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2011 Council of Nordic Composers prize to Icelandic ensemble Caput

--Caput is a flexible ensemble ranging from sinfonietta to chamber ensemble, and it consists of many of Iceland's leading musicians. This enables them to give excellent performances of a great variety of contemporary music, says Stina Lyles, Secretary General of the Council of Nordic Composers – an organization that represents nearly a thousand composers of art music.

--Even if the prize is a symbolic one, it's an important symbol of the composers' gratitude for the essential work of the performers, she adds.

The prize motivation reads:

Through their earnest, proficient and passionate work, including dozens of cd-releases, touring, and participation in many of our foremost festivals, the Caput ensemble has gratified innumerable listeners with contemporary music by Nordic composers, ever since it was founded in 1987.

The musicians in the ensemble were overtaken and pleased to receive the prize as a surprise event during a Caput concert at Nordic Music Days in Harpa, Reykjavík's new concert hall. They later phrased their reactions:

Caput is honored to accept the 2011 Council of Nordic Composers prize. Our intention has from the start been to encourage composers to write new and demanding music for skilled players. Sometimes it requires hard work to prepare a single part and a lot of rehearsals to get them all together, but all our players have been willing and eager to put in the extra effort needed to express each composer's ideas and thoughts, to interpret individual voices in global context. It is a joyful feeling when this professional voluntary work is recognized by the open ears of the connoisseur.

The council of Nordic Composers instituted the prize for the advancement of contemporary Nordic classical, electro acoustic and art music three years ago. Previous recipients are Robert von Bahr, founder and Director of Swedish record label BIS, in 2009, and the Swedish ensemble Pärlor för svin/The pearls before swine experience (Sara Hammarström, George Kentros, Mats Olofsson, and Mårten Landström) in 2010.

The Council of Nordic Composers Prize was awarded to Caput during Nordic Music Days in Harpa in Reykjavík Oct 6-9. The prize is an art work in silver, with sounds and vibrations, created by Lars Torvaldsson.

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