Golijov Awarded Special Prize

Vilcek Foundation recognizes foreign-born artists for extraordinary contributions in the U.S.

by *Susan Elliott, MusicalAmerica.com*

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NEW YORK -- Osvaldo Golijov is the first musician to receive the Vilcek Foundation Prize, a relatively new award for foreign-born artists and biomedical researchers who have made "extraordinary contributions to society in the United States." He receives his award at a ceremony in New York on March 26, along with Dr. Inder Verma, the 2008 recipient for biomedical research.

The foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, who immigrated to the U.S. from communist Czechoslovakia. He is now a professor and research scientist at New York University School of Medicine, she is an art historian. The award, whose recipients are nominated by foundation-appointed individuals, carries with it a cash prize of $50,000 and has been presented annually since 2006. Past arts recipients have been visual artists.

"We should not have to be reminded of how much America owes to people who were born abroad, but we do," said Dr. Vilcek, Foundation President. "Historically, the United States has innumerable foreign-born individuals to thank for establishing it as a leader in the sciences and arts, and in many other fields as well. In awarding The Vilcek Foundation Prizes, our primary objective is to raise awareness of that reality. We should not forget that so much of what this country takes credit for is the achievement of immigrants."

Argentine-born Golijov, 47, is among this country's most prolific and performed living composers; his work is known for its rich colors and often exotic Latin rhythms. He is also a recipient of the MacArthur "genius" grant.

Today's Question

Spanish native Jesus Lopez-Cobos (8:00 PM hour), whose birthday we note today, is the music director emeritus of what American orchestra, of which he was music director from 1986 to 2001?

- Baltimore Symphony Orchestra
- San Francisco Symphony Orchestra
- Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra

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