

**Harpa one of world's best concert halls**

The new concert hall in Iceland, Harpa – Reykjavik Concert Hall and Conference Centre, has been selected as one of the world's ten best concert halls – uniquely combining world-class acoustics and distinctive architecture. The distinguished British magazine, Gramophone, is behind the selection, featuring in its January issue. Harpa is designed by Henning Larsen Architects in collaboration with Batteriið Architects and the facade in collaboration with the Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson. The acoustic design was developed by Artec Consultants.

Gramophone – which has written about classical music since 1923 – invited five international architecture and music critics to select the world's ten best concert halls inaugurated within the last decade. "In the best examples, architects, acousticians and musicians have thought hard about what a concert hall should look like, sound like, and how it should relate to the community around it. We celebrate 10 of the most inspiring and dramatic examples," writes Martin Cullingford, Editor of Gramophone.

Harpa's four halls vary in size and the reverberation time in the halls can be adjusted according to the musical event taking place. The largest hall seats 1,800 guests and is named Eldborg after a famous volcanic crater in Iceland. Eldborg means 'Fire Castle'. Known for its beneficial properties in terms of acoustics, in situ cast concrete is the predominant material in the hall. Red-lacquered birch veneer covers all vertical surfaces and balcony edges.

The other concert halls on Gramophone's list include Jean Nouvel's concert hall in Copenhagen, the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles by Frank Gehry, Renzo Piano's Parco della Musica in Rome, Snøhetta's Opera in Oslo and Herzog & de Meuron's Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg.

The spectacular south facade of Harpa was developed in a collaboration between the Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson and Henning Larsen Architects. It is inspired by the geological basalt stone formations along the Icelandic coast. The remaining two-dimensional facades and roof build on the geometry of the south facade. The glass captures the light of the sun and colours of the sky and appears as a giant, illuminating sculpture, reflecting the sky and harbour in daytime. The building changes colours depending on the weather and time of day and year.

In December 2011, the leading Swedish magazine for Nordic architecture and design, FORM, selected Harpa as Building of the Year in Scandinavia. Henning Larsen Architects has designed a number of renowned concert halls. Among others, the Opera in Copenhagen and Uppsala Concert & Congress Hall in Sweden.

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*Photos attached. Photos should be credited Photo: Nic Lehoux*