

2016 – 2017

7.18.17 Zachary Brandon, 18, and **Maya Anjali Buchanan**, 17, are two of ten musicians who advanced to the Concerto Round of the Thomas and Evan Cooper International Competition. Both violin students study with Almita Vamos. Beginning in summer 2010, Oberlin Conservatory of Music joined with The Cleveland Orchestra to offer an important new international competition for young musicians. The competition awarded more than \$20,000 in prize money plus a performance with the orchestra.

The Thomas and Evan Cooper International Competition at Oberlin, sponsored by Thomas and Evan Cooper, alternates annually between piano and violin. The program was first offered in summer 2010 for pianists, followed by a 2011 competition for violinists. Open to musicians between the ages of 13 and 18, the competition culminates in a final round at Severance Hall in Cleveland, where the top three competitors perform a full concerto with the incomparable orchestra.

7.7.17 Academy graduate **Zachary Brandon** is the winner of the **Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra's Sibelius Violin Concerto Competition** and **Karisa Chiu** was the runner-up. Both musicians studied with Almita Vamos in the Academy and are attending an eight week intensive at the Aspen Music Festival and School.

More than 600 of the most talented young musicians in the world are participating at Aspen; this was the most selective admission year in AMFS history, with a record-breaking 2,500 applicants. Students will perform in four orchestras alongside more than 100 guest artists. **Zachary** will perform the Sibelius Violin Concerto in D minor in a free concert with the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra on Tuesday, July 11, at 4 pm in the Benedict Music Tent.

6.22.17 On Monday, June 19, The National YoungArts Foundation in cooperation with the Commission on Presidential Scholars and the U.S. Dept. of Education, presented A SALUTE TO THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Academy graduate and U.S. Presidential Scholar of the Arts **Andrew Guo** composed and performed piano on two of the pieces on the program, and composed a third. The scholars enjoyed a three-day event in Washington, DC.

6.17.17 Hannah White, 17, Germantown, WI, is the 2017 Medallion Concerto Competition Winner. The competition helps to foster careers of classical musicians

through cash prizes and an opportunity to perform with Orchestra Noir, the Atlanta African-American Orchestra founded in 2016 by Music Director, Jason Ikeem Rodgers. Orchestra Noir acts as a living testament to the African-American legacy of excellence and resilience in Atlanta and the nation. Their mission is to showcase and celebrate musical excellence and cultural achievements in Atlanta through concert events. Hannah studies violin with Danielle Belen.

6.7.17 Maya Buchanan performed at Harpa Concert Hall in Reykjavik, Iceland as a guest artist at the 5th Annual Harpa International Music Academy. In addition to a solo recital and a performance of Navarra with Johann Dalene of Sweden (Menuhin prize winner), she will attend a ten-day music festival.

Joshua Brown participated in the Stars of the Tchaikovsky Competition's First Tchaikovsky Youth Festival in Moscow, Russia. He performed at the Moscow Conservatory Hall and in Tchaikovsky's house—incredible historic venues!

6.3.17 Karisa Chiu, 17, violin student of Almita Vamos is the winner of the Jerry Lee Klein Memorial 4th Prize at the Irving M. Klein String Competition.

For the past 30 years, the Irving M. Klein International String Competition has attracted some of the world's finest young string players to San Francisco each June to compete for cash and performance prizes totaling over \$30,000. The Klein Competition has achieved international recognition as one of the most prestigious classical music competitions, recognized for the high caliber of the contestants, its unique, nurturing environment, and its commitment to the commissioning of new works.

A new first at the Klein Competition! Violinist Karisa Chiu, is the daughter of Cornelius Chiu, esteemed violinist with the Chicago ...Symphony Orchestra and a 1989 Klein prizewinner.

Academy Alumna Klein Competition Winners

2015 - Erika Gray, 4th, viola

2012 - Emma Steele, 2nd violin

Alexandra Switala, 4th violin

2011 - Mindy Park 4th, cello

5.20.17 Congratulations to Maya Anjali Buchanan and Tabby Rhee, Winners of the Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra's Bonnie and Lee Malméd Young Artists Competition.

1st Place - **Maya Buchanan**, 17. Maya studies violin with Almita Vamos.

2nd Place - **Tabby Rhee (Academy alumna)**, 19. Tabby studies viola with Roland Vamos and will be a freshman at The Juilliard School in the fall.

In addition to cash awards, both winners will perform with the orchestra next season. The purpose of the competition is to help ensure the future of classical music by providing the opportunity for young musicians to hone their audition skills as well as to perform with a high caliber symphony orchestra.

The competition is open to young orchestral musicians (including piano, saxophone, and guitar) from the ages of 16 to 22, and attracts performers from all over the country.

Previous Academy Winners

2015 - 16 1st place, Joshua Brown, violin, 2nd place Karisa Chiu, violin

2011 - 12 1st place, Gallia Kastner, violin; 2nd place, Claire Bourg

2010 - 11 1st place, Alexandra Switala, violin

2009 - 10 1st place, Zachary Spontak, violin; 2nd place, Kate Liu, piano

2008 - 09 2nd place, Benjamin Lash cello

2007 - 08 1st place, Natsuki Kumagai, violin

Pictured below: Maya Buchanan, left, and Tabby Rhee, right.

5.6.17 Heartfelt congratulations to **Yuelin Zhong**, Honorable Mention in the Emilio del Rosario Concerto Competition. The Emilio del Rosario Music Foundation connects classical piano students and composers to the Greater Chicago community through performance and educational opportunities. EDR's mission includes an international piano competition, master classes, and the commissioning of new music from aspiring composers. Yuelin Zhong, 16, Naperville, student of Ralph Neiweem (Academy - senior division)

ACADEMY ENSEMBLES BRING HOME GOLD, SILVER, & BRONZE AT INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITIONS

5.14.17 Congratulations to the Astera Quartet—SILVER medal winner at Fischhoff!

Bravo to the quartet, Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos. It was an amazing year for this ensemble.

Astera String Quartet – Ria Honda, Hannah White, Kayla Cabrera, Annamarie Wellems | Coaches: Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos

Well done Esperanza and Monet for advancing to the semi-finals and quarter-finals, respectively.

MIC is proud of everyone's hard work and dedication to chamber music this year -- at Rembrandt, Barnett, St. Paul, M-Prize and Fischhoff.

The Fischhoff Competition is the largest chamber music competition in the nation and the world. Each year, an average of 125 ensembles, representing 22 nationalities, enter in either the wind or string categories of three to six performers. Since its founding, more than 6,800 musicians have participated, many of whom have gone on to distinguished careers in music performance and education.

5.13.17 Hats off to Karisa Chiu, 17, Bronze Medal Winner and Bach Prize at the Stulberg International String Competition.

The winners each receive cash prizes and the opportunity to return to west Michigan for concerto performances with area orchestras like the Grand Rapids Symphony, Kalamazoo Junior Symphony and Western Michigan University Symphony.

More than 2,500 young string musicians between the ages of 11 and 20 have participated in the Stulberg International String Competition, which marked its 41st anniversary in 2016. The Stulberg has attracted world-renowned musicians to Kalamazoo to serve as judges and instructors in master classes exclusively for the competitors. The Competition was established in 1975 in honor of former WMU faculty and long-time conductor of the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony, Julius Stulberg.

Each year, the Bach Festival Society of Kalamazoo joins with the Stulberg International String Competition to bestow the Bach Award to the semifinalist with the best performance of a solo Bach selection.

Congratulations to the 2017 winners!

Gold Medal – William McGregor, double bass

Silver Medal – Qing Yu Chen, violin

Bronze Medal – Karisa Chiu, violin, student of Almita Vamos

Bach Prize – Karisa Chiu, violin

ACADEMY ENSEMBLES SWEEP M-PRIZE FINALS!

We are very proud of the extraordinary level of talent that represented MIC at this international competition.

Heartfelt congratulations to the students, teachers, and coaches!

The M-Prize is an international chamber music competition at the University of Michigan. It aims to identify and showcase the highest caliber of international chamber arts ensembles.

1st PLACE Astera String Quartet – MIC Academy

2nd PLACE Vieira String Quartet – MIC Academy

3rd PLACE Invictus Piano Quartet – MIC Academy

Astera String Quartet

Hannah White, violin, Ria Honda, violin, Kayla Cabrera, viola, Annamarie Wellems, cello

Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos, coaches

Vieira String Quartet

Karisa Chiu, violin, Maya Buchanan, violin, Steven Song, viola, Nathan Mo, cello

Rodolfo Vieira, coach

Invictus Piano Quartet

Joshua Brown, violin/viola, Zachary Brandon, violin/viola, Lydia Rhea, cello, Andrew Guo, piano

Elaine Felder and Mathias Tacke, coaches

MIC ACADEMY ENSEMBLES WIN GOLD AND SILVER AT 11th ANNUAL ST. PAUL STRING QUARTET COMPETITION

Congratulations to Gold Medal Winner Astera String Quartet and Silver Medal Winner Vieira String Quartet --

1st and 2nd place at the SPSQC held this past weekend at Hamline University, St. Paul, MN.

The competition attracts the finest and most talented high school musicians from around the country. Vieira also won the "Haydn" Prize.

Astera - Ria Honda and Hannah White, violin, Kayla Cabrera, Viola, Annamarie Wellems, cello.

Coached by Academy faculty members Sang Mee Lee and Roland

Vamos.

Vieira - Karisa Chiu and Maya Buchanan, violin, Steven Song, viola, Nathan Mo, cello.

Coached by Academy faculty member Rodolfo Vieira.

4/15/17 Hannah White has advanced to the final round of the **2017 Medallion Concerto Competition** sponsored by **Orchestra Noir**, the Atlanta African-American Orchestra. Founded in 2016 by Music Director, Jason Ikeem Rodgers, Orchestra Noir acts as a living testament to the African-American legacy of excellence and resilience in Atlanta and the nation. The Medallion Concerto Competition bestows one medal – GOLD. A \$2,500 Cash Prize and Performance with Orchestra Noir during the 2017 - 2018 Concert is the top prize.

4.17.17 Double Congratulations to Zach Brandon...who will be featured on From the Top & won the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award!

NPR's From the Top with Host Christopher O'Riley, Miami, FL / Show 339 will be recorded and broadcast at a later date. This special show will be presented for a student audience and will feature some of America's best young classical musicians. Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 11:00 AM | South Miami Dade Cultural Arts Center. Zach will perform the 2nd movement of the Franck Sonata. From the Top is America's largest national platform celebrating the stories, talents, and character of young classically-trained musicians through live events, NPR and video broadcasts, scholarships, and arts education programs. Founded in Boston in 1995, From the Top originated as a variety-style radio show. More than 20 years later, more than 3 million fans around the globe enjoy From the Top's radio broadcasts, videos, and live performances.

Each year From the Top's Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award Program provides 20 outstanding young musicians who demonstrate financial need with a \$10,000 scholarship to advance their artistic development and education. In addition, Jack Kent Cooke Young Artists perform on the hit NPR and PBS program, From the Top, and participate in arts leadership training to spread the power of classical music. Since 2005, From the Top has awarded over \$1.8M in scholarships to more than 180 talented young people who have used their

awards for new instruments, music lessons, summer music program tuition, competition fees, travel costs, computers, recording devices, and more. Jack Kent Cooke Young Artists range from age 8 to 18 and hail from all across the United States and abroad. Serious students of classical piano, violin, flute, guitar, and more, they are also active in community-service projects and academic pursuits. Common to all is a passion for music and a love for sharing it.

4.2.17 2017 A.N. & PEARL G. BARNETT CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITION

Congratulations Vieira and Invictus MIC chamber music ensembles--Grand Award, 1st, and 2nd place winners!

Nineteen groups participated in the fifth annual competition held Sunday, April 2 at the Anne & Howard Gottlieb Hall at Merit School of Music in Chicago. In addition to cash prizes, the Grand Award winner will have the opportunity to perform on 98.7 WFMT.

Strings & Piano Division

GRAND AWARD WINNER & 1st Place

Vieira String Quartet

Music Institute of Chicago Academy

(Maya Anjali Buchanan, Karisa Chiu, violin; Steven Song, viola; Nathan Mo, cello)

Coach: Rodolfo Vieira

2nd Place

Invictus Piano Quartet

Music Institute of Chicago Academy

(Joshua Brown, Zachary Brandon, violin/viola; Lydia Rhea, cello; Andrew Guo, piano)

Coaches: Elaine Felder and Mathias Tacke

3.26.17 Cellist Lydia Rhea, 17, Academy student of Hans Jensen, won the senior division of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Concerto Competition. She will perform the first movement of the Dvořák Concerto with the orchestra on Sunday, April 30th, 2017.

3.25.17 Violinist Claire Arias-Kim, student of Almita Vamos, received Honorable Mention in the **Chinese Fine Arts Society Competition** Violin Senior Division on Saturday, March 25.

Four high school musicians--including Academy violinist **Julian Rhee** perform on The Final Forte-- giving the artists the chance to perform a movement from a concerto with the Madison Symphony Orchestra.

Julian Rhee shared a link to the event: Watch The Final Forte 2017 livestream. · March 27 at 8:06am

<https://youtu.be/Kwvd3i91YAI>

Violist Kayla Cabrera will perform live on WFMT's Introductions next Saturday, March 25 at 11am.

Introductions features the Chicago-area's talented pre-college classical musicians every week. Soloists and small ensembles perform live in WFMT's Levin Performance Studio, while larger ensembles are recorded at their home locations. Unfortunately, most of you will be in chamber music, but WFMT will notify us when the program will be rebroadcast. They no longer rebroadcast on the Thursday night following the show at 10pm.

Rebecca Clarke sonata, first movement: Impetuoso

Bach cello suite no. 1 in G major, Allemande and Courante

Brahms viola sonata in F minor, movements 2, 3, 4

3.15.17 Congratulations to the 2017 Klein Competition Semifinalist, Karisa Chiu. For the past 30 years, the Irving M. Klein International String Competition has attracted some of the world's finest young string players to San Francisco each June to compete for cash and performance prizes totaling over \$30,000. The Klein Competition has achieved international recognition as one of the most prestigious classical music competitions, recognized for the high caliber of the contestants, its unique, nurturing environment, and its commitment to the commissioning of new works.

SEMIFINALS Saturday, June 3, 10am – 4:30pm | FINALS Sunday, June 4, 7pm

Past Klein prize winners comprise a who's who of the classical music artistic community. They include notable soloists Alyssa Park (1989), Jennifer Koh (1993), Vadim Gluzman (1993) and Alban Gerhardt (1989) and principal chairs in many of the finest U.S. orchestras, including the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, the New York Philharmonic, and the Boston Symphony. Former winners we all know: Richard Hirschl, Sang Mee Lee, Cornelius Chiu, Wendy Warner, Ani Aznavoorian, and Academy alumni Ali Switala, Mindy Park, and Emma Steele. <http://www.californiamusiccenter.org/semifinals-and-finals-information/>

3.12.17 Steven Song is one of the winners of the Park Ridge Civic Orchestra Mark Waltz Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is underwritten by Mrs. Karin Waltz in memory of Mr. Waltz, a long-time string bass player with the PRCOrchestra. During the PRCOrchestra's March 12 concert at North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie, the two scholarship winners were introduced on stage. Recipients, who will each receive a \$1,000 college scholarship, are selected through professionally judged live auditions and other criteria. Percussionist Benjamin Heim was the other winner. Former MIC winners include Nicholas Brown and Leevy Williams.

SPRING CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITION RESULTS! FIVE GROUPS ADVANCE TO NEXT ROUND!

St. Paul Chamber Music Competition

St. Paul, MN - April 22, 2017

Astera String Quartet - Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos, coaches

Hannah White, violin, Ria Honda, violin, Kayla Cabrera, viola, Annamarie Wellems, cello

Vieira String Quartet - Rodolfo Vieira, coach

Karisa Chiu, violin, Maya Buchanan, violin, Steven Song, viola, Nathan Mo, cello

M-Prize

Ann Arbor, MI

May 1-4, 2017

Astera String Quartet - Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos, coaches

Hannah White, violin, Ria Honda, violin, Kayla Cabrera, viola, Annamarie Wellems, cello

Invictus Piano Quartet - Elaine Felder and Mathias Tacke, coaches

Joshua Brown, violin/viola, Zachary Brandon, violin/viola, Lydia Rhea, cello, Andrew Guo, piano

Vieira String Quartet - Rodolfo Vieira, coach

Karisa Chiu, violin, Maya Buchanan, violin, Steven Song, viola, Nathan Mo, cello

Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition

South Bend, IN

May 12- 14, 2017

Astera String Quartet - Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos, coaches

Hannah White, violin, Ria Honda, violin, Kayla Cabrera, viola, Annamarie Wellems, cello

Esperanza Piano Quintet - Claudia Lasareff-Mironoff and Mark George, coaches

Thompson Wang, violin, Irina Casasnovas, violin, John Heo, viola, Brendan Tarm, cello, and John Schindler, piano

Monet Piano Quartet - Rodolfo Vieira and Abraham Stokman, coaches

Claire Arias-Kim, violin, Peter Morin, viola, Nathaniel Blowers, cello, Seoyun Baek, piano

3.11.17 Academy Violinist **Maya Anjali Buchanan**, 16, is the winner of the **2017 Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition**. Maya performed Korngold Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35 (Mvt. I). The final round of competition, featuring the finest young musicians in the state of Illinois, was held on Saturday, March 11 in Orchestra Hall. As the winner, Maya will perform with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at a CSO Youth Concert next season. The Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the training ensemble of the Chicago Symphony, accompanied four finalists in the final round of the competition. The orchestra was led by the CSO's International Sir Georg Solti Conducting Apprentice, Erina Yashima. Three of the four finalists violinists Maya Buchanan, Joshua Brown, and Thompson Wang all study with Almita Vamos in the MIC Academy. The fourth finalist, Haddon Kay, studies cello with Hans Jensen.

3.11.17 The Academy's **Calliope Trio (Karisa Chiu, violin, Nathan Mo, cello and Andrew Guo, piano) and Karisa Chiu** performing solo works, recorded a live **From the Top** show (Show 334), Saturday, March 11 at NEC's Jordan Hall in Boston. The program will be released to NPR stations and the FTT website on April 24. From the Top is America's largest national platform celebrating the stories, talents, and character of young classically-trained musicians through live events, NPR and video broadcasts, scholarships, and arts education programs. Founded in Boston in 1995, From the Top originated as a variety-style radio show. More than 20 years later, more than 3 million fans around the globe enjoy From the Top's radio broadcasts, videos, and live performances

Calliope Piano Trio

III. Allegro Vivace from Piano Trio in F Sharp Minor by Arno Babadjanian

Karisa Chiu, 17, violin

Sonatasatz in C Minor by Johannes Brahms with Christopher O'Riley, piano

Karisa Chiu, 17, violin

I. Mazurka from Five Pieces for Violin and Piano, Op. 81 by Jean Sibelius with Christopher O'Riley, piano

3.6.17 The American Opera Society of Chicago is pleased to announce its 2017 annual scholarship awards:

Academy violinist **Julian Rhee** -- Arthur J. and Glenna B. Collins Award

Academy cellist **Nathan Mo** -- Eleanor Pearce Sherwin Award

The award recipients will perform on October 18, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at the Fortnightly Club of Chicago.

Previous award winners include Joshua Brown ('16) Karisa Chiu ('15) , and Lydia Umlauf ('10).

3.6.17 Musicians' Club of Women Scholarship - In 1873, a group of five music-loving women began meeting informally to play and sing for each other in what became known as "The Amateur Musical Club." In 1893, Musicians Club of Women offered proceeds from a benefit concert to establish music scholarships for young women. Each winner will receive a free three-year membership in the club.

<http://www.musiciansclubofwomen.org/scholarships.html>

Continuing the tradition of supporting promising women in classical music, MCW is pleased to announce the 2017 winners.

2017 Tabby Rhee* - Jerome and Elaine Nerenberg Foundation Scholarship

2017 Alexandra Switala* - Farwell Trust Award

2017 Maya Buchanan - Farwell Trust Award

Previous Winners

2016 Karisa Chiu - The Jerome and Elaine Nerenberg Foundation Scholarship

2016 Hannah White - The Farwell Trust Award

2015 Serena Harnack - The Farwell Trust Award

2014 Hansuh Rhee - The Jerome and Elaine Nerenberg Foundation Scholarship

2013 Gallia Kastner - The Jerome and Elaine Nerenberg Foundation Scholarship

2013 Ade Williams - The Farwell Trust Award

2012 Kelly Talim - The Edith Newfield Award

2012 Claire Bourg - The Farwell Trust Award

*Alumna

2.27. 17 **Claire Arias-Kim**, student of Almita Vamos, is the winner of the Lakeview Orchestra Concerto Competition. In addition to a cash prize, Claire will perform the first movement of Lalo's Symphonie Espagnole with the orchestra on March 21 at 7:30. The Lakeview Orchestra is Chicago's newest community orchestra and

has been hailed for "committed and energetic" performances, and "doing fine work." (Chicago Classical Review). Founded in 2013, the orchestra is dedicated to engaging and entertaining audiences through compelling performances. Lakeview Orchestra presents more concerts each year than any other community orchestra in Chicago, and regularly combines the orchestral repertoire with interdisciplinary presentations such as dance, video, and theater.

2.27.17 42nd Stulberg International String Competition Announces 2017 Semi-Finalists

Congratulations Academy violinists Zachary Brandon and Karisa Chiu--two of 12 international semi-finalists.

Zachary Brandon (18), Violin, Battle Creek, MI

Teachers: Almita Vamos, Hye-Sun Lee, Music Institute of Chicago Academy

Karisa Chiu (17), Violin, Palatine, IL

Teacher: Almita Vamos, Music Institute of Chicago Academy

The mission of the Stulberg Competition is to promote excellence in string instrument performance by gifted young artists under the age of twenty. The competition will take place at the Dalton Center Recital Hall, Western Michigan University, on May 13, 2017.

Zachary Brandon, recipient of the 2016 Stulberg Bach Award Winner, will perform a lunchtime concert during Bach Week at Kalamazoo College on May 10, 2017.

2.15.17 The Music Institute of Chicago is proud to announce the **Finalists in the 2017 CSO Young Artists Competition** preliminary round. Three of the four Finalists and one Honorable Mention recipient are Academy violinists who study with Almita Vamos.

Finalists

Joshua Brown

Maya Anjali Buchanan

Thompson Wang

Honorable Mentions

Isabella Brown

Since 1919, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Youth Auditions have featured the most talented young soloists from across Illinois. The final round of the 2017 competition will take place on Saturday, March 11th at 2:00 p.m. in Symphony Center. The Civic Orchestra of Chicago – the training ensemble of the Chicago Symphony – will serve as the accompanying ensemble for the four finalists. The winner of the CSO Young Artists Competition will be announced at a public award ceremony and reception in Grainger Ballroom immediately following the final round. Previous winners have included violinist Rachel Barton Pine and several members of the CSO— including current associate concertmaster Stephanie Jeong and harpist Lynne Turner.

MIC Academy Archives

2015 - Finalist: David Hou, piano

2014 - 1st Gallia Kastner, violin

2012 - 1st Kyle Jannak-Huang, piano

2011 - 1st Johannes Gray, cello

2009 – 1st Adam Kim, piano

2008 – 1st Gabriel Cabezas, cello

2.11.17 The Astera String Quartet - Hannah White and Ria Honda, violins, Kayla Cabrera, viola, and Annamarie Wellems, cello, has been named the 1st place winner of the 3rd Edition of ENKOR International Music Competition, Chamber Music, 2017.

ENKOR provides ensembles with the unique opportunity to get heard and recognized by hundreds of professionals and influential people in the music industry. It is the only competition with a Jury Board consisting of 500+ members from 70+ countries on 6 continents. Astera is coached by MIC string department chair, Sang Mee Lee.

2.9.17 Congratulations to Alexandra Switala, Mira Williams, and Irina Casasnovas, Semi-finalists in the 20th Annual Sphinx Competition.

Senior Division Semi-Finalists

Alexandra Switala, 22, violin - Academy Alumna

Teacher: Almita and Roland Vamos ...

Mira Williams, 18, viola - Academy Alumna

New England Conservatory, Teacher: Kim Kashkashian

2017 Junior Division Semi-Finalists

Irina Casanovas, 16, violin - Academy - **Awarded 4th place and Honorable Mention**

Teacher: Almita Vamos

The Sphinx Competition offers young Black and Latino classical string players a chance to compete under the guidance of an internationally renowned panel of judges and to perform with established professional musicians in a competition setting. Its primary goals are to encourage, develop, and recognize classical music talent in the Black and Latino communities.

2.4.17 What an incredible week for Academy students...

Former Academy violinist **Tabby Rhee** and current violinist **Julian Rhee**, were chosen as the FIRST place winners of the **Society of American Musicians Young Artist Competition**. Julian won in the violin division and Tabitha in the viola competition. The brother and sister team from Brookfield, WI, have won many local competitions, but this was Tabitha's first win in a viola competition. Julian studies with Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee. The Society of American Musicians was founded in 1914 with the intent of promoting the best interests of music in America, and maintaining the highest standards of musicianship. Through the competition, its awards, and performance opportunities, the Society offers assistance and encouragement to young musicians and promising artists. The Society of American Musicians hosts an annual competition for a wide range of instruments: cello, guitar, flute, piano, viola, and violin each spring in Chicago. Former winners include Academy cellist **Annamarie Wellem**s.

Academy violists **Kayla Cabrera** and **Peter Morin**, and alumna violist **Tabby Rhee**, have been accepted as members of the **National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America (NYO-USA)** for the 2017 season. This summer's NYO-USA tour will take the orchestra to Latin America for the first time, under the direction of American conductor Marin Alsop. In addition to performing Mahler's Symphony No. 1, NYO-USA has commissioned a tone poem by celebrated composer Gabriela Lena Frank for NYO-USA's annual concert here at Carnegie Hall and on tour. The 2017 NYO-USA program runs from July 1 through August 6 and begins with a three-week residency at Purchase College, SUNY, where orchestra members will work with Orchestra Director James Ross and a faculty of principal players from many of America's greatest orchestras. This is

Kayla's second year touring with NYO-USA. Kayla studies with Roland Vamos and Peter with CSO assistant principal viola Li-Kuo Chang.

Academy violinist **Julian Rhee** has been named the winner of the **70th Annual West Suburban Solo Competition**. Julian, a high school junior from Brookfield, Wisconsin, will perform the third movement of Brahms' Violin Concerto (Concerto in D Major, op.77, Allegro giocoso) with the West Suburban Symphony Orchestra on Sunday, April 30, 2017, at the Hinsdale Central High School, 3:30pm. During the concert, Julian will be recognized and receive his award in an on-stage ceremony. Julian studies Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee. Each year since its founding, the West Suburban Symphony Society has proudly provided an opportunity each season for high-school instrumentalists and vocalists to compete to perform a solo work with orchestra. Former winners include Academy violinist Karisa Chiu.

The **FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra Young Artist Competition** has been rewarding and encouraging the talents of young musicians since 1956. Competitors, up to the age of 25, are judged and critiqued by professional orchestra musicians through the preliminary and semi-final rounds. The Final round is judged by Maestro Osmo Vanska, Music Director of the Minnesota Orchestra. As a finalist in the Friends of Minnesota String Competition, Academy violinist **Zachary Brandon** was awarded to a full scholarship to Aspen Music Festival and School this summer, as well as the Elaine Lagerstrom Memorial Award for best string player. With the exception of Zachary, all of the all the other finalists were in graduate school or professional performing artists. Zachary was the only high school string player to advance to the final round. Former Academy violist Matthew Lipman won the competition in 2012.

DuPage Symphony Orchestra 2017 Young Artists Audition - The DSO encourages serious study and musical excellence among young musicians through its annual Young Artists Auditions. Each entrant is evaluated by experienced judges and will receive written comments and suggestions based on their individual performances. The First Place winner will receive a cash award of \$500 and the opportunity to appear as a soloist with the DuPage Symphony on Saturday, May 13, 2017.

1st Place: **Julian Rhee**, student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D Major

2nd Place: **Thompson Wang**, student of Almita Vamos

Sibelius Violin Concerto in D Minor

Honorable Mention: **Kayla Cabrera**, student of Roland Vamos

Walton Viola Concerto

Former Academy winners include Academy students, cellist **Nathan Mo** and HM violinist, **Ria Honda**.

Academy violinist **Irina Casasnovas** has been named the Second Place Winner (Intermediate Category) of the **American Protégé International Piano & Strings Competition 2017**. Irina will perform in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in an upcoming concert. Irina, who moved to Chicago to enroll in the Academy and study with Almita Vamos, is from Costa Rica. The American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition was open to school students and adults of all nationalities and countries. Musicians from 19 countries applied for this year's Competition: different U.S. states, Canada, Mexico, Trinidad & Tobago, Italy, Germany, Spain, Finland, Bahrain, Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, China, South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan and Australia. Former winners include Academy cellists Richard Li, 2015 and Nathan Mo, 2014.

Pianist **Andrew Guo**, **YoungArts finalist and Presidential Scholar nominee**, has just been awarded the **\$10,000 Gold Award in CLASSICAL MUSIC Composition**, based upon his impressive performance and participation during YoungArts Week in Miami, where only 167 finalists (including Finalists Karisa Chiu and John Schindler) of the nation's most promising young artists in the literary, visual, design, and performing arts, spent a week-long intensive participating in master classes and workshops with internationally recognized leaders in their field.

Karia Chiu, also named of one six **Presidential Scholar** nominees in classical music, received a \$1500 award.

Cellist **Nathan Mo** has been awarded an orchestral string fellowship to the **Aspen Music Festival and School** for this summer. Former Academy cellist **Krystian Chiu** has also been selected as a fellow at Aspen this summer.

Violinist **Thompson Wang** is one of three first place winners in the **Glenbrook Symphony Orchestra 2017 Concerto Competition**. He will perform Waxman Carmen Fantasie for Violin and Orchestra on March 22, on the 37th Annual Spring GSO Concert @ GBN, 7:30pm. The Glenbrook Symphony Orchestra is the co-curricular district orchestra comprised of sophomore - senior string students and select freshmen from each school, as well as auditioned wind and percussionists from both Glenbrook North and South.

1.29.17 The **Vieira String Quartet**, coached by Rodolfo Vieira, won first place in the 22nd Annual Rembrandt Chamber Musicians Annual High School Chamber Music Competition, held at Northwestern University on Sunday, January 29. **String quartet members Karisa Chiu, violin, Maya Buchanan, violin, Steven Song, viola, and Nathan Mo, cello**, are members of the Music Institute of Chicago's Academy.

1st Place: Vieira String Quartet - Music Institute of Chicago (Academy)

2nd Place: Cerulean Quartet - Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras

Honorable Mention: Bellezza - Midwest Young Artists Conservatory

Founded in 1995, the Rembrandt Chamber Musicians Annual High School Chamber Music Competition is widely regarded as one of the premier competitions of its kind in the Midwest, drawing participants from the Music Institute of Chicago, Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras, Midwest Young Artists, Merit School of Music, and a variety of public and private schools. Competition winners have gone on to prestigious careers in music with some holding positions in the Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and San Diego Symphony Orchestras as well as the New York Philharmonic. In addition to the prestige of being named Rembrandt Young Artists, winning groups receive cash prizes, master class instruction from Rembrandt musicians, and additional performance opportunities. 2017 competition winners will participate in the RYA Outreach Program with special performances at Evanston Township High School and the Young Women's Leadership Charter School of Chicago.

1.28.17 The Illinois Music Education Conference & All-State Festival - January 25-28, 2017 - Peoria features select auditioned students from the state in orchestras and vocal ensembles. Three Academy students participated in the all-state festival.

Annamarie Wellems, VOCAL

Adlai E. Stevenson High School

District 7

All-State Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Peter Morin, VIOLA

Deerfield High School

District 7

3rd chair

All-State Orchestra

Nathaniel Blowers, CELLO

Neuqua Valley High School

District 9 Festival Orchestra

3rd Chair

All-State Orchestra

1.26.17 Cellist Lydia Rhea, 17, student of Hans Jensen, won the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Side-by-Side Program Concerto Competition. Lydia will play a concerto movement with the Indianapolis Symphony on the Side-by-Side concert on March 15, 2017. Lydia, selected principal cello for the orchestra, will perform the first movement of the Dvorak Cello Concerto as well as the full Mahler Symphony No. 1 and the Third Movement from Rachmoninoff's Symphony No. 2. The concert will be held on March 15th at Hilbert Circle Theater, home of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra in Indianapolis. **Side-by-Side | Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra**

1.28.17 Violinist Claire Arias-Kim, student of Almita Vamos, won second place in the Rockford Symphony Orchestra Annual Concerto Competition on Saturday, January 21, 2017. Cash prizes were awarded for the top three competitors and the first prize winner is offered an opportunity to perform with the Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra at its spring performance.

1.25.17 Congratulations **Andrew Guo**, Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award recipient. Andrew, 18, studies piano with faculty member Dr. Alan Chow and has been a member of the MIC Academy since 2011. Andrew also studies composition with Dr. Matthew Hagle.

Each year From the Top's Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award Program provides 20 outstanding young musicians who demonstrate financial need with a \$10,000 scholarship to advance their artistic development and education.

In addition, Jack... Kent Cooke Young Artists perform on the hit NPR and PBS program, From the Top, and participate in arts leadership training to spread the power of classical music.

Jack Kent Cooke Young Artists range from age 8 to 18 and hail from all across the United States and abroad. Serious students of classical piano, violin, flute, guitar, and more, they are also active in community-service projects and academic pursuits. Common to all is a passion for music and a love for sharing it.

1.7.17 Congratulations to **Karisa Chiu, Andrew Guo, and John Schindler**, who just returned from the 36th Annual National YoungArts Week in Miami.

691 winners (including honorable mention and merit winners) were invited to participate in regional programs, but only 167 finalists, the nation's most promising young artists in the literary, visual, design, and performing arts, spent a week-long intensive participating in master classes and workshops with internationally recognized leaders in their field. Considered a life-changing experience, the program aims to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration and community while offering Finalists the guidance needed to prepare for the next stage of their artistic development.

Andrew Guo | Classical Music/Composition (Finalist)

Karisa Chiu | Classical Music/Violin (Finalist)

John Schindler | Classical Music/Piano (Finalist)

1.14.17 Academy violinist **Julian Rhee**, Brookfield, WI, was named the first place instrumental winner of the Rising Stars Concerto Competition held at the Viterbo Fine Arts Center in LaCrosse, WI on Saturday, Jan. 14. Julian, a student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee, performed the first movement of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D Major. Julian is the recipient of the Jane Saline Memorial Award and, along with the first place pianist, Abigail Arkley, the two winners will perform concerto movements with the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra at the March 18 season subscription concert. Over twenty students from across the Midwest participated.

<http://www.lacrossesympphony.org>

1.9.17 Academy cellist **Lydia Rhea**, student of Hans Jensen, placed 2nd in the Senior Division of the **Muncie Symphony Orchestra's Young Artist Competition**. Lydia performed the first movement of Dvorak Cello Concerto. Lydia will perform as the featured soloists with the Muncie Symphony Orchestra next season.

1.8.17 Academy violinists **Zechariah Mo** and **Maya Anjali Buchanan**, students of Almita Vamos, were named winners of the January 8th **DePaul Concerto Competition** Open Division.

Winners perform a movement of the concerto with the Oistrakh Symphony of Chicago on February 12. The DePaul Concerto Festival for Young Performers, for students in piano, violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, oboe, and bassoon are invited to audition for the Annual DePaul Concerto Festival for Young Performers. All participants are provided with written performance evaluations from outstanding judges.

Maya Anjali Buchanan- Mozart, W.A.: Concerto in A Major, K. 219, Mvt. 1

Zechariah Mo- Bruch, M.: Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 26, Mvt. 1

Honorable Mention:

Academy student, **Claire Arias-Kim**, student of Almita Vamos - Mendelssohn, F.: Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64, Mvt. 3. Claire studies with Almita Vamos.

Academy student, **Steven Song**, student of Gerardo Ribeiro - Mozart, W.A.: Concerto in A Major, K. 219, Mvt. 1. Steven studies with Gerardo Ribeiro.

In addition, **Maya** won the **Kishwaukee Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition** in honor of former conductor Arthur D. Montzka on Saturday, January 7th. She will perform with the Kishwaukee Symphony Orchestra at the Northern Illinois University Music Building's Boutell Memorial Concert Hall in DeKalb on Saturday, February 25th.

12.26.16 Congratulations to all of the students who participated in the **20th Annual MYA Walgreens National Concerto Competition.**

Karisa Chiu, student of Almita Vamos, won the Senior Open Division Overall Winner and will perform with the MYAC Symphony Orchestra the 1st mvt. of the Brahms Concerto on Feb. 19, 2017 at Pick-Staiger Hall.

Senior Open Division Strings Category:

Karisa Chiu, violin student of Almita Vamos - winner, and Overall Senior Open Division Winner

Julian Rhee, violin student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee - Honorable Mention

Nathan Mo, cello student of Hans Jensen - Honorable Mention

Brendan Tarm, cello student of Hans Jensen- Honorable Mention

Thirteenth Annual Sejong Music Competition

12.4.16 1st Place - **ZACHARY BRANDON**, student of Almita Vamos, 2nd Place - **RIA HONDA**, student of Almita Vamos, and 3rd Place - **CLAIRE ARIAS-KIM**, student of Almita Vamos, winners of **The Thirteenth Annual Sejong Music Competition** held December 4, at the University of Illinois, Chicago. **Zachary also won the Best interpretation of a Korean piece and THOMPSON WANG, student of Almita Vamos, was named Honorable Mention winner.**

The Winners' concert will be held on January 29 at the Chicago Cultural Center. The goals of the Sejong Music Competition are to discover talented young musicians and encourage them in their studies, and to also introduce traditional Korean music expressed through Western media. Through this competition we hope to increase the awareness and understanding of Korea's cultural heritage amongst the younger generations growing up in the United States so as to promote harmony among people of various ethnic backgrounds and bridge Asian and Western cultures.

Sunday, January 29, 2017 at 2pm (Note: This is the same date as the Blount Slawson Competition Concert)

Claudia Cassidy Theater

Chicago Cultural Center

78 E. Washington

Chicago, IL 60602

<http://www.sejongculturalsociety.org/music/past/2016/winners.php> A full listing of all MIC winners will be posted on the main MIC website competition page.

12.1.16 Lydia Rhea, student of Hans Jensen, has been named principal cellist in the **Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's annual Side-by-Side program**. More than 1,000 talented central Indiana students have had the unique opportunity to share the stage of the historic Hilbert Circle Theatre with their professional counterparts since Side-by-Side began in 1991. Students are auditioned and coached by members of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. The result is a spectacular concert featuring the 100+ piece orchestra of students and professionals—a tremendously rewarding experience for the Symphony musicians, the students, and the audience.

11.28.16 Zachary Brandon received the Gold Prize Award of the Michigan American String Teachers' Association (MASTA) 2016 Michigan Solo Competition. As the first place winner, Zach will perform at Michigan Music Conference in Grand Rapids in 2017. http://astamichigan.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/MASTA_SoloCompetition_2016flyer_corrected-page-001.jpg

Cellist Bethany Bobbs, student of Tanya Carey, won first place at the **Fort Bend Symphony Concerto Competition** and will solo with the symphony over the winter. Founded in 1992, the Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra enriches the lives of Fort Bend residents and the Greater Houston area with live symphonic music. The full-size orchestra, complete with brass, woodwinds, strings and percussion, consists of approximately 50

talented and dedicated volunteer musicians primarily from the Fort Bend area including Sugar Land, Stafford, Missouri City, Richmond, Katy, Rosenberg and Fulshear.

Violinist Irina Casanovas, 16, who is a 2017 Junior Division Semi-Finalist in the **20th Annual Sphinx Competition**. Irina studies with Almita Vamos and will compete in Detroit in February.

2017 Senior Division Semi-Finalists include former Academy violinist Alexandra Switala, 22, student of Almita and Roland Vamos and violist Mira Williams, 18, student of Kim Kashkashian at the New England Conservatory.

MIC Academy Sphinx Alumni Junior Division

2016 Kayla Cabrera, viola

2015 Hannah White, violin – 1st Place, Mira Williams, viola – 2nd Place

2014 Julimar Gonzalez, violin, Mira Williams, viola – 2nd Place, Hannah White, violin – 3rd Place

Senior Division - Clayton Penrose-Whitmore, violin – 2nd Place

2013 Caitlin Adamson, viola, Hannah White, violin

Senior Division - Santiago E. Osorio, viola

2012 Caitlin Adamson, viola, Ade Williams, violin – 1st Place,

Mira Williams, viola

Senior Division - Gabriel Cabezas, cello – 1st Place

2011 Caitlin Adamson, viola, Ade Williams, violin

2010 Kenneth Jones-Madrid, violin

2009 Alexandra Alvarado Switala, violin – 2nd Place

2008 Clayton Penrose-Whitmore, violin – 1st Place, Chaunte Ross, violin, Alexandra Alvarado Switala, violin – 2nd Place

2007 Alexandra Alvarado Switala, violin

2006 Gabriel Cabezas, cello – 1st Place, Clayton Penrose-Whitmore, violin – 5th Place

11.28.16 MIC violinist **Zachary Brandon**, student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee, has advanced to the Second Round of the **Princess Astrid International Music Competition 2016** -- an international competition for young violinists. The nine first round candidates included winners of many prestigious international competitions, including Ludvig Gudim (Norway), Mai Suzuki (Japan), Mari Birgitte Halvorsen (Norway), Mayumi Kanagawa (USA), Abigel Kralik (USA), Rachel Ostler (USA), Milena Wilke (Germany), and Suyeon Kang (Australia).

The semi-final round will take place on Tuesday, November 29, in Trondheim, Norway. Six candidates, accompanied by piano, will play chosen sonatas by Brahms, Schumann, César Franck and Ravel, as well as solo pieces by Kreisler, Ysaye, Schubert and Paganini.

Three candidates will compete in the final round on December 1.

<http://www.tso.no/en/music-compe>

11.19.16

MIC STUDENTS MIAMI-BOUND!

YoungArts is proud to announce its 2017 Winners - 691 of the nation's most promising young artists in the literary, visual, design and performing arts.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING ACADEMY STUDENTS who will be traveling to Miami, FL as finalists!

Chiu, Karisa | Classical Music/Violin (Finalist) - student of Almita Vamos

Guo, Andrew | Classical Music/Composition (Finalist) - student of Alan Chow

Schindler, John | Classical Music/Piano (Finalist) - student of Alan Chow

Honda, Ria | Classical Music/Violin (Honorable Mention) - student of Almita Vamos

Mo, Nathan | Classical Music/Violoncello (Honorable Mention) - student of Hans Jensen

Brandon, Zachary | Classical Music/Violin (Merit) - student of Almita Vamos

Brown, Joshua | Classical Music/Violin (Merit) - student of Almita Vamos

Buchanan, Maya Anjali | Classical Music/Violin (Merit)-student of Almita Vamos

Alumni Alex Kim, David Hou, Freya Irani, and Serena Harnack all received Honorable Mention.

Selected from the largest pool of applicants to date, and representing artists from 40 states. This year's

Finalists have the opportunity to participate in the 36th annual National YoungArts Week in Miami from January 8 to 15, 2017.

11.15.16 Joshua Brown, violin student of Almita Vamos, was named the winner of the 2016-2017 American Prize in Instrumental Performance, High School Division. The American Prize is a series of new, non-profit national competitions in the performing arts. The winners receive cash awards, professional adjudication, and regional, national and international recognition for the best recorded performances by ensembles and

individuals each year in the United States at the professional, college/university, and secondary school levels. Administered by Hat City Music Theater, Inc., a nonprofit organization based in Danbury, Connecticut, The American Prize was founded in 2009 and is awarded annually.

<http://theamericanprize.blogspot.com>

10.9.16 Violinist **Zachary Brandon** will perform with the Northbrook Symphony Orchestra under the baton of music conductor/director Lawrence Rapchak.

Sunday, October 9, Sheely Center for the Performing Arts, 2300 Shermer Road, Northbrook Tickets:

847.272.0755

Romance de Paris ~ The Beautiful Era in France

Chabrier Danse Slav from The King in Spite of Himself

Debussy Clair de lune

Saint-Saëns Havanaise ---"Sensational young violinist Zachary Brandon will explore the charm and mystique of Saint-Saëns' exotic Havanaise."

Offenbach-Rosenthal Gaité Parisienne (complete)

Upcoming concerts featuring Academy students:

Joshua Brown - April 9, 2017

9.26.16 Academy students **Karisa Chiu**, violin, **Ria Honda**, violin, **Steven Song**, viola, and **Nathan Mo**, cello, performed at the Exponent Philanthropy's Biennial National Conference, the nation's largest gathering of individual, family, and small-staffed foundation donors.

Appearing at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile, the ensemble performed classical standards outside the grand exhibit hall to welcome guests and later in the ballroom during the welcome brunch. In addition to jazz and Broadway favorites, the students closed the set with the last movement of the Leyden Serenade to a rapt audience of nearly one thousand.

Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra: As the winner of the SVSO's Young Artist Competition, **Joshua Brown** will play the full Tchaikovsky Concerto under the baton of Robert Hasty. The concert is on Sunday, October 16, 2016, at 3pm at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts. Karisa Chiu, second place winner, will be playing a movement of a concerto or a showpiece at the November 20th concert. Stay tuned for more details.

<http://www.svso.org/tour/>

Waukegan Symphony Orchestra: **Joshua Brown** will be playing with the WSO, under the baton of Stephen Blackwelder, on Saturday, November 12th. The concert is at 7 pm in the Trapp Auditorium of Waukegan High School. Josh is playing the full Mozart Violin Concerto in A Major.

<http://www.waukegansymphony.org/Season.htm>

9.20.16 SKOKIE LIBRARY Young Steinway Concerts - Young Steinway Concerts showcase young people with extraordinary talent, giving local audiences the chance to enjoy first-class music, for free, close to home. Concerts begin at 3 pm in the Petty Auditorium at the library.

<https://skokilibrary.info/events/performances/young-steinway/>

A few Academy students have already performed this year...

September - Nathaniel Blowers

October - Annamarie Wellems

Upcoming:

November 6 - Seoyun Baek

February 5 - Ria Honda

9.15.16 Zachary Brandon, student of Almita Vamos, has been accepted to participate in the 18th Princess Astrid International Music Competition, November 27th – December 1st 2016, an international competition for talented young violinists. The competition is arranged with support from The Norwegian Department of Culture. Princess Astrid of Norway is the competition's patron. The first place prize is a soloist engagement with the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra and a chamber recital at Troldsalen in Bergen, Norway.

9.13.16 Piano student **Andrew Guo**, student of Alan Chow, participated in a master class hosted by Steinway & Sons at the WFMT Studios on September 13. Andrew performed Debussy's prelude The Sunken Cathedral for Steinway artist Carolyn Enger. The class will be aired on a broadcast later this fall.

9.1.16 As a former winner of the Sphinx Competition, violinist **Hannah White**, student of Almita Vamos, will tour for six weeks with The Sphinx Virtuosi, a self-conducted chamber orchestra comprised of 18 of the nation's top Black and Latino musicians. The tour runs from September 22 through the end of October. Hannah will be featured as a solo artist on a variety of concerts.

2015 Junior Division 1st Place Laureate

2014 Junior Division 3rd Place Laureate

2013 Junior Division Semi-Finalist

8.7.16 - *From the Top* with Host Christopher O'Riley, a weekly one-hour classical music program on public radio, is broadcast on more than 220 stations nationwide to an audience of more than half a million listeners. *From the Top* celebrates the stories, talents, and character of America's best pre-collegiate classically-trained musicians. Hosted by the Aspen Music Festival and School, Academy students violinist **Maya Anjali Buchanan** and cellist **Nathan Mo**, joined O'Reilly, pianist and host of FTT, on the Arensky Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, op. 32. Nathan also performed solo on Cassado's Dance of the Green Devil.

8.16 Violinist **Ria Honda**, student of Almita Vamos, has been accepted to participate in The 8th International LOUIS SPOHR Competition for Young Violinists in Germany later this fall. A total number of 189 violin virtuosos from all over the world applied for the contest sponsored by the FRANZ LISZT University of Music in Weimar. A jury elected 107 best young violinists to join the contest from October 28th till November 8th, 2016. Musicians are coming from 24 different nations, including China, Japan, South Korea, the United States and many European countries. <https://www.hfm-weimar.de/en/international-louis-spohr-competition-for-young-violinists/8th-international-louis-spohr-competition-for-young-violinists/participants/category-ii.html#HfM>

8.1.16 Joshua Brown, 16, violin student of Almita and Roland Vamos, has been awarded the **Grand Prize in the 2016 ENKOR International Music Competition**. There are four age categories that award one 1st prize and multiple 2nd and 3rd prizes for each category. The musician with the highest score across all four categories is awarded the Grand Prize. Joshua not only scored highest across all four categories this year in the violin division, but he actually received the highest score in the history of the competition across all years and all divisions - 98.22 (strings, piano, voice, woodwinds and brass, percussion, and chamber music).

The competition is a global online competition for classical performers which has hundreds of jury members voting and a very transparent scoring system. The jury is the International Academy of Performing Arts and Sciences which consists of 514 members from 74 countries on 6 continents. The Grand Prize consists of an offer for digital CD publishing and distribution of a recording made by Joshua. The Grand Prize is provided by KNS Classical, a Spanish based label.

Previous winners include Geneva Lewis (Grand Prize for violin 2015), the Zora String Quartet (Grand Prize for Chamber Music 2014/2015), and Noah Lee (First Prize for Strings 2015/2016).

Here is a link to the Winner's list:

<http://www.enkorcompetition.com/2016/07/results-violin-2016-enkor-intl-music-competition.html>

And here is a link to Joshua's specific page:

<http://www.enkorcompetition.com/2016/07/joshua-brown-grand-prize-violin-2016.html>

7.16.16 MIC Earns Three of Top Five Laureate Awards in 4th Stradivarius International Violin Competition

Academy violinists **Maya Buchanan – 2nd place Laureate, Joshua Brown - 3rd place Laureate, and Zachary Brandon - 4th place Laureate** earned top honors at the 4th Stradivarius International Violin Competition Junior Division held July 11 – 16, University of Utah, School of Music. Maya and Joshua study with Almita and Roland Vamos and Zachary studies with Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee. MIC students Karisa Chiu, Julian Rhee, and Hannah White advanced to the Junior Division Semi-Final round of the competition.

The high-caliber competition for young violinists from around the world is produced and funded by Charles W. Liu Fine Violins.

1st Laureate: - \$7,500 Cash

- Solo Appearance with the Utah Symphony

- Solo Appearance with the China Hunan Symphony Orchestra

2nd Laureate: - \$5,000 Cash

3rd Laureate: - \$3,000 Cash

4th Laureate: - \$2,000 Cash

5th Laureate: - \$1,000 Cash

6.27.16 The Center Stage Strings Summer Institute (CCS) joined the lineup of great summer institutes available through MPulse at the University of Michigan. The Academy's Vibrante String Quartet (**Hannah White, Zach Brandon, Freya Irani and Leevy Williams**) performed at the CCS opening night concert on June 27th in Ann Arbor and quartet members **Freya Irani, Zach Brandon and Leevy Williams** are also participating in the Center Stage Strings summer program. The institute was founded by renowned violinist and U-M

Professor Danielle Belen. CCS accepted 60 top students from over 90 applicants from across the country, as well as students from South America and Asia. Master Classes will be presented by violinist Robert Lipsett and cellist Richard Aaron.

Upcoming: Six MIC Students Compete in 4th Stradivarius International Violin Competition Junior

Division July 11 - 16 2016 ~ University of Utah, School of Music

The Stradivarius International Violin Competition, presented by Charles W. Liu Fine Violins, is a high-caliber competition for young violinists. From around the world, prestigious players gather to compete in front of the world's most distinguished judges for the Grand Prize. It was held in 2007, 2010, and in 2013. In 2013, MIC alumna Gallia Kastner received 3rd Place Laureate.

Congratulations & Good Luck to all of the MIC Students who are semi-finalists in the 2016 Junior Division.

Shennuo Bao, China

Zachary Brandon*, USA (MIC) - student of Almita Vamos

Joshua Brown*, USA (MIC) - student of Almita Vamos

Maya Buchanan*, USA (MIC) - student of Almita Vamos

Hana Chang, USA

Kit Ying Cheng, USA

Karisa Chiu*, USA (MIC) - student of Almita Vamos

Lingyu Dong, China

Liu Kuo, China

Kenta Nomura, USA

Su Qi, China

Julian Rhee, USA (MIC) - student of Hye-Sun Lee

Amy Sze, USA

Hannah White*, USA (MIC) - student of Almita Vamos

Kwun Yee Wong, Hong Kong

* MIC Academy

5.29.16 - The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announced a special celebration to kick off its yearlong initiative honoring the 100th anniversary of the birth of its namesake, the late President John F. Kennedy. On May 29, the 99th anniversary of his birth, the Center hosted a free to commemorate the life and legacy of America's 35th President. Along with other emerging artists, the Sphinx Quartet -- Brendon Elliott,

Academy violinist **Hannah White**, former Academy violist Mira Williams, and Sterling Elliot, performed at the celebration.

Piano student **John Schindler** was awarded third prize, one of two prizes for best performance of a violin or cello duo, and the Wisconsin Competitor Award in the Biennial PianoArts North American Competition, held in Milwaukee on June 8 for pianists ages 16-20.

Ten semifinalists, of whom John was the youngest, were invited from across the U.S. and Canada to compete. After a 45-minute solo recital round and a 45-minute collaborative recital round, John was announced as one of three finalists.

In the final round, John performed the complete Schumann Piano Concerto with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Andrews Sill, the conductor of the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra.

Cellist **Leevy Williams** received the National Orchestra Award from Lincoln Park High School. The National School Orchestra Award is the highest honor bestowed upon a member of a high school orchestra to recognize excellence through outstanding dedication, superior musicianship, leadership, and contributions to the ensemble.

It is the pinnacle of achievement in a high school orchestra program and is reserved for a maximum of one student per year.

Piano and composition student **Andrew Guo** placed 3rd in the 2016 Villiers Quartet New Works Competition. Andrew's original composition "Fantasy" (for string quartet) was selected as one of six semi-finalists out of over 100 entries in the on-line composition contest. After live-stream voting, Andrew was selected as one of three finalists whose work was performed live for final voting. The Villiers Quartet, hailed as one of the most charismatic and "adventurous" quartets of the British chamber music scene (The Strad), and the University of Oxford's resident quartet, performed the semi-finalists works live at the Jacqueline Du Pre Music Building, Oxford University, on May 27th.

For information about Andrew's piece and his personal composer notes, please visit the MIC Facebook page.

Winner: Kristina Wolfe (USA/DENMARK)

Second Place: Ian Munro (AUSTRALIA)

Third Place: Andrew Guo (USA)

5.21.16 - Violinist **Zachary Brandon** advanced to the final round of the 41st Stulberg International String Competition, earning the Bach Award. The mission of the Stulberg Competition is to promote excellence in

string instrument performance by gifted young artists under the age of twenty. At the end of the semifinals, the judges awarded the Bach Prize for best performance of a solo Bach selection to Zach, and then advanced six to the finals: Austin Haley Berman, Zachary Brandon, Daniel Hass, Zeyu Victor Li, Aubree Oliverson, and Brenden Zak. The finals concert resulted in the gold medal being awarded to cellist Daniel Hass; the silver medal to violinist Zeyu Victor Li; and the bronze medal to violinist Austin Haley Berman.

The Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition held at Northeastern University, presented first prize, second prize, and 2 honorable mentions to Academy students.

Honorable mentions went to **Maya Buchanan and Nathan Mo**; second place went to **Karisa Chiu**, and first place went to **Joshua Brown**. Joshua will play a full concerto with the orchestra and Karisa will play a movement of a concerto next season.

The objective of the competition is to help ensure the future of classical music by providing the opportunity for young musicians to hone their audition skills as well as to perform with a high caliber orchestra.