

# news & notes

## MURRAY PERAHIA SIGNS TO DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

**M**URRAY PERAHIA HAS signed a recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon, ending a 43-year partnership with CBS and its later incarnation, Sony Classical. Sony's Berlin headquarters declined to comment on the move but it triggered a fresh storm of criticism on social media of Bogdan Roscic, the label's president.

Born in New York in 1947, Perahia was a

Murray Perahia celebrates his move to DG



© DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

prodigious talent who gained the support of Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Vladimir Horowitz. Perahia signed with CBS in 1973, a year after winning the Leeds International Piano Competition. His 80 recordings with CBS and Sony have attracted wide critical acclaim and a myriad of prizes, including eight *Gramophone* awards.

Releases of Perahia's recordings have been sparser since Roscic, a former head of A&R at Deutsche Grammophon, joined Sony in 2009. The most recent was a Brahms album in 2012, when Sony also released a box set celebrating the pianist's 40 years with the label.

Under Roscic's leadership Sony has focused increasingly on artists active in crossover and those with a following in growth markets, such as the Chinese pianist Lang Lang and South African soprano Pretty Yende. Perahia, an elder statesman of the piano with a firm adherence to core classical repertoire, was clearly out of place in this new culture.

Deutsche Grammophon said in a statement that Perahia 'intends to record key works from his repertoire, thereby preserving insights gained over the course of a career that began in the mid-1960s and continues to flourish as he approaches his 70th birthday next April.'

Confirming these plans, Perahia said he would be working with DG 'on projects that are dear to my heart'. He added: 'The recording process provides the chance to return to compositions – to uncover fresh ways of thinking and feeling about them – and to explore the masterworks of the keyboard repertoire at every stage in one's development. My exciting new relationship with Deutsche Grammophon means that I can share my interpretations with the widest global audience.'

Clemens Trautmann, DG's president, expressed confidence that Perahia's new recordings for the label 'will certainly be recognised as landmark interpretations for many decades to come by connoisseurs and critics as well as by a broader audience.'

The DG statement ended with a swipe at their rival: 'An artist of Murray Perahia's stature joining Deutsche Grammophon at an advanced stage in his career is not without precedent. During the 1980s, CBS Masterworks lost the two greatest pianists signed to the label at the time, when both Rudolph Serkin and, shortly afterwards, Vladimir Horowitz decided to entrust their mature years as recording artists to the yellow labe, with now legendary results.'

[www.murrayperahia.com](http://www.murrayperahia.com)

## CHARLES OWEN NAMED STEINWAY AMBASSADOR

**S**TEINWAY & SONS HAS appointed the British pianist Charles Owen as its first UK ambassador. The new role will see Owen lead three masterclasses at Steinway Hall in London between November 2016 and March 2017.

Students invited to take part will perform on a Steinway & Sons grand piano and receive personal feedback and advice from Owen. They will also visit the Hall's on-site restoration centre and be given an insight into the care, passion and craftsmanship that goes into creating and restoring every Steinway instrument.

Owen said he was 'delighted and

honoured' to become a Steinway ambassador. He added: 'I look forward to coaching young pianists from around the UK, with a positive aim to encourage, develop and widen their knowledge of music and piano playing.'

*Owen's masterclasses at Steinway Hall take place on 18 November 2016, 27 January and 9 March 2017. Directors of music at state schools, independent schools, colleges and universities are invited to apply on behalf of their students via the Steinway & Sons website: <http://steinway.co.uk/masterclass>*

[www.charlesowen.net](http://www.charlesowen.net)



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Charles Owen