

Mariinsky Is Grammy-Nominated

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Composer Rodion Schedrin and his wife, famed ballerina Maya Plisetskaya.

ST. PETERSBURG — Russian musicians have seized four nominations at this year’s prestigious Grammy awards, presented every year by the American Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

The Mariinsky Theater label’s recording of Rodion Shchedrin’s opera “The Enchanted Wanderer” performed by the Mariinsky Theater Symphony Orchestra and Chorus under Valery Gergiev is a finalist in two categories: “Best Opera” and “Best Work by a Contemporary Classical Composer.”

St. Petersburg conductor Mariss Jansons, who began his career at the St. Petersburg Philharmonic and now spends most of his time abroad, has also been nominated in the “Best Classical Album” and “Best Orchestral Performance” categories for a recording of Bruckner’s Third and Fourth Symphonies with the world-renowned Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, where he is principal conductor.

James Mallinson, producer of “The Enchanted Wanderer” and of a recording of the opera “Parsifal” by Mariinsky Theater soloists and the Symphony Orchestra and Chorus under Valery Gergiev, received a Grammy nomination for “Producer of the Year in Classical Music.”

“Among this year’s nominees we see musicians of exceptional talent and outstanding professionalism,” said Neil Portnow, president of the American Academy of Recording Arts. “I am proud that this year the academy has once again succeeded in compiling an impressive list of candidates for the award, covering an incredibly broad range of music.”

The Grammys are presented every year in categories including pop, electronic, rock and classical music, as well as jazz, blues, gospel, rap, reggae, country and children’s music.

“The Enchanted Wanderer” was released in March this year, making it the label’s fifth disc. The new recording immediately attracted attention from critics, with BBC Music Magazine naming “The Enchanted Wanderer” the best opera recording of the month.

Rodion Shchedrin wrote “The Enchanted Wanderer” in 2002 based on themes from Nikolai Leskov’s eponymous novel following a commission from Lorin Maazel for the New York Philharmonic, which gave the premiere. The work’s Russian premiere was held in St. Petersburg in July 2007 as part of the “Stars of the White Nights” international music festival.

In the “Best Opera” category, the Mariinsky Theater Symphony Orchestra and Gergiev are competing against the Royal Opera House Symphony Orchestra (London) under Antonio Pappano with a recording of Alban Berg’s “Lulu,” Ars Lyrica Houston under Matthew Dirst with Johann Adolf Hasse’s opera “Marc Antonio e Cleopatra,” Germany’s Sinfonieorchester Berlin under Kent Nagano with Kaija Saariaho’s opera “L’amour de loin” and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales under David Lloyd-Jones with Arthur Sullivan’s opera “Ivanhoe.”

In “Best Classical Album” Jansons is up against Riccardo Muti (Verdi’s “Requiem”), Giovanni Antonini (“Sacrificium” album), Giancarlo Guerrero (“Deus Ex Machina” by Michael Daugherty) and Gil Rose (“Dreamhouse” by Steven Mackey).

“Bruckner is a signature composer for the Concertgebouw orchestra, which firmly holds the third position in the world’s rating of symphony orchestras,” said Gyulara Sadykh-zade, a musical reviewer with the Vedomosti newspaper. “For that reason the nomination is all the more important for Jansons, who feels the heart and soul of this famous orchestra perfectly.”

“Mariinsky is a very young recording label — it had its first release in 2009 — and it has been noticed by the Grammys since its very first release, which is most encouraging,” Sadykh-zade said. “Usually, new or small recording labels go completely unnoticed by such giants as the Grammy awards.”

The prize-giving ceremony will take place in Los Angeles on Feb. 13, 2011.

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