



POLAR MUSIC PRIZE

**JOSEPH SADDLER, KNOWN AS GRANDMASTER FLASH,
ANNE-SOPHIE MUTTER,
& THE PLAYING FOR CHANGE FOUNDATION
ANNOUNCED AS THE 2019 POLAR MUSIC PRIZE LAUREATES**

**Award Ceremony takes place on Tuesday 11 June in Stockholm
in the presence of the Swedish Royal Family**

#polarmusicprize

London, Wednesday 13 February 2019: The Polar Music Prize, one of the world's most prestigious music awards, now in its 28th year, has announced that the 2019 Laureates are hip hop pioneer **Joseph Saddler**, known as **Grandmaster Flash**, queen of the violin, **Anne-Sophie Mutter**, and the music charity **The Playing For Change Foundation**, part of the Playing for Change movement. Each Laureate receives prize money of one million Swedish Kronor. (approx. GB £86,000 / US \$110,000). The Awards will be presented at a gala ceremony and banquet at Stockholm's Grand Hôtel by His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden on Tuesday 11 June. The event will be broadcast live on Swedish national television (TV4) at 8pm CET and can be viewed throughout Europe via TV4 Play.

Joseph Saddler, aka Grandmaster Flash, said: "It is such an honour, because a lot of times in our culture, what we do as DJs gets overlooked. So for these people to say, lets give this to someone who doesn't necessarily use a microphone as their gift...for me to be picked out of so many people, I am so, so deeply honoured."

Anne-Sophie Mutter said: "It is a huge honour to be in this illustrious group of musicians who have received the Polar Music Prize. I'm deeply honoured and humbled and I can't wait to come to Stockholm and meet the other recipients."

Whitney Kroenke, co-founder of The Playing For Change Foundation, said: "This is incredibly humbling and mind-blowing - we are ecstatic. We started the project so that musicians that would not otherwise be seen or heard, would have the chance to express themselves and be recognised. To be in the company of people that have made us all love music for so many years, is truly an honour."

Grandmaster Flash is one of the undisputed pioneers of hip hop, a genre of music that is the dominant force in 21st century popular music; he is rightly heralded as a hip hop virtuoso. Joseph Saddler, known as Grandmaster Flash emerged from the Bronx in the early 1970's and was one of the first to manipulate music by placing his fingers on the vinyl, perfecting beat looping and discovering many of the iconic beats still commonly sampled today. He is a musician, a scientist, a storyteller and a cultural tour de force.



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Anne-Sophie Mutter is a musical phenomenon. For more than 40 years the German violinist has thrilled audiences around the world with her virtuosity and astonishing clarity. The four-time Grammy Award winner is equally committed to the performance of traditional and modern composers, to date she has played the world premieres of 26 works, and has had many pieces composed for her. As well as a packed international concert calendar, Anne-Sophie Mutter dedicates herself to numerous benefit projects and through her two charitable institutions supports future generations of musicians.

The Playing For Change Foundation was founded in 2007 'to inspire, create positive change, connect and bring peace to the world through music.' The foundation has now grown to fifteen music programs around the world. Every week, 2,000 young people attend classes in multiple disciplines of music and arts education funded by the foundation. So far over 15,000 people have been impacted by The Playing For Change Foundation.

Marie Ledin, managing director of the Polar Music Prize, said:

"We are delighted to honour three Laureates this year, only the second time we've done so in our 28 year history. In Grandmaster Flash, Anne-Sophie Mutter and Playing For Change, we have three spectacular Laureates; we are all looking forward to welcoming them to Stockholm and paying tribute to their work and talent at the award ceremony on 11 June."

The Polar Music Prize Award Committee is an independent 11-member Award Committee which selects the Laureates. The committee receives nominations from the public as well as from the International Music Council, the UNESCO founded NGO which promotes geographical and musical diversity.

Announcement videos, publicity shots and biographies are available on the website www.polarmusicprize.org.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

CITATIONS:

Grandmaster Flash:

The Polar Music Prize 2019 is awarded to the DJ and musician Joseph Saddler, known as Grandmaster Flash. Born in Barbados and raised in the South Bronx, New York, Grandmaster Flash created a whole new way of making music. Grandmaster Flash is a scientist and a virtuoso who has demonstrated that turntables and mixing consoles can be musical instruments. His adventures at the turntables – “the Adventures of the Wheels of Steel” – changed the course of popular music. Some 40 years later, the musical form and the hip hop culture that Grandmaster Flash helped to create, in the ruins of the South Bronx in the mid-1970s, has grown into the largest music genre, hip hop, in the United States and the world.

Anne-Sophie Mutter:

The Polar Music Prize 2019 is awarded to the German violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, known as ‘the Queen of the Violin’. She grew up in a small village in the Black Forest. By the age of five, it was obvious that the football-playing girl had an exceptional musical talent. At the age of 13, she auditioned for Herbert von Karajan. The following year, she started playing with Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Over the years, several of the world's foremost modern composers have written music specially for her. With her Stradivarius under her chin, Anne-Sophie Mutter is not just one passionate and risk-taking musician – she is also a storyteller. As she herself said, “Music is only touching when it tells a story.” With her passionate commitment to justice, Mutter demonstrates the power and key role of music in the world

The Playing for Change Foundation:

The Polar Music Prize 2019 is awarded to The Playing For Change Foundation dedicated to providing music and arts education to underprivileged children around the world. In 2002, co-founders Mark Johnson and Whitney Kroenke created the Playing For Change movement from the shared belief that music has the power to break down boundaries and overcome distances between people. The organization established the foundation in 2007 as a way to give back to the communities of the musicians they met along their journey. Since then, it has grown into a global project with 15 music schools and programs around the world that have impacted the lives of over 15,000 children and their surrounding communities. The Playing For Change Foundation shows how music can be used to inspire, build bridges between people, create positive change, and conditions for peace.

ABOUT - THE POLAR MUSIC PRIZE:

The Polar Music Prize was founded in 1989 by the late Stig “Stikkan” Anderson, a true legend in the history of Swedish popular music. Stig Anderson was the publisher, lyricist and manager of ABBA, and he played a key role in their enormous success. The name of the prize stems from Anderson’s legendary record label, Polar Music.

The Polar Music Prize celebrates the power and importance of music and is awarded to individuals, groups or institutions for international recognition of excellence in the world of music. The roll call of former Laureates reads like a who’s who of music: Paul McCartney, Dizzy Gillespie, Patti Smith, Bob Dylan, Ravi Shankar, Renee Fleming, Ray Charles, Youssou N’dour, Mstislav Rostropovich and Kronos Quartet, to name but a few.

In 2019, the Polar Music Prize awards three Laureates in order to celebrate music in all its various forms and to emphasize the original intention of the Polar Music Prize: To break down musical boundaries by bringing together people from all the different worlds of music.