

The first award in this new category, with prize money of 400,000 euros

Cristóbal Halffter wins the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award for contributing to “the idea of a European contemporary music”

- “The real triumph is that an award family devoted to knowledge has accorded contemporary music the same stature as physics or ecology” remarked Halffter on receiving the news.
- The Frontiers of Knowledge Awards stand among the world’s foremost award schemes for the breadth of disciplines addressed and their monetary amount - a total of 3.2 million euros spread over eight categories.
- The jury was formed by six experts from prestigious music institutions in four countries, chaired by Juerg Stenzl from the University of Salzburg.

February 5, 2010.- The BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in the Contemporary Music category goes in this inaugural edition to Spanish composer and conductor Cristóbal Halffter Jiménez-Encina (Madrid, 1930), whose works “breathe an immense inspiration” in the words of the prize jury. “Through their coherence and the continuity of their commitment, they have greatly contributed to the idea of a European contemporary music”.

“Since the late 1950s and early 1960s” the citation goes on, “[Halffter] has made a major contribution to the reintroduction of Spanish music into the world of contemporary music”. He is considered one of the leading composers from the “Generation of 1951”, responsible for introducing into Spain the main currents of the European musical avant-garde.

Cristóbal Halffter is widely acknowledged to be a key figure in the European music of the twentieth century. His work was a force for renewal in Spanish contemporary music, which he helped bring within the mainstream of international musical creation. True to his time, he has experimented with numerous contemporary techniques including electroacoustic music and serialism. Internationally, Halffter’s reputation rests on his achievements as both composer and conductor.

Halffter's international repute rests, furthermore, on his twin achievements as a composer and conductor.

Halffter's first words on hearing of the award were: **"The real triumph is that an award family devoted to knowledge has accorded contemporary music the same recognition as physics or ecology. That is truly a fabulous stature to give us"**.

The new laureate draws additional satisfaction from the fact that the prize was decided by an international jury meeting in Spain: **"Although I have lived abroad and it was there that I won my first recognition, I have never cut myself off from Spain. Not only am I delighted at this prize, but it also binds me more tightly to our shared culture"**.

The jury was chaired by **Juerg Stenzl**, Professor of Musicology at the University of Salzburg (Austria), with **Siegfried Mauser**, President at Munich University of Music and Performing Arts (Germany), acting as secretary. Remaining members were **Hugues Dufourt**, composer and Emeritus Research Director at France's Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (CNRS); **Ranko Markovic**, Artistic Director of the Konservatorium Wien University (Austria); **Luis de Pablo**, Spanish composer, and **Dieter Torkewitz**, Professor of Music Theory at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna (Austria).

Halffter was nominated for the award by the Royal San Fernando Academy of Fine Arts (Spain); music publisher Universal Edition (Austria); the Paul Sacher Foundation (Switzerland); and the Prince Pierre of Monaco Foundation.

The Frontiers of Knowledge Awards honor world-class research and artistic creation. The breadth of disciplines addressed and their monetary amount, an annual 3.2 million euros, place them among the foremost international award families. However their uniqueness lies in their close alignment with the scientific, technological, social and economic challenges of the present century. In this respect, they are the first to reserve dedicated categories for Climate Change; Development Cooperation; Information and Communication Technologies, and Ecology and Conservation Biology, alongside the awards going to outstanding contributions in Economics, Finance and Management; Basic Sciences; Biomedicine, and Contemporary Music.

Contemporary Music is a novelty in this edition, taking over from the generic Arts category of the 2008 awards. The qualities it honors coincide with the defining values of the Frontiers Awards: innovation arising from the cumulative stock of knowledge and curiosity as a spur to exploration, creativity and the utmost excellence.

"WE ARE CONFUSING CULTURE AND SPECTACLE"

As well as reasserting the claim of contemporary music as an essential part of human knowledge, Halffter calls for it to receive greater public attention: **"Many major works expressive of the culture of the turn of the century have been virtually ignored. That is why I am so pleased to be in the company of scientists in these Frontiers of Knowledge awards. And I stress the word *knowledge* here, not information. Information is everywhere; it is knowledge we are running short of"**.

Halffter also reflects on the idea of culture in our times: **"Out society tends to confuse culture and spectacle. Culture can be spectacle, but spectacle is often anything but**

culture”. And it is here, in his judgment, that innovation encounters most obstacles: “For me, the world’s best tenor performing La Traviata is just not news; what really excites me is the premiere of a string quartet by any of my colleagues”.

WINNERS IN OTHER AWARD CATEGORIES

The Contemporary Music category is the seventh to be decided in this edition of the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Awards.

Winners to date in remaining award categories are:

Climate Change: German physicist and mathematician **Klaus Hasselmann** for demonstrating that recent global warming trends are attributable to human activities.

Information and Communication Technologies: **Thomas Kailath**, U.S. engineer and mathematician of Indian origin, for a mathematical development enabling the production of increasingly small size chips.

Basic Sciences: shared by physicists **Richard N. Zare** and **Michael E. Fisher** for respectively rendering visible individual molecules and describing their collective behavior.

Biomedicine: American physician **Robert J. Lefkowitz** for discovering the receptors targeted by most of today’s drugs.

Ecology and Conservation Biology: American ecologist **Peter B. Reich** for improving our ability to predict terrestrial ecosystem responses to global environmental change.

Development Cooperation: the **Development Research Institute (DRI)** at New York University for “its contribution to the analysis of foreign aid provision, and its challenge to the conventional wisdom in development assistance”.

The next award announcement, to be made shortly, corresponds to the Economics, Finance and Management category.

The BBVA Foundation supports knowledge generation, scientific research and the promotion of culture, relaying the results of its work to society at large. This effort materializes in research projects; human capital investment; and specialization courses, grants and awards. Among the BBVA Foundation’s preferred areas of activity are basic sciences, biomedicine, ecology and conservation biology, the social sciences and literary and musical creation.

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For more information, contact the BBVA Foundation Communication Department (+34 91 374 5210/+34 94 487 4627 or comunicacion@fbbva.es) or visit www.fbbva.es