

Press Release

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NADINE KOUTCHER WINS BBC CARDIFF SINGER OF THE WORLD 2015

32 year old Nadine Koutcher from Belarus has won BBC Cardiff Singer of the World 2015.

At the final, held on Sunday 21 June at St David's Hall, Cardiff, Nadine performed Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride* and Delibes' *The Bell Song*.

Following her triumph Koutcher said:

"I have no words – I am speechless. It is totally incredible to win."

The four other finalists were Amartuvshin Enkhbat, Lauren Michelle, Oleksiy Palchykov and Jongmin Park.

The competition's patron, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, presented the winner with a £15,000 prize and the Cardiff trophy. The distinguished jury included Chairman, David Pountney, John Fiore, Soile Isokoski, Claron McFadden and Dennis O'Neill.

The £2,000 Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize, supported by Cardiff University School of Music was presented to 29 year old baritone Amartuvshin Enkhbat from Mongolia by BBC's National Trustee for Wales, Elan Closs. This award was chosen by the audience and viewers at home.

The Song Prize was awarded to Jongmin Park from South Korea on Friday 19 June at St David's Hall.

The singers performed their own programmes of operatic and concert works at St David's Hall, Cardiff, accompanied by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales conducted by their Principal Conductor Thomas Søndergård and the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera conducted by Martyn Brabbins.

David Jackson, Artistic Director, BBC Cardiff Singer of the World said:

"From such an incredibly strong field of artists in the final we have a really worthy winner who will fly the flag for Cardiff Singer."

From Milan and Helsinki to New York and Toronto, auditions took place in eight locations across the world, and the 20 outstanding finalists were selected from 55 countries and included representatives from Mongolia and Malta, two countries new to the competition. More than 350 opera and concert singers at the start of their careers entered the contest. For the singers who were selected, the exposure to large audiences, both in Cardiff and across the BBC's television, radio and online services, has given them an invaluable boost to their careers.

BBC Cardiff Singer of the World is a pivotal part of the Classical Voice Season in the BBC's Year of Song and Dance and was broadcast extensively on BBC Four and BBC Radio 3, along with BBC Two Wales, BBC Radio Wales, BBC Radio Cymru, S4C and online at bbc.co.uk/cardiffsinger. For the first time anyone in the world could sign up to watch all the BBC Four broadcasts following a new partnership with subscription service sonostream.tv.

BBC Cardiff Singer of the World is organised by BBC Cymru Wales in association with Welsh National Opera and supported by the City and County of Cardiff.

More details about BBC Cardiff Singer of the World can be found at bbc.co.uk/cardiffsinger

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www.bbc.co.uk/cardiffsinger

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Pictures of the singers and jury members are available on request.

Notes to Editors

Nadine Koutcher was born in Minsk and studied at the Minsk State Musical College and the St Petersburg Conservatory. Competition wins include the Grand Prix at the 2012 International Vocal Competition's-Hertogenbosch, where she also won the Audience Award and the prize for the best performance of the obligatory piece.

She made her debut at the Mikhailovsky Theatre in St Petersburg in 2009 as Violetta *La traviata*, and subsequently performed roles including Princess Eudoxie *La Juive* and Oscar *Un ballo in maschera*. In 2012 Nadine joined the Perm State Opera, winning Moscow's Golden Mask for her performance as Medea in Pascal Dusapin's *Medea Material*. In 2013 she sang Doña Isabel in *The Indian Queen* in a co-production by Perm Opera, Teatro Real and ENO, conducted by Teodor Currentzis and produced by Peter Sellars, singing at Teatro Real for the first time.

In 2013 Nadine sang in Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* at the Concertgebouw and in Verdi's *Requiem* in Norwich, with the London Symphony Orchestra. She recorded a CD of Rameau's music in 2012 with the MusicAeterna Orchestra and Currentzis.

Future engagements include Countess *Le nozze di Figaro* and title role *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse and Amenaide *Tancredi* at Teatro Municipal de Santiago de Chile.