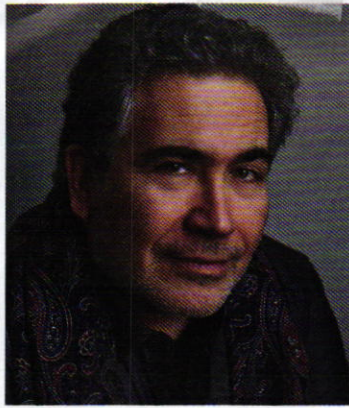


## Rizzi to replace Elder at Opera Rara

Opera Rara, the record label devoted to unearthing and taking into the studio rare and neglected works from the *bel canto* era, has appointed a new Artistic Director. After seven years in the post, Sir Mark Elder is stepping down in September, to be replaced by Carlo Rizzi. The Italian conductor first worked with Opera Rara two years ago, conducting two discs of *bel canto* arias with soprano Joyce El-Khoury and tenor Michael Spyres, both shortlisted for last year's *Gramophone* Awards. Rizzi, whose career has included two spells as Music Director of Welsh National Opera, will lead the organisation into its 50th anniversary next year. 'Opera is my passion and I strongly believe in its future. Just as it is important to present known



masterpieces afresh and to commission new works, I believe that finding and bringing back to life the hidden jewels of this endlessly enriching art form is equally vital to excite modern audiences,' he said. New recordings will include Donizetti's *Il furioso all'isola di San Domingo* (being recorded next year for release in 2021), followed by Offenbach's *La princesse de Trébizonde*.

Reflecting on his time at Opera Rara, Elder said: 'Bringing so many unknown operas to life has been challenging, but there is certainly an appetite for discovery among artists as much as the public.' Among Elder's achievements with the label was a superb recording of Rossini's *Semiramide*, our Recording of the Month in last year's Awards issue.

## ONE TO WATCH

### Johan Dalene Violinist

Robert von Bahr, the chief executive of BIS Records, is rightly proud of his credentials when it comes to spotting young talent. Alexandre Kantorow's recent success at the 16th International Tchaikovsky Competition, having already made three recordings for BIS (including the Liszt concertos when he was only 17) well illustrates this; so, too, does the story of 18-year-old violinist Johan Dalene. When Dalene won the prestigious Nielsen Competition earlier this year (as we reported in the May issue), and then became one of the latest intake of BBC New Generations Artists (as we reported in the July issue), he had already made his first recording for BIS. In January, he recorded the violin concertos by Tchaikovsky and Barber - he played the former as part of his winning performance in Copenhagen - with the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra under



Daniel Blendulf, and the disc is due out later this year. BIS is committed to making further recordings with him. Indeed, it's easy to imagine this gifted young violinist being widely sought after.

Dalene is a prodigious talent. He made his debut with the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra at the age of seven, and had success in various competitions in his teens, culminating in his triumph at the Nielsen

Competition. He is someone who, like many prodigies, developed so rapidly when he was young that his instrument seems almost to be an extension of his body, so natural and relaxed is he when he plays; a performance of Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen* given when Dalene was 10 years old, available on YouTube, exemplifies the insouciance of a young performer entirely at one with his instrument. Do look out for him!

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With Apple Music we've created playlists for each ensemble as well as one overarching playlist featuring all 10 of them. Visit [gramophone.co.uk/awards](http://gramophone.co.uk/awards) where you can find out who has been nominated, listen to them, and then vote. Voting closes on September 7; the winner will be announced at the *Gramophone* Awards in October.

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