



Raymond Leppard, ISO Conductor Laureate, Dies at Age 92

Maestro Leppard served as ISO Music Director from 1987-2001; continued long-term relationship with the orchestra and community

(October 22, 2019) – The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra announces the loss of a long-time artistic leader and friend, as Raymond Leppard died earlier today in the presence of his closest friends and husband, Dr. John Bloom. Maestro Leppard, Conductor Laureate and Music Director from 1987 to 2001, was 92 years old.

“The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra family is heartbroken by the loss of our dear friend and Conductor Laureate Raymond Leppard,” said CEO James Johnson. “While his tenure as Music Director will be remembered for raising the artistic profile of the orchestra through international tours, recordings, and broadcasts, his influence on the ISO continues to this day. By making Indianapolis his permanent home, Maestro Leppard was able to serve as a champion of classical music in this city, conducting concerts, teaching, and inspiring others to cherish the music he loved. He put an indelible stamp on this city and this orchestra. We will think of him fondly every time we hear or perform one of his favorite works. Our thoughts are with Maestro Leppard’s family and close friends as they grieve the passing of this generous artist and wonderful man.”

During his tenure with the ISO, he led eight recordings and initiated *Indianapolis On-The-Air*, a syndicated radio broadcast of performances that continues to air across the United States. Maestro Leppard proposed the tradition of beginning the orchestra’s season with a star-studded gala and established the popular Classical Christmas Concert. His Thursday night Studio Series invited our neighbors to learn more about symphonic works in a laid-back setting.

“I am deeply saddened by the loss of our Conductor Laureate, Maestro Raymond Leppard,” said Music Director Krzysztof Urbanski. “He uplifted the ISO with striking artistic insight and inspiration, and touched so many people through his love and stewardship of classical music. He will be profoundly missed, but his legacy will live on through his writings, his recordings, his compositions and arrangements, and most especially in the musicians whose lives were remarkably influenced by his artistry.”

In addition to his term as Music Director of the ISO and long-standing association with the English Chamber Orchestra, Raymond Leppard conducted many other major orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, and the BBC Symphony.

Raymond was well-known for reviving the baroque operas of composers including Cavalli and Monteverdi – influencing a rejuvenated interest in the genre. Notable collaborations include the

Metropolitan and San Francisco operas, the New York City Opera, Glyndebourne Opera, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and appearances in Paris, Hamburg, Santa Fe, Stockholm and Geneva. In the late 1950s, he accepted a post at Cambridge as University Lecturer in Music, beginning his joint career as academic and performer.

Maestro Leppard earned international recording prizes including the Deutsche Schallplattenpreis, a Grammy® Award, a Grand Pro/Am Music Prix du Disque, and the Edison Prize. He composed several film scores including *Lord of the Flies*, *Laughter in the Dark*, and *Hotel New Hampshire*.

"The world of music has lost one of its foremost interpreters," said Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly. "Our beloved ISO has lost a cherished visionary. I have lost a true and dear friend. The joy that is Raymond Leppard shall be forever remembered."

The Queen of England honored Maestro Leppard with the title Commander of the British Empire (CBE). For his services to Italian music, the Republic of Italy conferred upon him the title of Commendatore della Repubblica Italiana. In America, he received honorary degrees from Purdue University, Butler University, and the University of Indianapolis. Born in London, Raymond Leppard was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He became a U.S. citizen in 2003.

Raymond Leppard will be remembered not only for his brilliant mind and incredible talent, but for his charming demeanor, his witty sense of humor, and his deep connection to the Indianapolis community that will have an everlasting influence on the city's musical landscape.

"Since music was the most palpably religious of all my experiences, I used it as a basis of a celebration of life and the living of it, for it has made everything worthwhile for me." – Maestro Raymond Leppard, 1927-2019

###

About the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra:

Under the leadership of Music Director Krzysztof Urbanski and Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra has become a leading orchestra in the nation with its commitment to artistic excellence, diverse and creative programming inside and outside its historic Hilbert Circle Theatre home, its engagement with communities throughout the state of Indiana and its ambitious approaches to music education, performance and collaboration. In the decades since its founding in 1930, the ISO has presented a range of classical, pops, family and holiday programming to hundreds of thousands of people each year; received national and international acclaim with its radio broadcasts, tours and recordings; and became the first major orchestra with a resident ensemble.

The ISO continues to engage new audiences through innovative programming including the Fifth Third Bank *Lunch Break Series* of casual 45-minute performances each summer, the holiday traditions of the IPL *Yuletide Celebration*, the Stella Artois *Happy Hour at the Symphony Series*, and the popular Bank of America *Film Series*.

Media Contact: kcutler@indianapolissymphony.org
Kristin Cutler, Director of Communications