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About us

The German Record Critics' Award

The German Record Critics' Award ("Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik") was established in 1980 to set the "most rigorous standards for supreme achievement and quality" in the field of music recording.

The German Record Critics' Award Association consists of up to 145 music critics, writers, musicologists and editors in Germany, Austria and Switzerland actively involved in the assessment of CDs and DVDs. Its mission is to provide producers, composers, artists and music lovers with an honest guide to new releases of true artistic significance. The critics nominate from the latest releases in 29 categories ranging from opera to rock, folk, blues — even Indonesian Gamelan orchestra — produced by large and small, domestic or foreign record companies. These Nominations feature a wide range of performers, from newcomers to stars, and include bestsellers as well as rare little-known gems.

To remain independent from the commercial interests of the production companies, the jury officially registered as a charity in 1988. The Association is supported by the Minister of State for Culture and the Media. Since January 2010, the office moved from Berlin to Bonn into the „Haus der Kultur“, host for a variety of cultural institutions promoting music and cultural affairs. The members of the jury are not paid to make their selections for the Critic's Award — in their day jobs they work as journalists, editors or musicologists. They broadcast programmes for public, private and online internet radio, write music reviews for newspapers and specialized magazines, do research on music history or even play music as DJs in international clubs.

„Annual Awards“ ("Jahrespreise") are presented to as many as 15 outstanding productions, and „Certificates of Special Merit“ ("Ehrenurkunden") are awarded to three artists and producers for lifetime achievement in recording.

With its „Quarterly Critics' Choice“ ("Bestenliste") the German Record Critics' Award recommends new releases which merit special attention, either for the quality of interpretation or creativity, or for their value to the repertoire. These lists provide a candid picture of new releases of outstanding importance judged on purely artistic grounds. Every CD and DVD released during the past three months is eligible for selection in the following 29 categories:

1. Symphonic and Orchestral Music
2. Concertos
3. Chamber Music
4. Piano Music
5. Harpsichord and Organ Music
6. Opera I (CD, DVD, up to 1800)
7. Opera II (CD, DVD, Beethoven and later)
8. Choral (with and without orchestra)
9. Baroque and Pre-Baroque Music
10. Lieder and Vocal Recital
11. Historical Recordings
12. Contemporary Classical Music
13. Film Music
14. Spoken Word and Cabaret
15. Pop and Rock
16. Independent
17. Nu and Extreme
18. Chansons and Songs
19. Folk and Folklore
20. Traditional Ethnic Music



21. World Music
22. Jazz (traditional)
23. Jazz (Swing / modern)
24. Blues and Blues-related
25. Black Music
26. Recordings for Children and Youth (CD/ DVD)
27. DVD Productions (Opera & Ballet / Classical Music / Non-Classical)
28. DVD Jazz (concerts, documentaries)
29. Crossover Productions

To qualify for nomination a recording must be available on the German market and should be sent immediately after its official publication date to each of the five members of the respective jury panel for evaluation. Please do not send preliminary releases or MP3-files to the main office. For further information please contact:

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