



ROYAL  
OPERA  
HOUSE

Press Release

Friday 17 May 2024

## **His Majesty The King attends Antonio Pappano gala performance**

- **His Majesty King Charles III was welcomed to the Royal Opera House for a one-time gala performance celebrating Antonio Pappano's 22-year tenure.**
- **The visit comes after recent news that His Majesty will serve as the Patron of the Royal Opera House, The Royal Opera and The Royal Ballet.**

Last night [Thursday 16 May], **His Majesty King Charles III** joined the audience for a special gala performance to celebrate **The Royal Opera's** longest serving Music Director, **Antonio Pappano**.

His Majesty joined the audience in celebrating Antonio Pappano's 22 years at the musical helm of The Royal Opera.

**Antonio Pappano, Music Director of The Royal Opera, said:**

"It was a huge honour to welcome His Majesty to this wonderful evening, alongside the remarkable Orchestra, Chorus and an unrivalled ensemble cast of dear friends and long-time collaborators. While tonight was a tribute to my time at Covent Garden, it was also a celebration of singing, drama and the power music has to change us and enrich lives."

**Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House, Alex Beard, said:**

“We were deeply honoured and absolutely delighted to welcome His Majesty King Charles III to this extraordinary night of music and singing. It’s impossible to understate Tony’s impact over the last 22 years. He’s part of the fabric of our theatre, and the legacy of his performances, and the talent he’s nurtured have made an enormous contribution to the arts globally.”

**Director of The Royal Opera, Oliver Mears, said:**

“This gala was an opportunity for the *whole* House to gather and recognise all Tony has given to music, and the arts more broadly - as a leader, communicator, colleague - and friend. It was a huge honour to welcome His Majesty The King to this special evening.”

Celebrating Pappano’s 22-year tenure as Music Director of The Royal Opera, the gala comprised performances by friends and regular collaborators including **Aigul Akhmetshina, Carlos Álvarez, Xabier Anduaga, Diana Damrau, Freddie De Tommaso, Amartuvshin Enkhbat, Gerald Finley, Ermonela Jaho, Jonas Kaufmann, Huw Montague Rendall, Lisette Oropesa, Sonda Radvanovsky, Nadine Sierra, Insung Sim and Bryn Terfel.**

They were joined by the **Royal Opera Chorus** and the **Orchestra of the Royal Opera House**, led by **Concert Master Vasko Vassilev** performing repertoire by composers such as **Donizetti, Massenet, Mozart, Puccini, Rossini, and Verdi.**

A life-long music enthusiast and champion of the arts, His Majesty King Charles III invited Pappano to conduct the orchestra accompanying Their Majesties’ Coronation, which celebrated its one-year anniversary earlier this month.

Last week, it was confirmed that His Majesty would serve as Patron of the Royal Opera House, The Royal Opera and newly The Royal Ballet, taking over from his late mother Queen Elizabeth II.

**ENDS**

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Position of Music Director Maestro Antonio Pappano generously supported by Mrs. Susan A. Olde OBE. Gala generously supported by Mrs. Susan A. Olde OBE and Rolex

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

- Images can be downloaded [here](#)

- Pappano is The Royal Opera's longest serving Music Director and will step down from his post at the end of the 2023/24 Season. Jakub Hruška succeeds him in September 2025, becoming The Royal Opera's seventh Music Director following on from Karl Rankl, Rafael Kubelík, Sir Georg Solti, Sir Colin Davis, and Bernard Haitink.

## **PRESS CONTACTS**

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## **About the Royal Opera House**

Home to The Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, the Royal Opera House brings together world-class performers and trailblazing creative teams to share unforgettable performances with audiences near and far. Our theatres are in the heart of London's Covent Garden, but our work is accessed and experienced across the UK and globally through ROH Stream, tours, cinema programme, radio broadcasts and TV output. Our work in schools and communities up and down the country is driven by our curriculum linked Create & Learn programmes, specially designed to inspire creativity, broaden participation and diversify the future of opera and ballet. These sit alongside industry-leading talent development projects, regional partnerships, and a raft of daytime events, family activities, tours, exhibitions and free concerts here in our iconic Covent Garden home. We are also expanding our audience through our flagship Young ROH scheme and are committed to reducing our impact on the environment and aim to achieve net zero emissions by 2035.