



ROYAL
OPERA

11 NOVEMBER 2012

CHANGE OF CONDUCTOR ANNOUNCEMENT

THE MINOTAUR (Harrison Birtwistle)

17, 21, 24, 26, 28 January 2013

Antonio Pappano has been suffering from acute tendonitis in his right elbow during the recent *Ring* cycles. This has built up over a long period of time, and was partly caused by an unprecedented workload over the last six months, with productions of *Les Troyens*, *Otello*, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and several concerts and galas following straight after each other.

His doctors have been able to help him through the *Ring* cycle, which Antonio Pappano conducted to the highest international acclaim, but he has been advised that in order to recover fully, he needs a complete break from the extreme physical demands that conducting puts on his elbow. On the advice of his doctors, he has therefore had to make the difficult decision to withdraw from this Season's revival of Harrison Birtwistle's *The Minotaur*.

The Royal Opera understands this difficult situation and fully supports Antonio Pappano's decision to withdraw from conducting *The Minotaur*. We are thrilled to have been able to secure **Ryan Wigglesworth** to replace him for the full run of performances, after consultations with Harrison Birtwistle. Ryan Wigglesworth is one of the most exciting young British conductors of his generation and has been critically acclaimed for his performances of contemporary music; he is also a gifted composer himself. Harrison Birtwistle has full confidence in Ryan Wigglesworth and supports

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the choice of him to replace Antonio Pappano as conductor of this revival of *The Minotaur*.

Antonio Pappano

'I am deeply disappointed at having to withdraw from conducting *The Minotaur*, as I had been very much looking forward to revisiting the score, and having the opportunity to work once again with Harry and the fantastic cast, led by John Tomlinson. I wish Ryan all the very best for his debut with The Royal Opera and feel sure that the revival will be very exciting with Ryan on the podium.'

Ryan Wigglesworth

"I'm delighted to be conducting *The Minotaur*. The power and the beauty of Birtwistle's opera is still vivid in my mind from its premiere at Covent Garden four years ago. I look forward to working with the outstanding cast, and to continuing my relationship with Harry's music, which has been a constant throughout my career".

Ryan Wigglesworth was appointed composer-in-residence at English National Opera in 2012 and made his ENO conducting debut in spring 2012 with Detlev Glanert's *Caligula*. Ryan Wigglesworth received the vocal prize at the 2010 British Composer Awards for his song cycle *Augenlieder*, and his recent recording of orchestral works by Harrison Birtwistle with the Hallé won awards from *Gramophone* and *BBC Music* magazines.

He recently conducted the Britten Sinfonia at London's Barbican Centre in performances of Oliver Knussen's *Where the Wild Things Are* and *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* in celebration of the composer's 60th birthday. Other highlights during the 2012/13 season include *Carmen* for ENO, his debut with the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester at the Berlin Philharmonie, as well as returns to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra for a series of concerts, to the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, and to the London Philharmonic Orchestra, for whom he will conduct Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* at the Royal Festival Hall.

He has been commissioned to write a piece for Aldeburgh Music for the centenary celebrations of Benjamin Britten's birth in 2013.

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