



American composer Tod Machover's new opera, *Death and the Powers*, complete with a chorus of robots and a musical chandelier, received its world premiere at the Opera Monte-Carlo in September. Photo: Jill Steinberg.

the ridiculous and indefensible position of the unions, which gives ministers an excuse.”

There was turmoil in France, too, where early-music specialist Emmanuelle Haïm abandoned her debut with the Opéra National de Paris in Mozart's *Idomeneo*, because of what the house termed “a reported mutual understanding, after the early rehearsals, that the time necessary to merge her artistic approach with that of the orchestra was not compatible with the programming constraints of the Opéra National de Paris.”

In Vienna, a revival of Franco Zeffirelli's production of *Carmen* lost its hot-ticket status along with stars Rolando Villazón and Elina Garanča and conductor Mariss Jansons, all of whom got a dose of cancellitis.

WINNERS

The Philharmonia Orchestra's “Re-rite,” an interactive performance of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* that gave patrons a chance to conduct, play, and “be” inside an orchestra, won the Royal Philharmonic Society's audience development award. The RPS also honored the late Philip Langridge in the singer category, Oliver Knussen for conductor, the London Sinfonietta for ensemble, and Kaija Saariaho for large-scale composition with her *Notes on Light*.

It was a busy year for Saariaho's trophies cabinet as she also picked up Denmark's highest musical honor, the \$110,000 Sonning Music Prize.

Dame Kiri Te Kanawa won the lifetime achievement in music award at the 11th annual Classical Brits. Conductor

and film composer Ennio Morricone and Icelandic singer/songwriter Björk won the 2010 Polar Music Prize—the dual award is intended to bridge the gap between classical and popular music. Russian pianist Denis Kozhukhin won Belgium's Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition.

NEW MUSIC

In what the BBC deemed “a golden age of British contemporary music,” the Proms provided the usual boost for new music, with major premieres for 19 living British composers, including 12 BBC commissions, almost double the number in recent seasons.

BBC-commissioned British composers were Tansy Davies, Jonathan Dove, Alissa Firsova (Russian-born but now a British national), Graham Fitkin, Robin Holloway, Gabriel Jackson, David Matthews, Stephen Montague (American-born but a U.K. resident since 1974 and a British national since 2000), Thea Musgrave, Tarik O'Regan, Mark-Anthony Turnage, and Huw Watkins.

There were also premieres by Julian Anderson, George Benjamin, Cornelius Cardew, James Dillon, Simon Holt, James MacMillan, and Colin Matthews.

Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers* received its world premiere at the Opera Monte-Carlo in September, complete with a chorus of robots and a musical chandelier, and is due for a North America premiere in March 2011. ●

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