD compact award, and Australia's Limelight Recording of the Year.

Founder and Director of Polyphony, Layton is also Fellow and Director of Music at Trinity College Cambridge and Music Director of Holst Singers. Former posts include Chief Conductor of Netherlands Chamber Choir, Chief Guest Conductor of Danish National Vocal Ensemble, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of City of London Sinfonia, and Director of Music at the Temple Church, London.

Layton is constantly in demand to première new works by the greatest established and emerging composers of our age. A longstanding partnership with Arvo Pärt has resulted in première performances and award-winning recordings, including three discs with Polyphony on Hyperion. With the late Sir John Tavener, premières include Layton's bold realisation of his epic seven-hour vigil *The Veil of the Temple*, a new departure in British choral music. Passionate in his exploration of new music, Layton has introduced a vast range of new choral works to the UK and the rest of the world, transforming the music into some of the most widely performed today. His long association with music from the Baltic includes acclaimed recordings of works by Eriks Ešvalds, Uģis Prauliņš, and Veljo Tormis. His captivating discs, with Polyphony, of the American composers Morten Lauridsen's *Lux aeterna* and Eric Whitacre's *Cloudburst* were nominated for Grammy Awards, with *Cloudburst* spending a year in the USA's Billboard Classical Album Chart.

Layton's recordings have consistently broken new ground, creating a new sound world in British choral music which continues to influence and inform conductors and choirs throughout the world. Award-winning discs with Polyphony include Britten *Sacred and Profane*, James MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, and Poulenc's *Gloria*. In a recent Gramophone critics' poll of the world's "20 greatest choirs", not only was Polyphony voted second finest, but The Choir of Trinity College Cambridge also made it into the top five: confounding expectation, Layton had led a student choir into the highest ranks. Now the choir tours at the highest international level and records prolifically, recently winning a Gramophone Award, a Grammy nomination, and Australia's Limelight Recording of the Year.

Layton guest-conducts widely, working with and inspiring the world's finest choirs and orchestras: Netherlands Chamber Choir; Danish National Vocal Ensemble; SWR Vokalensemble, MDR Leipzig and NDR Hamburg Radio Choirs in Germany; Latvian State and Radio Choirs, Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, and Voces Musicales in the Baltic; Polish Radio, NFM, and Wrocław Philharmonic Choirs; Slovenian Philharmonic Choir; Eric Ericsson Chamber Choir, Stockholm; Die Konzertisten, Hong Kong; and the inaugural concert of Yale Center for Music and Liturgy at Carnegie Hall. With Britten Sinfonia eight highly-acclaimed recordings include Handel's *Messiah* ("Best *Messiah* recording" – BBC Music Magazine); with City of London Sinfonia (where Layton succeeded Richard Hickox as Artistic Director and Principal Conductor) tours included Latin America and premières uniting Cathedral choristers across Britain; and with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment he has recorded Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, *B Minor Mass* and *St John Passion*.

Main Office
25 City Road, Cambridge
CB1 1DP, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 1223 312400
Fax: +44 (0) 1223 460827

Hazard Chase Limited, registered in England no. 2516014, VAT no. 538 5557 11
Member of the International Artist Managers' Association
Hazard Chase acts as agent only and can accept no responsibility as principal

info@hazardchase.co.uk

www.hazardchase.co.uk

London Office
48-49 Russell Square, London
WC1B 4JP, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7636 5440
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7636 5115

Hazard Chase

Layton's interpretations of Bach and Handel have been heard with orchestras ranging from Academy of Ancient Music to the London Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestras. Performances include Messiah in Sydney Opera House, the first staged St John Passion with English National Opera, and regular BBC broadcasts. He has worked with London Sinfonietta, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Opera North, Scottish and Australian Chamber Orchestras, Auckland Philharmonia, Seattle, Queensland, Melbourne, Adelaide and West Australian Symphony Orchestras, and Minnesota, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National and Hallé Orchestras. Layton is also Artistic Director of the Annual Christmas Festival at St John's Smith Square.

Layton continues to innovate, taking bold and original steps and leading the way in the use of new technologies in choral music. Everything sung by The Choir of Trinity College Cambridge is webcast live and available to listen again online. Layton was the first in the world to webcast every single note sung in this way, laying bare the music making without any digital editing. This searchable archive of over 4,000 musical tracks recorded live over the last six years forms an invaluable resource for listeners around the world.

This biography is valid for use until Feb 2018. We update our biographies regularly and ask that they are not altered without permission. For updated versions, please email anna.edwards@hazardchase.co.uk

Main Office
25 City Road, Cambridge
CB1 1DP, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 1223 312400
Fax: +44 (0) 1223 460827

Hazard Chase Limited, registered in England no. 2516014, VAT no. 538 5557 11
Member of the International Artist Managers' Association
Hazard Chase acts as agent only and can accept no responsibility as principal

info@hazardchase.co.uk

www.hazardchase.co.uk

London Office
48-49 Russell Square, London
WC1B 4JP, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7636 5440
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7636 5115