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RENATO BALSADONNA ANNOUNCES DECISION TO LEAVE THE ROYAL OPERA TO PURSUE HIS CONDUCTING CAREER

Renato Balsadonna, Chorus Director of the Royal Opera Chorus, has announced his decision to leave at the end of the 2015/16 Season to concentrate fully on his conducting career.

Renato joined the Company in 2004 and has prepared the Royal Opera Chorus for all their performances at the Royal Opera House as well as for choral concerts outside the Covent Garden theatre. Both the Chorus and Renato regularly receive great critical acclaim.

Antonio Pappano said ‘Renato is undoubtedly one of the finest chorus directors in the world and has played a key role in the quality of The Royal Opera’s performances over the past decade. He’s an inspirational colleague who consistently strives for the best and will be very difficult to replace. He has some fantastic opportunities ahead to develop further as a conductor so it’s an exciting time for him, and I’m thrilled that we will welcome him back in future Seasons to conduct.’

Renato Balsadonna added ‘My feelings of friendship, mutual respect, admiration and gratitude towards the Royal Opera House, the extraordinary Royal Opera Chorus and Music Director Tony Pappano have a special place in my heart. In recent years, the Royal Opera House, through the generosity of Tony, has supported and nurtured my ambition to develop as a conductor. Even more, I have to say thank you for having helped me through the transition. I will continue living in London enjoying as a conductor the wonderful music-making of its orchestras and of the Royal Opera House.’

For The Royal Opera, Renato conducted two performances of *I due Foscari* in October 2014 and will conduct performances of *Nabucco* this Season and *Madama Butterfly* in the 2016/17 Season.

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Other conducting engagements already announced include *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Don Carlo* in Frankfurt, and *La bohème* in Trieste. Renato also continues his collaboration with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with future concerts and a recording.

The position of Chorus Director is currently being advertised.

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