

May 2016

CONGRATS TO OUR GRADS!

Nicholas Brown - Chicago College of Performing Arts' Music Conservatory at Roosevelt University, Studying with Almita Vamos - Violin Performance

Ben Friedland - The Cleveland Institute of Music, Studying with Derek Zadinsky - Double Bass Performance

Freya Irani - The New England Conservatory of Music, Studying with Dimitri Murrath - Viola Performance

Alexandra Kim - The Juilliard School, Studying with Natasha Brofsky - Cello Performance

Tess Krobe - Cleveland Institute of Music, Studying with Robert Vernon - Viola Performance / Dual Degree Program Case Western University

Natalie Nedvetsky - The Juilliard School, Studying with Matti Raekallio - Piano Performance

Leevy Williams - Rice University, Shepherd School of Music, Studying with Norman Fischer - Dual Major: Cello Performance & Liberal Arts

Josiah Yoo - Northwestern University, Bienen School of Music, Studying with Hans Jørgen Jensen - Dual Major: Cello Performance and Undecided Academic Major

5.20.16 M-PRIZE An international chamber arts competition based in Ann Arbor, at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance, M-Prize aims to identify and showcase the highest caliber of international chamber arts ensembles and provide a professional performance and adjudication platform for the chamber arts. Congratulations to Academy ensembles at the **M-Prize's Junior Division. Vibrante String Quartet** placed second, winning \$3,000. Coached by Matthias Tacke, Vibrante includes Academy students Zachary Brandon and Hannah White, violin; Freya Irani, viola, and Leevy Williams, cello. **Calliope Trio** placed third, winning \$2,000. Coached by Tatyana Stepanova and Paul Vanderwerf, Calliope include Academy students Karisa Chiu, violin, Nathan Mo, cello, and Andrew Guo, piano.

5.7.16 Bravo Vibrante String Quartet! MIC Ensemble wins Bronze!

Congratulations Hannah White, Zach Brandon, violin, Freya Irani, viola, Leevy Williams, cello and to coach Matthias Tacke for a spectacular showing at Fischhoff!

Bravo Trio Iris, Quartet Degas, Calliope Trio, and Archon Piano Quartet for advancing to the semi-finals.

4.2.16 Congratulations to **Zachary Brandon**, violin student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee for advancing in the 41st Annual Stuhlberg International String Competition. Twelve semifinalists from around the world compete on Saturday, May 21, 2016, in Dalton Center Recital Hall on the campus of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan before a panel of judges and an audience. Semifinalists will perform a selection from a required list of Bach and a movement(s) from a standard concerto. Six finalists will be chosen to perform in the competition finals on the evening of Saturday, May 21, 2016. <http://www.stulberg.org/competition/competition-and-application-guidelines/>

4. 2. 16 Violinist **Claire Arias-Kim**, 14, of Almita Vamos, participated in a master class with esteemed violinist Rachel Barton Pine Saturday, April 2 at the Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin. The event was sponsored by the Elgin Symphony Orchestra and the Gail Borden Public Library. Claire performed Ziguenerweisen by Pablo de Sarasate. The masterclass was a featured program of the ESO's week-long tribute to Maud Powell, and culminated in all-Dvořák ESO performance led by conductor David Danzmayr and featuring Rachel Barton Pine. The Elgin Symphony Orchestra, whose mission is to serve and engage a broad audience through the performance of powerful symphonic music and dynamic educational programs while developing strong community relationships, offers several masterclasses a year.

4.3.16 **Academy Sweeps 4th Annual A.N.& Pearl G. Barnett Chamber Music Competition!**

Grand Award Winner and Strings & Piano Division 1st Place Winner, **Iris Piano Trio** -- Ria Honda, Alexandra Kim and Natalie Nedvetsky (coached by Paul Vanderwerf and Milana Pavchinskaya)

2nd Place - **Vibrante Quartet** -- Hannah White, Zachary Brandon, Freya Irani and Leevy Williams (coached by Mathias Tacke)

3rd Place - **Quartet Degas** -- Maya Buchanan, Joshua Brown, Tess Krope and Josiah Yoo (coached by Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos)

3.24.16 FISCHOFF NATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITION

Congratulations to the six Academy Chamber Music ensembles accepted to the Junior Division Quarterfinals of the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Association Competition!

Two piano trios, one piano quartet, and three string quartets will compete in the next round of live performances on May 6, 2016 on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, USA.

Archon Piano Quartet - Nicholas Brown, Steven Song, Annamarie Wellems, Daniel Szefer

(Abraham Stokman and Rodolfo Vieira, coaches)

Calliope Trio - Karisa Chiu, Nathan Mo, Andrew Guo

(Tatyana Stepanova and Paul Vanderwerf, coaches)

Degas Quartet - Maya Buchanan, Joshua Brown, Tess Krope, Josiah Yoo

(Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos, coaches)

Trio Iris - Ria Honda, Alexandra Kim, Natalie Nedvetsky

(Milana Pavchinskaya and Paul Vanderwerf, coaches)

Vibrante Quartet - Hannah White, Zachary Brandon, Freya Irani, Leevy Williams

(Mathias Tacke, coach)

Vitae String Quartet - John Heo, Claire Arias-Kim, Peter Morin, Brendan Tarm

(Mathias Tacke, coach)

Kudos to 2nd Alternate - Akros Piano Trio - Byron Fulop Laing, John Schindler, Lydia Rhea

(Abraham Stokman and Rodolfo Vieira, coaches)

3.14.16

Congratulations to **Quartet Degas --Maya Buchanan, Joshua Brown, Tess Krope, and Josiah Yoo**, coached by Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos, selected to compete in the final rounds of the SPSQC on April 16. The top 6 scoring groups (listed in alphabetical order) were invited. 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.

Previous MIC Academy Winners!

2015

Gold Medal — Atara String Quartet (The Academy, Chicago)

2014

Silver Medal — Atara String Quartet (The Academy, Chicago)

2012

Haydn Prize — Quartet Ventoso (The Academy, Chicago)

2010

Gold Medal — Emerald String Quartet (The Academy, Chicago)

Silver Medal — Quartet Danaë (The Academy, Chicago)

2009

Gold Medal — Aurelia String Quartet (The Academy, Chicago)

Silver Medal — Quartet Danaë (The Academy, Chicago)

2008

Silver Medal — Quartet Polaris (The Academy, Chicago)

2007

Gold Medal — Ridere Quartet (The Academy, Chicago)

Silver Medal — Zeloso String Quartet (The Academy, Chicago)

3.12.16 **Nathan Mo**, 17, Academy cello student of Hans Jensen, won the Musichorale Scholarship Competition on Saturday, March 12 with a performance of Tchaikovsky's Rococo Variations. **Zechary Mo**, 14, Academy violin student of Almita Vamos received Honorable Mention with the third movement of the Bruch Violin Concerto. Nathan will perform on the Musichorale's Spring Concert on April 24 at the Ozinga Auditorium at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights.

Each year, Musichorale hosts a vocal contest in the fall and an instrumental contest in the spring, and awards three monetary prizes: \$1,000 first place, \$500 second place, \$250 third place winners, as well as honorable mentions.

The 2015 instrumental winner was violinist John Heo.

3.6.16 Joshua **Brown**, 16, violin student of Almita and Roland Vamos, won the Opera Society's Eleanor Pearce Sherwin Scholarship. The applicants for "piano, strings, and other solo instruments" were between the ages of 14 and 35.

Joshua played select movements from Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, Mozart Sonata K.301, Bach Sonata No. 1, and Waxman Carmen Fantasie. As a scholarship recipient, Joshua will perform in a recital next October. Previous Academy winners include violinists Karisa Chiu and Lydia Umlauf, '10.

3.5.16 Congratulations to violinists **Karisa Chiu**, 16, Academy student of Almita Vamos and **Hannah White**, 16, Academy student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee, winners of the March 5th **Musicians Club of Women Scholarship** audition.

Karisa is the recipient of the 2016 Jerome and Elaine Nerenberg Foundation Scholarship and Hannah is the recipient of the Farwell Trust Award. The students will receive cash prizes and a free three-year membership in the Musicians Club of Women. They will also perform later in the year when the club presents a monthly concert series for the public in Preston Bradley Hall, Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington, and in Buchanan Chapel, Fourth Church, North Michigan Avenue at Delaware Street, Chicago for MCW members and guests at the Union League Club of Chicago.

About the Musicians Club of Women

Musicians Club of Women (MCW) is the oldest musical club in America. 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." Ensuing years witnessed phenomenal growth in both the size of the membership and the amount of musical activity. In an age prior to the existence of musical impresarios, the Amateur Musical Club acted in this capacity, presenting concerts by some of the greatest artists of the period, including Jan Paderewski, José Iturbi, Alexander Scriabin, Dame Myra Hess, Edward MacDowell and the noted American violinist Maud Powell, to mention only a few. The spirit of philanthropy and of supporting women musicians developed early in the club's history. In 1893, the proceeds of a benefit concert were used to establish and maintain a music scholarship for young women. Thus began one of the most important traditions of Musicians Club of Women—the awarding of annual scholarships to assist young women in furthering their musical studies.

2.28.16 The Iris Trio, **Ria Honda**, violin, **Alexandra Kim**, cello, and **Natalie Nedvetsky**, piano, participated in a CSO sponsored Master Class with esteemed cellist and CSO Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant Yo-Yo Ma. The trio performed the Cassado Piano Trio in C Major. The trio is coached by Milana Pavchinskaya and Paul Vanderwerf.

2. 2016 PRCO Scholarship Winners - The Park Ridge Civic Orchestra awards 2 Student Scholarships every year. Each scholarship will be presented to the winners at the upcoming March 16th Park Ridge Civic Orchestra concert. Over the past 23 seasons the PRCO has awarded more than \$30,000 to deserving students to continue their musical studies at the college level. In addition to the cash award, winners are often given performance opportunities. **Nicholas Brown**, violin student of Almita and Roland Vamos, won the J. Mark Waltz Memorial Scholarship, underwritten by Karin Waltz in honor of her late husband, J. Mark Waltz, a long-time member of the PRCO's bass section. **Leevy Williams**, cello student of Gilda Barston and Hans Jensen, was a co-winner of the Rotary International Educational Scholarship, underwritten by the Rotary Club of Park Ridge.

2.21.16 Success at 2016 MYA Discover Chamber Music Competition

Congratulations to the Academy's **Calliope Trio**, Open Division Overall Winner and Strings/Piano Category Winner of the Midwest Young Artists 8th Annual Discover National Chamber Music Competition. The competition, held at Ravinia Festival's Bennett Gordon Hall on Sunday, February 21, is designed to provide an educational as well as a competitive experience for young chamber ensembles. Contestants competed for over \$5,000 in cash prizes and scholarships and the winner of each division will perform in a Winners Recital on March 12, 2016 at the Midwest Young Artists Center.

The Calliope Trio, **Andrew Guo, piano; Karisa Chiu, violin; Nathan Mo**, cello (coached by Tatyana Stepanova & Paul Vanderwerf), performed Mendelssohn's Piano Trio #2 in C minor, Opus 66, *allegro energico e con fuoco* and Babadjanian's Piano Trio in f-sharp minor, *allegro vivace*. The Academy's Cantare Piano Quintet received Overall and String/Piano Division Winner Honorable Mention - **Seoyun Baek, piano; Isabella Brown, Barbara Juminaga, Zechary Mo, violins/viola; Mia Wimbiscus, cello** (coached by Elaine Felder and Sang Mee Lee).

Other Instruments Honorable Mention went to MIC's Trio Moderne, Jisu Yang, piano; Ellie Kim, violin; Daniel Aisenberg, clarinet (coached by Milana Pavchinskaya)

Previous Awards: In 2015, Étoile Quartet won the Open Division Overall Winner and Strings/Piano Category Winner (Gallia Kastner, Serena Harnack, Freya Irani and Alexandra Kim) and the Atara String Quartet (Hannah White, Karisa Chiu, Tess Krope, and Krystian Chiu) and Fortis Piano Quartet (Kitsho Hosotani, Joshua Brown, Nathan Mo, and Daniel Szefer) received Strings/ Piano Honorable Mention. In 2014, the Overall Division

Winner and Strings Category Winner went to the VOX String Quartet (Hansuh Rhee, Serena Harnack, Nathan Mo, and Mira Williams).

2.13.16 Congratulations to the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra's Robert Stanger Young Artist Concerto winner, Karisa Chiu, 16, Palatine, Academy violin student of Almita Vamos. The auditions are held each winter to provide a forum for outstanding area high school instrumentalists to compete for the opportunity to perform a concerto movement with the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra. These awards are in memory of Dr. Robert Stanger, President of Elmhurst College, who also served as President of the Board of Directors of the Elmhurst Symphony from 1968-1972.

2.7.16 Quartet Degas wins Honorable Mention with the first movement of Brahms' String Quartet No. 1 in C Minor at the 21st Annual Rembrandt Chamber Players High School Chamber Music Competition.

Congratulations to **Maya Buchanan, Josh Brown, Josiah Yoo, Tess Krope**, coaches Sang Mee Lee and Roland Vamos. Founded in 1996, the RCP Annual High School Chamber Music Competition is widely regarded as one of the premier youth competitions in the country.

2.6.16 Congratulations to the 60th annual DuPage Symphony Orchestra Young Artists Auditions winner Academy cellist **Nathan Mo**, 17, Rolling Meadows. Mr. Mo will perform Tchaikovsky's Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33 on March 20, 3PM with the DSO. Honorable Mention: **Ria Honda**, 15, Wilmette, Academy violin student of Almita Vamos.

1.30.16 Karisa Chiu, 16, Academy violin student of Almita Vamos, was named first place winner of the **2016 Blount-Slawson Young Artists Competition**. Karisa will perform the Sibelius Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47, with the Montgomery Symphony on April 25th, 2016. Huntingdon College hosted the Montgomery Symphony League's competition on January 30–31. The program, sponsored by the Blount Foundation and the Guice Slawson family, brings select U.S. young musicians in grades 7–12 in strings, winds, brass, and percussion to Montgomery for competition, performance, and prizes. First place winners earn \$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.

Academy cellist Nathan Mo, 17, student of Hans Jorgen Jensen, was a finalist in the competition and received a Merit Award.

Blount-Slawson Young Artists Competition Goals:

- To promote a professional standard of performance among young musicians through the experience of a competitive forum
- To afford young musicians the opportunity to be judged by artists of recognized standing
- To select a talented young musician to perform with the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra.

1.23.16 John Schindler, piano student of Alan Chow, received Honorable Mention at the MTNA East Central Division Senior Piano Competition. In addition, John has been selected to be one of 12 finalists in the Charleston Symphony Orchestra PepsiCo National Young Artist Competition. The finalists will go to Charleston mid-April to compete for four prizes and the opportunity to perform their concerto in a public concert with the CSO. For the preliminary round, John submitted a video of himself performing the last movement of Rachmaninoff's second concerto with the Brevard orchestra this past summer. John was the only pianist to advance to the final round (breakdown of the finalists' instruments is as follows: flute - 2, oboe - 1, saxophone - 1, trumpet - 1, violin - 1, cello - 2, harp - 1, piano - 1, voice - 2

1.9.16 - Congratulations ANDREW GUO MTNA Composition Competition National Winner!

The Music Teachers National Association Performance Competitions provide educational experiences for students and teachers and to recognize exceptionally talented young artists and their teachers in their pursuit of musical excellence. The state competitions are considered the primary educational level with the division and national levels showcasing outstanding performance and honoring significant pedagogical achievement.

2015 Senior Division

Andrew Guo, 17, Winner, Academy composition student of Matthew Hagle

Title: Seven Images for solo piano

Andrew's winning piece will be performed at the National Convention in San Antonio, Texas this April.

Performances of Note – **Joshua Brown** has been invited to appear on NPR's From the Top with Host Christopher O'Riley. The program will be recorded in Lake Jackson, Texas on Friday, March 4, 2016 at the Clarion Music Performance Center. Josh will play Wieniawski Polonaise in D Major. From the Top is America's largest national platform dedicated to celebrating the stories, talents, and character of classically-trained young musicians. Through live events, NPR and YouTube broadcasts, scholarships, and leadership programs, they empower extraordinary young people to engage and inspire music lovers of all ages. From the Top is the most popular weekly one-hour classical music program on public radio, heard by more than half a million listeners in more than 220 markets.

Josiah Yoo - As a 2015 Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award recipient, Josiah will perform Pezzo Capriccioso by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky on NPR's From the Top with Host Christopher O'Riley on April 25. The broadcast was recorded at the Allen Theatre, Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX.

1.9.16 - Karisa Chiu, 16, Academy student of Almita Vamos, winner of the **2016 Arthur D. Montzka Young Artists Concerto Competition**. Karisa will join the Kishwaukee Symphony Orchestra on Saturday, Feb. 27, performing Violin Concerto in d, Op. 47, by Jean Sibelius. **Ayoun Kim**, 17, Academy student of Hans Jensen, was named runner up. The competition was held at the Northern Illinois University Boutell Memorial Concert Hall on Saturday, January 9, 2016. More information about the Arthur D. Montzka Memorial Concert on Feb. 27, visit <http://kishorchestra.org/season/events.html>.

1.10.16 - The DePaul Concerto Festival for Young Performers - 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. Winners perform a movement of a concerto with the Oistrakh Symphony of Chicago and are given a professional DVD recording of the concert.

CELLO

Honorable Mention with Distinction

Lydia Rhea – 16, student of Hans Jensen, Elgar, E., Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85, Mvt. 4

Honorable Mention

Brendan Tarm – 16, student of Gilda Barston, Elgar, E., Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85, Mvt. 1 & 2

Annamarie Wellems – 16, student of Tanya C. Carey, Elgar, E., Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85, Mvt. 4

VIOLA

Honorable Mention

Peter Morin – 16, student of Li-Kuo Chang, Hoffmeister, F.A., Concerto in D Major, Mvt. 1

VIOLIN

Winners

Isabella Brown – 13, student of Almita and Roland Vamos, Bach, J. S., Concerto in E Major, BWV 1041, Mvt.

1

Ria Honda – 15, student of Almita and Roland Vamos, Bruch, M., Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op 26, Mvt. 2

Honorable Mention

Claire Arias-Kim – 14, student of Almita Vamos, Bruch, M., Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op 26, Mvt. 2

Ria Honda Advances in MENUHIN COMPETITION, LONDON, APRIL 2016

Ria Honda, 15, Academy student of Almita Vamos, has been selected as a Junior Competitor in the long-standing Menuhin Competition. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Yehudi Menuhin's birthday, the Menuhin Competition returns to London for the first time since 2004. International soloists and 44 of the world's best young violinists will star in an 11-day festival of concerts and events for all ages. Hosted by the Royal Academy of Music, junior participants will compete for a 1-year loan of a fine Italian violin by Florian Leonhard Fine Violins, as well as cash prizes and scholarships. The Menuhin Competition is the only violin competition asking jury members to perform a concert and give a public masterclass thus offering outstanding education and entertainment to competitors and audiences alike.

MIC Academy alumna Kelly Talim and HyunJae Lim will compete in the Senior Division.

Midwest Young Artists hosted the **20th Walgreens National Concerto Competition** on December 28 and 29. The philosophy of the Walgreens Concerto Competition is to provide young musicians with a positive learning experience in a nurturing and supportive environment. Prizes for this solo competition include an opportunity to perform with the MYA Symphony Orchestra. The Overall Winners will perform at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall at Northwestern University on February 28, 2016.

MIC is proud to congratulate the following Academy winners! Special acknowledgement to **Zachary Brandon**, Open Senior Division Overall Winner and String Category Winner. Visit <https://mya.org/> for a full list of winners.

Senior Division Winners

Overall Winner

Zachary Brandon, 17, violin, student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee

String Division Winner

Zachary Brandon, 17, violin, student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee

String Division Honorable Mention

Leevy Williams, 17, cello, student of Hans Jorgen Jensen and Gilda Barston

Karisa Chiu, 16, violin, student of Almita Vamos

Alexandra Kim, 17, cello, student of Hans Jorgen Jensen

Junior Division Winners

String Division Winner

Isabella Brown, 13, violin, student of Almita and Roland Vamos

Lydia Rhea, 16, student of Hans Jensen, is the winner of the 2015 Carmel Symphony Orchestra's (CSO) 35th Young Artists Competition. Lydia was last year's CSO Young Artists Competition runner-up. "We are pleased to present first-place winner, Lydia Rhea, at our Family Fun! Concert on January 31. Talented players such as Lydia are an inspiration to children who attend this concert each year. In addition to seeing Lydia perform, children are invited on stage by age groups to experience great classical music and then try various instruments in the lobby following the concert," says Dr. David Bowden, artistic director of the Carmel Symphony Orchestra. As the first place winner, Rhea will perform January 31, 2016 with CSO at the Family Fun! Concert sponsored by the CSO League at the Palladium. She also receives a scholarship award of \$1000, made possible by the generous sponsorship from the Steinway Piano Gallery.

<https://www.carmelsymphony.org/blog/item/cso-announces-2015-young-artist-competition-winner-cellist-lydia-rhea>

Sejong Competition - The Twelfth Annual Sejong Music Competition was held on Sunday, December 6, 2015 at the University of Illinois at Chicago Performing Arts Center. This competition is open to all pre-college violin and piano students.

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 there is 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.

<http://www.sejongculturalsociety.org/music/past/2015/winners.php>

PIANO SENIOR

1st Place: John Schindler – 16, student of Alan Chow (winner of Best Interpretation of a Korean Piece)

VIOLIN SENIOR

1st Place: Karisa Chiu – 16, student of Almita Vamos (winner of Best Interpretation of a Korean Piece)

2nd Place: Zachary Brandon – 17, student of Almita Vamos & Hye-Sun Lee

Honorable Mention: Ria Honda – 15, student of Almita & Roland Vamos (tie)

Honorable Mention: John Heo – 15, student of Almita Vamos (tie)

2015 MTNA Illinois Competition Winners

The Music Teachers National Association Performance Competitions provide educational experiences for students and teachers and to recognize exceptionally talented young artists and their teachers in their pursuit of musical excellence. The state competitions are considered the primary educational level with the division and national levels showcasing outstanding performance and honoring significant pedagogical achievement.

Illinois String Competition

Josiah Yoo, Winner, Senior String Division, student of Hans Jensen

Steven Song, Alternate, Senior String Division, student of Gerardo Ribeiro

Illinois Piano Competition

Natalie Nedvetsky, Illinois State HM, Senior Piano Division student of Jim Giles

Next Round: Josiah Yoo and John Schindler (WI State Winner), piano student of Alan Chow, will compete in the East Central Divisional Competition on January 15–16, 2016, Goshen College, Goshen, IN

2015 MTNA East Division Composition Winners

Holden Mui, Winner, Junior Division, student of Matthew Hagle,

Andrew Guo, Winner, Senior Division, student of Matthew Hagle

Holden and Andrew advance to the National Competition January, 2016.

Freya Irani, 17, viola student of Roland and Almita Vamos, received an Honorable Mention at the Bolz Young Artist Competition in Madison, WI, held November 7, 2015. Young artists from across the state of Wisconsin compete in the Bolz Young Artist Competition's two preliminary rounds for a chance to perform a movement from a concerto with the Madison Symphony Orchestra during the final round, which will be held in the Capitol Theater at the Overture Center in January 2016.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ACADEMY ALUMNA KATE LIU 17th International Chopin Competition - 3rd Place Bronze Medal Winner!

It isn't just every day, or every year for that matter, that any competitor from the United States is among the Chopin International Competition finalists and prizewinners. In fact, no American has won a first prize since 1970. It's a very select group of pianists who share the honor, a group which includes such famous pianists as Maurizio Pollini, Martha Argerich, Krystian Zimerman, Garrick Ohlsson and Mitsuko Uchida. However 2015 was a breakthrough year for the United States and for one very special pianist, Kate Liu. At age 21, Liu, this young pianist, originally from Winnetka, has taken the music world by storm. She first began her studies at the Music

Institute of Chicago in 2004 with the late Emilio del Rosario and went on to study with Micah Yui and Alan Chow at MIC before her acceptance to the Curtis Institute of Music in 2013 where she currently studies with Robert McDonald. She was member of the inaugural Academy class at the Music Institute, a program which has consistently produced top performing classical musicians like violinist Ben Beilman, violist Matthew Lipman and cellist Gabriel Cabezas.

From Warsaw, Poland: Monday, October 19, 2015 by David Polk

Last night, the finals of the Chopin Piano Competition began in the national concert hall here in Warsaw, Poland. For the last three weeks, this hall has been the center of great speculation, emotion, excitement, disappointment and music, culminating in ten performances of concertos by Chopin's great national hero.

On this first night of the finals, there was a clear winner, at least according to the audience's response, and that was **Winnetka native Kate Liu**. Of four performances of the same concerto (Chopin's first concerto), Liu performed fourth. And while many in the hall looked a bit tired after hearing the same piece for the third time, the audience and orchestra perked up and the few remaining empty seats filled up as the **Music Institute of Chicago alumna** touched the keys of the Steinway.

The orchestra didn't even finish playing its final notes before yells of excitement were heard and about half the audience rose to their feet, which did not happen for the other performers.

The critical response by the brutally honest press here in Poland has been positive. After her third round performance, Dorota Szwarcman of the weekly magazine Polityka wrote that other performers were "eclipsed by Kate Liu." Music lovers and music press alike have been surrounding Kate, wondering whether she'll be crowned the next Chopin champion in less than 48 hours.

WFMT's live broadcast of the Chopin Competition winner's concert from Warsaw begins at noon CST Wednesday. Live daily 9 am reports continue through Tuesday. (wfmt.com/chopin)

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10.14.15 The Sphinx Virtuosi graced the Perelman Stage of Carnegie Hall's Isaac Stern Auditorium marking the twelfth anniversary of this concert series. In addition to the featured performance, Sphinx Virtuosi violinist **Hannah White**, student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee, was presented the Linda and Isaac Stern Charitable Foundation Award, for her artistry and talent. The scholarship is named after Isaac Stern, violinist,

educator, humanitarian, and savior of Carnegie Hall. Hannah is touring with the critically acclaimed all Black and Latino Sphinx Virtuosi, a conductorless ensemble comprised of alumni winners of the Sphinx Competition.

10.10.15 John Schindler, piano student of Alan Chow, won the MTNA WI State Senior Piano Competition last week, and will move on to the East Central Division Competition in Goshen, Indiana on January 16. John performed Bach Chromatic Fantasy & Fugue in D minor, Beethoven Op. 7, mvt. I, and Ravel - Gaspard de la nuit "Ondine" and "Scarbo".

10.1.15 Joshua Brown, violin student of Almita and Roland Vamos, will perform on Copland's Music of the Heartland Concert with the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra at 7:00pm on Saturday, October 17.

From the website: Rounding out the program will be violin phenom and Stanger Young Artist Audition Winner, Joshua Brown performing Waxman's "Carmen".

Andrew Guo, piano student of Alan Chow, will perform at the Chicago/Midwest Chapter of the American Liszt Society's Fifth Annual Franz Liszt Birthday Celebration Gala at Nichols Concert Hall, Saturday, October 24 at 7:30pm. Andrew will perform "Tarantella" (Venezia e Napoli).

Daniel Szefer, piano student of Ralph Neiweem, will perform at his CSO debut with Paderewski Symphony Orchestra at Chicago Symphony Center at 3:00pm on Sunday, November 8. The Orchestra honors the legacy of Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860-1941), one of the greatest pianists from the Golden Age of Piano.

9.1.15 Natalie Nedvetsky, piano student of Jim Giles, has been selected to participate in the Wilhelm Kempff Academy Beethoven Master Classes in Positano, Italy in October. In 1957 Wilhelm Kempff held his first Beethoven course in his house "Casa Orfeo" in Positano/southern Italy, which was built according to his own plans. The inauguration of the first course took place with the participation of his friend and colleague Alfred Cortot and he continued holding these courses until 1982. Over the years a large number of successful pianists of later generations arrived to work in peace and quiet on Beethoven's sonatas and piano concertos.

9.1.15 Hannah White, violin student of Hye-Sun Lee and Almita Vamos, will once again tour with SPHINX VIRTUOSI, one of the nation's most dynamic professional chamber orchestras. Comprised of 18 of the nation's top Black and Latino classical soloists, these alumni of the internationally renowned Sphinx Competition come

together each fall as cultural ambassadors to reach new audiences. Hanna will tour with Academy alum and former Almita Vamos violin student, Clayton Penrose Whitmore.

<http://www.sphinxmusic.org/performance-calendar-2015.html>

7.31.15 2015 Academy wins Gold and Silver in Thomas & Evon Cooper International Competition

Eighteen-year-old Gallia Kastner and 15-year-old Belle Ting were both awarded first-prize medals. Second prize went to 15-year-old Joshua Brown for his stunning performance of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1. In truth, a case could be made for all three contestants earning first prize. Kastner's authoritative performance of Brahms' Violin Concerto in D, Ting's sparkling reading of Glazunov's rarely played Concerto in A minor and Brown's soulful take on the Shostakovich were all on an Olympian level. For more on the final performances, please click on this review:

http://www.cleveland.com/musicdance/index.ssf/2015/08/2015_cooper_competition_ends_i.html

7.30.15 The Thomas & Evon Cooper International Competition has announced the three finalists who will perform complete concerti with the Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall in Cleveland, OH on Friday night, July 31:

Joshua Brown (MIC Academy, Gurnee, IL), Gallia Kastner (MIC Academy, Arlington Heights, IL), and Belle Ting (Taiwan).

The Audience Award was presented to Joshua Brown.

Karisa Chiu (MIC Academy, Palatine, IL) was awarded 4th place (\$1,000) and Maya Buchanan (MIC Academy, Rapid City, SD) received 6th place (\$1,000).

Prizes to be awarded on Friday include \$10,000 for first place, \$6,000 for second place, and \$3,000 for third place. The top three contestants will also be eligible for a full tuition scholarship to the Oberlin Conservatory of Music.

The Music Institute of Chicago is proud of the incredibly talented violin students who participated in the competition over the past few days--**Hannah White, Zachary Brandon, Julian Rhee, Nicholas Brown, Ria Honda (Top 10 Finalist), Karisa Chiu (4th place - Top 6 Recital Finalist), Maya Buchanan (6th place - Top 6 Recital Finalist), Joshua Brown, (Top 3 finalist) and Gallia Kastner (Top 3 finalist).**

7.9.15 Maya Buchanan has been named Runner-Up in the Aspen Music Festival and School Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto Competition.

Collaborative Pianist: Tamara Goldstein

6.2.15 Hannah White, 15, violin student of Almita Vamos and Hye-Sun Lee, has been named a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholar. Jack Kent Cooke is a private, independent foundation dedicated to advancing the education of exceptionally promising students who have financial need. The Foundation supports exceptional students from elementary school to graduate school through scholarships, grants, direct service, and knowledge creation and dissemination. Previous Academy winners include Mira Williams, Adé Williams, and Matthew Lipman.

6.2.15 Fortis Piano Quartet , grand prize winner of the 3rd Annual A.N. & Pearl G. Barnett Chamber Music Competition, recorded on **Introductions, 98.7 WFMT**, which will be aired later this summer. **Joshua Brown and Kitsho Hosotani, violin/viola, Nathan Mo, cello, Daniel Szefer, piano are coached by Tatyana Stepanova and Rodolfo Vieira.**