



LONGBOROUGH FESTIVAL OPERA CONGRATULATES ANTHONY NEGUS ON BEING NAMED IN THE KING'S HONOURS LIST

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Photo credit: Matthew Williams-Ellis

Longborough Festival Opera is delighted to congratulate Anthony Negus on being named as a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in the King's Honours List. The honour is in recognition of his services to music with particular reference to his work at Longborough Festival Opera where he has been Music Director since 2000. Among the highlights of his time with Longborough Festival Opera have been acclaimed cycles of Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* in 2002/2004, 2013 and 2024. For this year's edition of the Festival Anthony conducts *Tristan und Isolde* and next year, as part of the celebrations of the theatre's 30th anniversary, he conducts a new production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Andrew Mosely, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Longborough Festival Opera, said:

"On behalf of the trustees of Longborough Festival Opera, I warmly congratulate Anthony on receiving this richly deserved honour. He has played a central role in shaping the reputation of Longborough, particularly through his deep commitment to the works of Wagner and composers inspired by him. As Music Director, he has brought exceptional interpretative insight, musical authority and authenticity to our productions, most notably in the three Ring Cycles he has conducted for Longborough. His meticulous attention to detail and ability to coach and inspire singers and orchestral musicians have driven the artistic excellence for which Longborough is now renowned. Anthony's musical leadership has taken the company from a small festival to a respected destination for serious opera lovers, significantly enhancing its profile within the UK and achieving international recognition."

Emily Gottlieb, Executive Director of Longborough Festival Opera, said:

*“All of us at Longborough are thrilled for Anthony and this long-deserved recognition of his services to music and to the cultural life of the UK. He has hugely enriched the operatic landscape of this country and has quietly and steadily built an international reputation – in particular for his interpretation of Wagner and the late romantic German repertoire – which he has gained over the past 25 years as Music Director of Longborough Festival Opera, helping establish it as the ‘English Bayreuth’. On behalf of all of our staff, artists, orchestra, crew and the myriad people who have worked with Anthony over the years at Longborough, I offer our heartfelt congratulations. His modesty, enthusiasm, curiosity and infectious passion for his craft is tangible, and we are all richer for working with him. We greatly look forward to continuing our long association with Anthony as he steps into his new role of Conductor Laureate from 2027, conducting a new production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.”*

Critics have praised Negus’s conducting at Longborough Festival Opera citing his authoritative interpretations, his ability to draw nuanced textures from the orchestra and the way he enhances the dramatic and emotional impact of productions. In 2025 Sir Nicholas Kenyon in the Telegraph noted “the outstanding musical direction of Wagner supremo Anthony Negus” in his review of *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Longborough.

Elsewhere, Negus has conducted Wagner around the world, including with Melbourne Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. In Australia, Negus has regularly been invited to conduct Wagner, including four hugely successful performances of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in 2025 and two acclaimed Ring Cycles in 2023 for Melbourne Opera, where he was awarded for both productions the Outstanding Conductor Award at the OperaChaser Awards.

Negus assisted Sir Reginald Goodall on *The Valkyrie* in 1970 at Sadlers Wells before working as a répétiteur at Wuppertal, Bayreuth and Hamburg. After joining the music staff of Welsh National Opera he conducted their production of *Parsifal* in 1983 aged 36 when Goodall fell ill. Wolfgang Wagner, Head of the Bayreuth Festival and the composer’s grandson, came to a performance and said: “It is absolutely astounding what Anthony has done. I was impressed with the love he brought to all aspects of the opera. It was a great personal triumph for him”. At WNO, Negus assisted Pierre Boulez on *Pelléas et Mélisande* and at ENO, Reginald Goodall on *Tristan und Isolde*, *Parsifal* and *The Valkyrie*. In 2017 he was awarded the Goodall Award by The London Wagner Society for “his devotion to the works of Richard Wagner”.

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About Longborough Festival Opera

Martin and Lizzie Graham started promoting opera in the grounds of their home in 1991 as Banks Fee Opera. Longborough Festival Opera has since grown into an established opera company, situated in the heart of the Cotswolds, with an annual season taking place in a purpose-built opera house seating 500.

The company is an independent charity that continues Martin Graham's legacy in the theatre he built in the grounds of the family home. It is not in receipt of public grant funding nor any revenue from the Graham family and relies on ticket sales and the generosity of members and audiences.

Throughout Longborough's history, Martin and Lizzie achieved what some might have said to be impossible: in 2013 they presented a full-length production of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* with minimal budgets but to great critical acclaim, establishing the Festival as a destination for Wagnerians in the UK and abroad. In 2019 the company embarked on a new *Ring*, culminating in another new full cycle in 2024.

Since the 1990s, Longborough has presented high-quality opera overlooking the beautiful Evenlode valley in Gloucestershire in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Conscious of its surrounding environment, the Festival is committed to sustainability and creative reuse with a tradition of repurposing, reclaiming and recycling objects to create transformative architecture, artwork and performances.

Learning and Participation are central to the work of the company. Longborough operates an Emerging Artist Programme offering solo roles and chorus positions in its world-class productions for singers at the beginning of their careers. Longborough's music staff also provide weekly singing lessons in its Singing Schools, with a new scholarship introduced in 2025 to offer recipients the opportunity to perform in the Longborough Youth Chorus in a production in the summer festival. Another schools scheme – Playground Opera – reimagines classic operas to make them accessible for children. Workshops with local secondary schools also take place every year, involving interactive sessions with live performances and discussions.

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