

Today President Toomas Hendrik Ilves presented the Young Cultural Figure Award of the Cultural Foundation of the President of the Republic to the Pianist Mihkel Poll at the Office of the President. Mihkel Poll has given a remarkable contribution to introducing the Republic of Estonia and its culture in the world.

„A good musician is made into a great musician by his personality and creative abilities and, of course, consistent work and the courage to do something difficult and unknown, by always trying to do something new," the President said upon presenting the award and added that Mihkel Poll has all these characteristics.

„This makes people listen to your work and understand music, enchanting the audience from Tudulinna Basic School in Virumaa to Wigmore Hall in London. You will help us to make Estonian music heard and well-known all over the world. By doing this you also make Estonia greater and better known ," the Head of State said.

President Ilves thanked the members of the Council of the Cultural Board and the benefactor of the award, Indrek Neivelt. Young Cultural Figure's Award is 5,000 euros.

According to Mihkel Poll, the award will be an inspiration in his future creative work, the stressfulness and tension of which is overcome by the joy that music brings. "In the search for spiritual values art is the most direct route," Poll stated.

The laureate of the award thanked his teachers and family for their support and understanding and the President and members of the Council of the Cultural Board for the recognition.

Mihkel Poll was presented as a candidate for the award by the Estonian Association of Interprets (Chairman of Board Henry-David Varema) and Juko-Mart Kõlar, recommendations were given by Anu Tali and Erkki-Sven Tüür.

Mihkel Poll is this season's residing artist of ERSO and has given outstanding concerts to

introduce Estonian music and composers. Mihkel Poll has co-operated in the season of 2012/2013 with a number of orchestras (Norrbotten Chamber Orchestra, Birmingham SSO) and conductors (Olari Elts, Neeme Järvi, Anu Tali, Arvo Volmer) and has given numerous solo concerts in both Estonia and abroad. In addition, he also gives free lecture-concerts in Estonian schools, introducing classical music and the life of an interpret of international scale to gymnasium students.

The repertoire of Mihkel Poll covers a very large number of genres and eras, extending to both large forms and miniatures and masterpieces from Bach to Liget. Mihkel Poll also often makes music with chamber ensembles with most outstanding instrumentalist and singers of Estonia, including his sister, Mari Poll.

Mihkel Poll has performed in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Russia, Germany, Belgium, the Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and the USA. He has given concerts with ERSO, Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, Nordic Symphonic Orchestra, Magdeburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Norrbotten Chamber Orchestra, Symphonic Orchestra of Vanemuine, Sinfonia of Birmingham, Norwich Philharmonic Orchestra, Pärnu City Orchestra and EMTA Symphonic Orchestra. Last season, Mihkel Poll gave a successful concert tour with the Nordic Symphonic Orchestra, conducted by Anu Tali.

After winning the reputable Guildhall Wigmore Recital Prize in October 2011, Mihkel made his debut last June in the world-famous Wigmore Hall. In 2009, Mihkel launched his debut CD with 20th century piano pieces under reputable Finnish recording company, Ondine. The record includes some pieces from the creative work of Ravel, Shostakovich, Mossolov, Liget and Tulve. In April 2013, Mihkel Poll concluded an agency contract with an international agency, Sonora, that will be representing him in Poland and France, agency contracts to represent Poll in Germany and Switzerland will be concluded in the nearest future.

Mihkel Poll was born in 1986 in Tallinn, started his piano classes at the age of 6 at the Nõmme Music School and continued at the Tallinn Secondary Music School. At the moment, he studies at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre.

Additional information about the Young Cultural Figure's Award and previous laureates is available at www.president.ee

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