

## **5.13.18 Congratulations Kairos String Quartet - M-PRIZE Junior String Division 1st Place Winner and Fischhoff Gold Medal Winner!**

The Academy brings these young musicians together from across the U.S. - Joshua Brown is from Illinois, Julian Rhee from Wisconsin, Thompson Wang from California, and Lydia Rhea from Indiana. The group is coached by Rodolfo Vieira.

**First Prize at the Rembrandt Chamber Players Chamber Music Competition Rembrandt Young Artists for 2018**

**Grand Prize at the A.N. & Pearl G. Barnett Chamber Music Competition Silver Medal at the St. Paul National String Quartet Competition**

**Winner of the M-Prize International Chamber Arts Competition, Junior String Division**

**Gold Medal, Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, Junior String Division**

## **5.8.18 2018 U.S. Presidential Scholars Announced!**

Two MIC students have been named members of the 54th class of U.S. Presidential Scholars, recognizing 161 high school seniors for their accomplishments in academics, the arts and career and technical education fields. The United States Presidential Scholars Program is described as "one of the Nation's highest honors for students" in the United States of America and the globe.

**Violinist Julian Rhee, 17, Brookfield, WI and pianist David Hou, 17, Hawthorn Woods, IL** are two of twenty students selected as U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts. Julian, a student of Almita Vamos in the Academy, and David, a former student of Alan Chow in the Academy, will attend the 2018 Ceremony on June 24 when they receive a Presidential Scholar Medallion.

In 2017, Academy piano student **Andrew Guo** received this same high honor, and in 2009 it was awarded to Academy violinist **Andrea Jarrett**.

The National YoungArts Foundation reviews approximately 12,000 candidates annually of 15- to 18-year-old artists in the fields of visual, literary, performing and design arts. From these they select (through a blind adjudication process) the top 600-700 artists in the nation as National Winners. 171 of these Winners travel to Miami, Florida for National YoungArts Week, where they are further adjudicated by panelists and can win up to \$10,000 to help them pursue a career in the arts. These 171 Winners are then narrowed down to 60 nominees that are recommended to the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. These 60 candidates are invited to apply, and the Commission, in turn, selects the 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership and demonstrated commitment to high ideals.

**5.7.18** MIC Academy students, families, and alumni celebrated a preconcert lobby performance by the **Agora String Quartet (Kaylin Liu and Zechary Mo, violins; Natalie Morin, viola; Cameron Chiu, cello)** coached by Sang Mee Lee, to close the Harris Theater for Music and Dance 17-18 CMS season, May 7, 2018.

MIC thanks the Harris Theater for many years of a wonderful partnership that provides access to CMS through their residency at the Harris. Many string and piano students have benefited from CMS concerts and master classes since 2011.

**Congratulations to former Academy students Matthew Lipman and Ryan Meehan, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS) artists.**

**5.6.18 Violinist Abigail Park**, student of Injoo Choi, was named 1st place Winner at the AMI Violin Competition, Sunday, May 6. She performed the Saint-Saens Violin Concerto No.3 in B minor, Op. 61, 1st. movement. In addition to a cash prize, Abigail will perform on the Memorial Winners Concert on Sunday, May 20th, 2018 at 2pm, AMI's Clarendon Hills Campus. AMI's mission is to provide a high standard of music education to all students in all instruments, levels, ages, and styles of music. Our principal objective is to preserve the art of music education and music performance for future generations of the American society. AMI's campuses are located in Clarendon Hills, Downers Grove and St. Charles, Illinois.

**5.11.18 The 45th Annual Fischhoff Competition** will be held May 11-13, 2018, on the campus of University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN. The Fischhoff National Chamber Music Association sponsors the nation's largest chamber music competition.

**CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK TO AGORA STRING QUARTET, KAIROS STRING QUARTET and SARRASIN PIANO TRIO**, three of twenty-five Fischhoff Quarterfinalists! Thank you Academy coaches Sang Mee Lee, Rodolfo Vieira, and Mark George.

The excitement begins 9:20am, Friday, May 11. Live web streaming on May 11 & 12 @

<http://www.fischhoff.org/>

***5.3.18 ANNOUNCING THE 2018 GRADUATING SENIOR CLASS OF THE ACADEMY! CONGRATULATIONS!!***

Seoyun Baek - Eastman School of Music for Piano Performance with Alan Chow

Joshua Brown - New England Conservatory of Music for Violin Performance with Donald Weilerstein

Maya Anjali Buchanan - Curtis Institute of Music for Violin Performance with Ida Kavafian

Ria Honda - Columbia-Juilliard Exchange for Violin Performance with Li Lin

Lydia Rhea - Cleveland Institute of Music for Cello Performance with Dr. Melissa Kraut

Julian Rhee - New England Conservatory of Music for Violin Performance with Miriam Fried

Thompson Wang - New England Conservatory of Music for Violin Performance with Ayano Ninomiya

**5.6.18 Young Steinway Concert: Neil Wary, Violin and Mia Wimbiscus, Cello | Sunday, May 6, 2018, 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm Petty Auditorium**

The Young Steinway concerts showcase young people with extraordinary talent, giving local audiences the chance to enjoy first-class music, for free, close to home. Many performers have gone on to great achievements as professional musicians. This is the 35th season of showcasing talented young performers of classical music.

Violinist Neil Wary is a senior at Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) in Aurora. He was runner up in the 2017 Symphony Orchestra of Oak Park and River Forest Concerto Competition, is concertmaster of the IMSA orchestra, and is a member of Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra.

**4.26.18 John Heo**, second place winner of the Fox Valley Symphony Concerto Competition, performed Saint Saens Rondo Capriccio with Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra, April 29 at Crimi Auditorium in Aurora University. In addition to the performance opportunity, John was awarded a cash prize.

**4.26.18** On Saturday, 4/26 at 11:00 am **WFMT featured the Music Institute of Chicago Academy Orchestra**. The orchestra performed at Skokie Public Library on Saturday, March 24. Hear the sounds of a Spanish bullfight, a movement from a jaunty cello concerto by a member of the Bach family, and more. The spring Academy Chamber Orchestra Concert featured senior cellist Lydia Rhea, student of Hans Jensen, who performed the third movement of C.P.E. Bach's Cello Concerto in A Major under the baton of Conductor James Setapen. Thanks to the Skokie Public Library for hosting MIC in the Petty Auditorium.

**4.25.18 Academy violinist Julian Rhee** performed on the Susan Marshall '76 Memorial Concert at the North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka, Wednesday, April 25. Each year NSCD hosts a young emerging musician who is invited to perform a concert and visit with students and faculty. Julian performed for almost 500 students, and as an ambassador of the arts, Julian provided inspiration and insight into being a young musician as he visited Lower, Middle, and Upper School music class...es.

Qualities of the Susan Marshall Artist include being an outstanding musician and performer, speaking passionately about performing music and training, and acting as an advocate for young musicians --from kindergarten to high-school-seniors.

The North Shore tradition and annual concert series was established in 1983 by Susan's parents, Irl and Barbara Favill Marshall '46, in memory of Susan and her lifelong love of music. Susan played violin and piano, enjoyed singing and graduated from North Shore in 1976. She continued her studies at Dartmouth College and in graduate school at the University of Denver. Former Susan Marshall Artists include MIC violinists Adé Williams and Alexandra Switala, pianist Andrew Guo, cellist Nathan Mo, and clarinetist Daniel Aisenberg.

**4.22.18 Stars of Tomorrow Concert features MIC Students Highland Park Community House**

Pilgrim Chamber Players' Stars of Tomorrow FREE concert that features amazing prize-winning young musicians from the Chicago area, all 18-years-old and younger.

**Violinist Ria Honda, Eclipse Quartet members Irina Casanovas, Ria Honda, John Heo, and Alon Hayut,** and duo piano students Colin Song and Lauren Kim will perform.

**4.18. 18 Congratulations to violinist Julian Rhee, 2018 U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts Semifinalist!**

Julian Rhee, Brookfield, WI, recently named Valedictorian and President of his senior class, studies in the Academy with Almita Vamos. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by executive order of the President, to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. Presidential Scholars will be posted in early May and the National Recognition Program at the White House is tentatively scheduled for June 24-26, 2018.

[www.ed.gov/psp](http://www.ed.gov/psp).

#### **4.8.18 Congratulations Kairos String Quartet, winner of the A.N. and Pearl G. Barnett Chamber Music Competition and Silver Medalist at the St. Paul Chamber String Quartet Competition!**

ST. PAUL - Six groups advanced to the final round of the 2018 St. Paul String Quartet annual competition at Hamlin Univeristy in St. Paul, MN.

#### **BARNETT**

+ Strings & Piano Division 1st Place: Kairos String Quartet, Music Institute of Chicago Academy  
+ Barnett Chamber Competition Grand Award Winner: Kairos String Quartet, Music Institute of Chicago Academy

Congratulations to all of the students and coaches who participated in Merit School of Music's annual competition, held Sunday, April 8, in the Anne & Howard Gottlieb Hall, Chicago.

The MIC Academy quartet, comprised of **Joshua Brown and Julian Rhee (violin and viola), Thompson Wang (violin), and Lydia Rhea (cello), are coached by Rodolfo Vieira**. The ensemble performed Mendelssohn String Quartet No. 6 in F minor, opus 80 (Josh, violin I and Julian, viola) and Ginastera String Quartet No. 1, opus 20 (Julian, violin I and Josh, viola).

**4.18.18 Violinist Joshua Brown**, was excited to be performing in the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series Wednesday, April 18, at 12:15 pm in the Chicago Cultural Center's beautiful Preston Bradley Hall. Pianist Milana Pavchinskaya and Joshua performed works by Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Waxman.

**3.24.18 Violinist Julian Rhee**, student of Almita Vamos, has advanced to the semi finals of **2018 Irving M. Klein International String Competition**. One of the world's most prestigious classical music competitions, this year's Klein Competition features nine outstanding young string players from around the world aged 15-23 vying for over \$25,000 in prizes and performance contracts onstage at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. The SEMIFINALS round takes place Saturday, June 2 from 10AM - 4PM. Each of the 8-9 competitors,

selected from over 100 admissions, will perform a 25-minute program, including a solo Bach piece, the commissioned work by David Froom, and a movement from a major concerto. Finalists will be announced at conclusion of performances. The FINALS round takes place Sunday, June 3 from 3:00PM- 5:30PM and will feature three dynamic 25-35-minute recitals featuring solo Bach, and well-loved major sonata and concerto movements. Awards ceremony and VIP reception will follow.

**3.20.18 On the Road to St. Paul...the Kairos String Quartet** has advanced to the Final round of the St. Paul String Quartet Competition on Saturday, April 14 at the Sundin Music Hall, Hamline University, Saint Paul, MN. The Academy quartet is coached by Rodolfo Vieira, and members include **Joshua Brown (violin/viola), Julian Rhee (violin/viola), Thompson Wang (violin), and Lydia Rhea (cello). Joshua, Julian, and Thompson all study violin with Almita and Roland Vamos, while Lydia studies cello with Hans Jensen.**

Founded in 2006 as a performance forum for outstanding high school chamber musicians, the Saint Paul String Quartet Competition's primary mission is to celebrate excellence in string quartet playing, foster an increased appreciation for the chamber music art form, and enhance the music culture in this country. The SPSQC has garnered a national reputation for showcasing our nation's finest pre-college string players and young artists from this event now populate the most prestigious conservatories and music programs in the country. The top scoring quartets are invited to St. Paul to perform in the Final Round event. Audiences can vote live at 4:30pm at <https://www.spsqc.org/schedule>

**3.19. 18 Cameron Chiu**, 16, is the 1st Place Winner, Cello Intermediate Division 2018 Society of American Musicians Competition. Cameron studies with Horacio Contreras in the Academy.

The Winners Concert will be held at Lily Reid Holt Memorial Chapel at Lake Forest College on Sunday, April 22nd at 3:00 pm. First place recipients from all divisions and instruments will be featured on the concert.

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.

**3.19.18 Natalie Morin** is the winner of the **Deerfield High School Concerto Competition**. Natalie, 17, studies viola with Roland Vamos in the Academy. She played the first movement of the Hoffmeister Viola Concerto in D major. Natalie, the only string winner, will play with the Deerfield Symphony High School Orchestra at the final orchestra concert in May.

**3.17.18 Violinist Julian Rhee** was awarded First Prize in the prestigious 2018 Johansen International Competition for Young String Players held this past weekend in Washington, DC. He will receive a cash prize, scholarship opportunities, and several concerto performances with orchestras. Cellist **James Baik** advanced to the final round of the competition and violinist **Ria Honda** advanced to the semi-final round. All three string students study in the Academy.

### **3.14.18 On the road to South Bend...**

**Hats off to Eclipse String Quartet, Kairos String Quartet, and Sarrasin Piano Trio! Three Academy ensembles advanced to the quarter-final round of The 45th Annual Fischhoff Competition, May 11-13, 2018.**

Congratulations to the Agora String Quartet, selected as 2nd Alternate.

Each year, an average of 125 ensembles, representing 22 nationalities, enter in either the wind or string categories of three to six performers. Watch for LIVE STREAMING information.

**Eclipse - John Heo, Hannah White, Irina Casasnovas,  
Alon Hayut; Coached by Mathias Tacke**

**Kairos - Joshua Brown, Julian Rhee, Thompson Wang,  
Lydia Rhea; Coached by Rodolfo Vieira**

**Sarrasin - Claire Arias-Kim, Seoyun Baek, James Baik  
Coached by Mark George and Rodolfo Vieira**

**Agora - Natalie Morin, Cameron Chiu, Zechary Mo, Kaylin Liu  
Coached by Sang Mee Lee**

**3.9.18 Ria Honda, violin student of Almita Vamos; Julian Rhee, violin student of Almita Vamos; and James Baik, cello student of Hans Jensen,** will compete in the The Eighth Triennial 2018 Johansen International Competition for Young String Players (Ages 13–17) sponsored by The Friday Morning Music Club Foundation, Inc.

12 violinists, 8 violists, and 10 cellists head to Washington DC as semifinalists to compete.

Rehearsal: March 14, 2018

Semi-Finals: March 15–16, 2018

Finals: March 17, 2018

**2015 Results** - Third Prize — **Maya Buchanan**, age 15; student of Almita Vamos; from Rapid City, SD.

**3.3.18 Pianist Yerin Yang**, 15, student of Winston Choi and Alan Chow, is the winner of the 2018 Chicago Symphony Orchestra Young Artists Competition. Four finalists played on stage in Orchestra Hall on March 3, accompanied by the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and directed by Sir Georg Solti Apprentice Erina Yashima. Yerin will be featured in a CSO School Concert during the 2018/19 season.

3.3.18 Continuing the tradition of supporting promising women in classical music since 1893, **violinist Irina Casasnovas**, 17, student of Almita Vamos, was presented the **Musicians' Club of Women Farwell Trust Award** on March 3. Each winner receives a free three-year membership in the club and performs on a concert series at the Chicago Cultural Center. Watch for concert information.

**3.8.18 Joshua Brown**, 18, student of Almita Vamos, has been named a 2018 Yamaha Young Performing Artists (YYPA) Winner. This year's eleven winners include musicians from Curtis Institute of Music, The Juilliard School, Berklee College of Music, and Manhattan School of Music, among others. Joshua is the youngest and only Pre-College winner this year, and is the only violinist to have been named a Yamaha Young Performing Artist since 2014. <https://www.facebook.com/joshuabrownviolinist/>

**3.4.18 Seoyun Baek**, 18, student of Alan Chow and Edward Auer, has been accepted to compete in the 9th New York International Piano Competition (under the auspices of The Stecher and Horowitz Foundation), June 17-22 in New York City. In addition to scholarships, winners are provided opportunities for concert and recital appearances, master classes, and seminars.

**3.3.18 The Road to Ann Arbor... Congratulations Eclipse String Quartet (Irina Casasnovas, Hannah White, John Heo, Alon Hayut, coached by Mathias Tacke) and Kairos String Quartet (Joshua Brown, Julian Rhee, Thompson Wang, Lydia Rhea, coached by Rodolfo Vieira)**, junior division semi-finalists in the M-Prize International Chamber Music Competition. The event is officially the largest competition of its kind in both number of applicants and the grand prize of \$100,000 offered as the grand award in the senior division. Supported by the U-M Office of the Provost and an anonymous donor, M-Prize also awards an additional \$109,000 in prize money divided among the winning small ensembles in both junior and senior divisions in

three categories: Strings, Winds and Open (comprising any instrumentation or genre). The ensembles will compete in live rounds of competition from May 3-6, 2018, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**2.17.18 Violinist Hannah White** soloed with the Albany Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Music Director and Conductor Claire Fox Hillard. The concert at the Albany Municipal Auditorium titled was "Classical Women." Hannah joined the ASO to perform Violin Concerto No. 3 in B minor, Op. 61 by French composer Camille Saint-Saens.

**2.17.18 Congratulations to John Heo**, 2nd place winner of the Fox Valley Youth Concerto Competition. John will perform Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso Saint-Saens with the Fox Valley Orchestra April 29, 2018 at Crimi Auditorium.

**2.10.18 Violinist Kaylin Liu** is the 2nd place winner in the Violin Intermediate Division at the 2018 Society of American Musicians Competition. Kaylin performed Meditation from the Opera Thais for Violin and Piano (Jules Massenet) and Variations on a Theme by Corelli in the Style of Tartini (Fritz Kreisler).

Over 100 students were inspired in a master class presented by violinist **Julian Rhee** at the West Bend High School in Wisconsin. Julian performed two pieces and then provided direction to three soloists and one chamber strings ensemble. <https://westbendcurrent.com/2018/02/17/it-was-very-inspiring-brookfield-...>

**2.12.18** As senior division winners of the DePaul Concerto Festival, MIC students performed with the Oistrakh Symphony of Chicago at the Winners' Concert on Sunday, February 12, 2018 at DePaul Concert Hall. Congratulations DePaul Concerto Festival for Young Performers 2018 Senior Division Winners:

Cello James Baik (student of Hans Jensen) - Shostakovich, D.: Concerto in Eb Major, Op. 107, Mvt. 1

Piano Yerin Yang (Winston Choi and Alan Chow) - Grieg, E.: Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16, Mvt. 1

Violin John Heo (Almita Vamos) - Wieniawski, H.: Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 22, Mvt. 1

**2.4.18** Congratulations to **Second Prize winner John Heo** and **Zechary Mo**, who received **Honorable Mention**, at the DuPage Young Artists Auditions, Sunday, February 4. John and Zechary study violin with Almita Vamos. The DSO Strives to encourage serious study and musical excellence among young musicians through its annual Young Artists Auditions. This experience has been designed to be rewarding as well as educational.

## **2.2.18 Sphinx Competition Finalists**

2018 Junior Division - Irina Casasnovas, violin; Claire Arias-Kim, violin

Senior Division - Hannah White, violin - Achievement Award

**1.31.18 Violinist Julian Rhee** has been selected as a nominee for the 2018 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students who exemplify academic and artistic excellence. Julian, 17, Brookfield, WI, has been a student at MIC since 2011. He currently studies in the Academy with Almita Vamos. Julian is nominated in the Classical Music discipline.

YoungArts is the sole nominating agency for this high honor and the 60 candidates, representing 25 states and nine artistic disciplines, are all YoungArts winners.

The candidate applications will be reviewed by the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, which will ultimately select 20 high school seniors to be recognized as U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts for their academic and artistic accomplishments, demonstrated leadership, community service and outreach initiatives, and overall creativity.

Former Academy pianist David Hou has also been nominated in Classical Music.

1.28.18 Students of Almita Vamos, Joshua and Isabella Brown, are performing with two area orchestras on Sunday, January 28.

Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra <http://www.elmhurstsymphony.org/web/events.aspx>

January 28, 2018 - 3:00 PM

Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church

Vivacious Vivaldi: The Four Seasons

Artist: Joshua Brown, violin

Conductor: Stephen Alltop

Northbrook Symphony Orchestra - <http://northbrooksymphony.org/events/>

January 28, 2018 - 4:00 PM

Sheely Center for the Performing Arts

2300 Shermer Road, Northbrook

Rustic Revelry

Michael Hoover, flute

Soloist: Isabella Brown, violin

**1.25.18 Violinist Ria Honda** will be featured on NPR's From the Top with Host Christopher O'Riley. The show will be recorded in Highwood, Illinois on Thursday, 2/1/18. Show 348

From the Top is America's largest national platform celebrating the stories, talents, and character of classically-trained young musicians. Ria will perform Carmen Fantasie by Franz Waxman with Christopher O'Riley, piano and "Estrellita" by Manuel Ponce (1882-1948), arr. Jascha Heifetz, with Christopher O'Riley, piano.

Ria Honda, 17, lives in Wilmette, Illinois where she is a senior at New Trier High School. She studies violin in the Academy with Almita Vamos. Ria competed in the Menuhin International Competition in 2016, won the M-Prize competition, and earned the Silver medal at the Fischhoff Chamber Music competition with her quartet, the Astera String Quartet. She has also spent five summers at Meadowmount. Outside of music, Ria enjoys cooking, travelling, and trying new foods.

Release Date Monday, February 26, 2018

**1.14.18 The Kairos String Quartet** won first place yesterday in the Rembrandt Chamber Musicians 23rd Annual High School Chamber Music Competition, widely regarded as one of the premier competitions of its kind in the Midwest.

The Academy quartet is comprised of Julian Rhee, 17, Brookfield, WI, Thompson Wang, 18, Fountain Valley, CA, Joshua Brown, 18, Gurnee, IL, and Lydia Rhea, 18, Fishers, IN. The group is coached by MIC faculty member Rodolfo Vieira.

### **1.7.18 DePaul Concerto Competition**

The DePaul Concerto Festival for Young Performers was founded in 2003. To accommodate the increasing difficulty of repertoire, a decision was made to conduct the Festival with a full symphony orchestra. A partnership was formed in 2007 with the Oistrakh Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Mina Zikri. That year, thirteen winners had the privilege of performing a concerto movement in concert. *In 2008, the Festival was opened to students outside of the Community Music Division.* Viola was added in 2009, clarinet in 2012, and oboe and bassoon in 2013. In 2018, the Festival expanded to include a Junior division for piano, violin, and viola.

### **Senior Division Winners 2018**

#### **CELLO WINNERS**

**James Baik** - Shostakovich, D.: Concerto in Eb Major, Op. 107,

Mvt. 1, student of Hans Jorgen Jensen

HONORABLE MENTION

**Cameron Chiu** - Kabalevsky, D.: Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 49,

Mvt. 1, student of Horacio Contreras

**Mia Wimbiscus** - Elgar, E.: Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85, Mvt. 4, student of Hans Jorgen Jensen

PIANO WINNERS

**Yerin Yang** - Grieg, E.: Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16, Mvt. 1, student of Winston Choi and Alan Chow

VIOLIN WINNERS – *The following students study with Almita Vamos*

**John Heo** - Wieniawski, H.: Concerto No. 2 in D Minor,

Op. 22, Mvt. 1

HONORABLE MENTION WITH DISTINCTION

**Thompson Wang** - Mozart, W.A.: Concerto in D Major,

K. 218, Mvt. 1

HONORABLE MENTION

**Claire Arias-Kim** - Mozart, W.A.: Concerto in D Major,

K. 218, Mvt. 1

**Irina Casasnovas** - Mozart, W.A.: Concerto in D Major,

K. 218, Mvt. 1

### **1.2018 MIC VIOLINIST TO APPEAR ON NPR's FROM THE TOP**

**Julian Rhee**, Brookfield, WI, will appear on an upcoming episode of From the Top, the hit NPR radio program featuring America's best young classical musicians and hosted by acclaimed pianist Christopher O'Riley.

Julian studies violin at the Music Institute of Chicago Academy with Almita Vamos and is a senior at Brookfield East High School. He is the winner of the 2018 National YoungArts Foundation and the class president of his high school. In addition to music, Julian enjoys basketball and table tennis, and dreams of being a sports announcer.

The episode was taped before a live audience at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall in Boston on October 1, 2017. On the broadcast, Julian performs "Subito" by Witold Lutosławski with Christopher O'Riley,

piano. He also performs "Norwegian Ballage" alongside Time for

Three. <https://www.fromthetop.org/musician/julian-rhee/>

From the Top is America's largest national platform celebrating the stories, talents, and character of classically-trained young musicians.

**1.2018 Cellist James Baik and violinist Irina Casasnovas** have advanced to the preliminary round of the **2018 Blount-Slawson Young Artists Competition**. Since 1981, the Symphony League has mounted a concerto competition for pre-college instrumentalists with the winner appearing as a guest artist with the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra. The competition will be held on Saturday and Sunday, January 27 - January 28, 2018 at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama. The top entrants from Saturday's preliminary round of competition will compete on Sunday at 1:00 PM in a final round of competition which will be open to the public.

*First Prize: Performance with the Montgomery Symphony at the Davis Theater on April 30, 2018; \$10,000 consisting of a Cash Award of \$2,500 and a separate Educational Award of \$7,500 with designation towards the study of music. | Second Prize: Cash award of \$3,000 | Third Prize: Cash award of \$2,000 | Fourth Prize: Cash award of \$1,000*

**1.9.18 15-year-old violinist Isabella Brown** of Gurnee, Illinois, was featured on **WFMT's Introductions**, showcasing Chicago's top classical youth musicians. Isabella is in her third year in the Academy studies violin with Almita and Roland Vamos as the Rachel Barton Pine Scholar and plays on a Dom Nicolo Marchioni detto 'Amati' of Bologna circa 1740, generously on loan to her from Kenneth Warren and Son, Ltd.

*12.28.17 Midwest Young Artists Walgreens Concerto Competition* Young musicians from all corners of the USA competed in Midwest Young Artists' (MYA) 21st Annual Walgreens National Concerto Competition. The open senior division took place on December 26 - 28, 2018. Students competed for more than \$10,000 in scholarships and cash prizes in the MYA Orchestra Division and the Open Division. The Open Division Overall winner, MYAC Orchestra Division Overall Senior Level winner and Overall Junior Level winner from the 2017 - 2018 competition will perform with the MYAC orchestra on February 25, 2018 at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall in Evanston, IL.

Open String Division

Winner: **Julian Rhee**, violin student of Almita Vamos

Honorable Mention: **John Heo**, violin student of Almita Vamos

**12.21.17 The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, (CMS)** is one of eleven constituents of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. The performing artists constitute a revolving multi-generational and international roster of the world's finest chamber musicians.

On December 21, after performing The Brandenburg Concertos at the Harris Theater the night before, four CMS artists joined Academy students for 90-minute master classes at The Music Institute of Chicago's Evanston campus. Both the artists and students applauded the classes, and CMS artists looks forward to a return in the spring.

Through the rewarding benefit of a long-standing relationship with Wu Han and David Finckel, Co-Artistic Directors of the Chamber Music Society, and the Harris Theater for Music and Dance where CMS is in residency, CMS artists have presented master classes to Academy students since 2006.

*Violinist Daniel Phillips - Isabella Brown and Ria Honda*

*Violinist/Violist Yura Lee - Natalie Morin and Joshua Brown*

*Violinist Kristen Lee - Claire Arias-Kim and Esme Arias-Kim*

*Cellist Nicholas Canellakis - Alon Hayut and Mia Wimbiscus*

### **11. 30.17 Congratulations to YoungArts 2018 winners!**

The National YoungArts Foundation identifies and nurtures the most accomplished young artists in the visual, literary, design and performing arts and assists them at critical junctures in their educational and professional development. YoungArts aspires to create a community of alumni that provides a lifetime of encouragement, opportunity, and support.

Congratulations to **Julian Rhee**, 2018 National YoungArts Foundation Finalist in Classical Music/Violin. Julian, one of 171 Finalists, will attend National YoungArts Week in Miami, January 7-14, when Finalists present their work during an intensive, week-long and all-inclusive program. Artists across 10 disciplines participate in master classes and workshops with internationally recognized leaders in their field.

Congratulations to **Ria Honda**, Honorable Mention Winner in Classical Music/Violin and to **Claire Arias-Kim and Irina Casasnovas**, Merit Winners in Classical Music/Violin.

Honorable Mention and Merit winners have the opportunity to participate in the New York Regional Program, April 24 – 29, 2018, where students spend a week fully immersed in their art form and participate in interdisciplinary and genre-specific master classes.

Violinists Julian Rhee, Ria Honda, Irina Casasnovas and Claire Arias-Kim are all Academy members in the studio of Almita Vamos.

Academy alumni winners include:

David Hou | Classical Music/Piano (Finalist)

Brendan Tarm | Classical Music/Violoncello (Honorable Mention)

Maya Anjali Buchanan | Classical Music/Violin (Merit)

### **Recognition Levels**

Merit: The YoungArts Merit award level recognizes work that has been deemed as commendable by the panel, strong technically with a clear artistic point of view.

Honorable Mention: The YoungArts Honorable Mention award level recognizes work that demonstrates exceptional technique; a strong sense of artistry; and a depth of thinking/performance that exceeds the level of peers at this career stage.

Finalist: The YoungArts Finalist award recognizes work that demonstrates exceptional technique; a strong, sophisticated, nuanced, and clear artistic point of view; and a depth of thinking/performance that far exceeds the level of peers at this career stage. Finalists who meet eligibility requirements are considered for nomination to the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

### **11.20.17 21st Annual Sphinx Competition Jan. 31 – Feb. 4, 2018 <http://www.sphinxmusic.org/sphinx-competition/>**

The Sphinx Competition is held every year in Detroit, Michigan. The competition is open to all Junior High, High School, and College age Black and Latino string players residing in the U.S. 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.

**2018 SENIOR DIVISION SEMI-FINALIST HANNAH WHITE**

**2018 JUNIOR DIVISION SEMI-FINALISTS: CLAIRE ARIAS KIM AND IRINA CASASNOVAS**

**11.12. 17** The Sejong Cultural Society strives to advance awareness and understanding of Korea's cultural heritage amongst people in the United States by reaching out to the younger generations through contemporary creative and fine arts. It is our hope that, through this, the rich culture behind Korea's colorful history will be accessible to people of any ethnicity and nationality while being a unique part of the larger, more familiar Western culture, and that such harmonizing of the two cultures will create a better understanding between them. Music Competition - **The Sejong Music Competition** seeks to both encourage talented young musicians in their studies and introduce traditional Korean musical themes to young musicians.

#### **Violin Senior Division**

**First Ria Honda** - Wilmette, IL Almita Vamos

**Second Thompson Wang** - Glenview, IL Almita Vamos

**Third John Heo** - Northbrook, IL Almita Vamos

**HM Claire Arias-Kim** - Hoffman Estates, IL Almita Vamos

**Best interpretation of a Korean Piece- John Heo**

**11.11.17 2017 Young Concert Artists International Auditions** in NY - **Joshua Brown** advanced to the 2017 Young Concert Artists Finals on Saturday, November 11. Young Concert Artists, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to discovering and developing the careers of extraordinary musicians from all over the world. Winners of the Auditions are selected by a Jury of distinguished musicians. The sole criteria are exceptional musicianship, virtuosity, and individuality. The musicians compete against a standard of excellence – not each other. Joshua was not selected as one of the winners, but was one of the youngest members in the competition.

**11.17.17** Congratulations to **Irina Casasnovas**, who is among eight finalists in the **Young Artists Competition** in Costa Rica. The finalists were selected from 70 participants during two sets of auditions. Irina will rehearse with the Orchestra from November 14-17, and perform in the final concert with the Costa Rica National Symphony Orchestra under Maestro Carl St. Clair on November 17 at the National Theater. St. Clair is the Artistic Leader and Principal Conductor of the USC Thornton Orchestras at USC and has conducted concerts in Bulgaria, Portugal, Switzerland, Israel, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Brazil, and Mexico. In Costa Rica, competitions do not select one winner amongst finalists; they are all considered winners because of the diversity of the pool of participants in age and instruments. Irina studies with Almita Vamos.

**11.4.17** Piano student **Yuelin Zhong** received HM in the MTNA Illinois Senior Solo Competition last weekend at Olivet Nazarene University, Bourbonnais, Illinois on November 3-4, 2017. Yuelin studies with Ralph Neiweem.

**11.1.17** Congratulations to **Irina Casanovas** who has advanced to the second round of Young Artists Competition in Costa Rica. From a group of instrumentalists including percussion, piano, and voice, only three violinists advanced to the next round of 15. The competition is for young professionals under age 25 years; it includes all instruments of the orchestra, piano, and voice.

**10.30.17** Violinist **Julian Rhee** recorded on NPR's From the Top with Host Christopher O'Riley at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall in Boston, MA on 10/1/17. (Show 346) Release Date Monday, January 1, 2018.

Julian performed "Subito" by Witold Lutosławski (1913-1994), with Christopher O'Riley, piano. Julian also joined Time for Three – violinist Nicolas (Nick) Kendall, violinist (and From the Top Alum!) Charles Yang, and double-bassist Ranaan Meyer. Julian studies with Almita Vamos.

**10.14.17 Academy violinist John Heo** soloed with the Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra on Saturday, October 14 at the Calvary Community Church in Williams Bay, WI. John performed Wieniawski's complete Violin Concerto No. 2 to a standing ovation. John studies with Almita Vamos.

**10.7.17 Violinist Joshua Brown**, 17, debuts in Cincinnati this Sunday in the historic recital series, *Matinée Musicale Cincinnati*, following in the footsteps of some amazing violinists, including Nathan Milstein, Henry Szeryng, Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, and Joshua Bell. He will be accompanied by excellent pianist Beilin Han.

"For more than a century — since 1912 — *Matinée Musicale Cincinnati* has presented recitals by instrumentalists and singers on their way to illustrious careers. Legendary pianist Arthur Rubinstein performed [on the series] in 1938. In 1955, 21-year-old Van Cliburn played for Cincinnati in a *Matinée Musicale* recital, three years before he won the International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow. Coloratura soprano Beverly Sills sang in Cincinnati in 1969, the same year she debuted at the renowned La Scala opera house in Milan. In 1983 violinist Joshua Bell, then 16, performed his very first professional recital with *Matinée Musicale*. Today he's one of the world's most respected performers. Thanks to a generous bequest from philanthropist

and classically-trained musician Louise Dieterle Nippert (1911-2012), Matinée Musicale's tradition of musical excellence continues." - Rick Pender

**9.24.17 Joshua Brown, 17 and Isabella Brown, 14, will perform at the opening series concert for the Northbrook Symphony Orchestra -- Music is Magic!**

A festive, family-friendly, "Bring Your Grandkids Free" event, featuring a colorful potpourri of works by Debussy, Grainger, Smetana, Glazunov and Sarasate, and Ravel's beloved Mother Goose Suite. *The superb brother/sister violin duo of Joshua and Isabella Brown will perform Sarasate's enchanting Navarra*