



PRESS RELEASE

A Forum for Musical Life

Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille to present new competition concept for the Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition Hanover

Hanover, Germany, October 2, 2019 | In 2021, Hanover will see the introduction of the “Joseph Joachim“, the first prize of the Joseph Joachim Violin Competition. Yesterday, the competition’s new artistic directors, Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille, presented their comprehensive concept for the renowned violin competition, which is hosted by Stiftung Niedersachsen. “We would like to embed the competition into the current requirements posed by the international concert scene. Our goal is to offer participants a forum for their journey towards an active career as performing musicians”, Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille explain. In the future, the competition will no longer define itself by the amount of monetary awards, but rather, by the artistic personalities of its participants and the way in which the young musicians captivate audiences on the concert stage. The artistic directors elaborate: “With changes in requirements and a new jury structure, the Joseph Joachim Violin Competition will aim to attract more mature violinists”. The age limit for applicants will be raised to 32 years. The competition remains closely connected to its long-standing partners and venues, namely the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media and the *NDR Radiophilharmonie*.

New Schedule

The 2021 Joseph Joachim Violin Competition’s opening event will take place on the Cumberland stage of *Schauspiel Hannover* and include surprise performances and artistic contributions of other genres. The competition itself will begin as usual with two preliminary rounds and 35 participants. Only 10 violinists will advance into the semi-final round, which is divided into two parts: a work accompanied by the Camerata Bern chamber orchestra (semi-final round 1) and a recital of a string quartet movement (semi-final round 2). The quartet movement to be played will only be announced 24 hours before the performance. Only 4 participants will then advance into the final round, where they will play a grand violin concerto with the NDR Radiophilharmonie conducted by Andrew Manze. The program will also include the commissioned contemporary work. Afterward, the jury will deliberate. The evening – and the competition – will conclude with an awards ceremony followed by a grand gala party at the NDR *Sendesaal*.

New Jury Structure

With regard to the various professional opportunities awaiting today’s violinists, Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille have decided to adjust the jury structure. From now on, the pre-selection of participants will fall to the string section leaders of the NDR Radiophilharmonie, thus becoming part of orchestra business. The competition jury will include nine members: five violinists and four jury members from concert-related fields. The following jury members will accompany the 2021 competition: Ana Chumachenco, Suyoen Kim, David Takeno, Donald Weilerstein and Carolin Widmann, as well as Eleonore Büning, Robert Levin, Andrew Manze (from the semi-final round on) and Christine Schäfer. As competition hosts, the artistic directors will not be part of any jury.

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New Prize Structure

All four finalists will receive a monetary award in the amount of EUR 10,000 each. Additionally, the new “Joseph Joachim” prize in the amount of EUR 30,000 will be awarded to a single participant from the group of finalists.

Further prizes include the audience award in the amount of EUR 2,000, the prize for best interpretation of the commissioned work in the amount of EUR 5,000, and a chamber music award in the amount of EUR 3,000.

The prize for best interpretation of the commissioned work will be awarded by the composer of said work, while the ensemble performing with the finalists will give out the chamber music award. The final round also holds a number of non-monetary awards: The *Fritz Behrens Stiftung* will once again provide the valuable Guadagnini violin on loan, a CD production will be made possible, and the music publisher G. Henle will be offering an Urtext award for the best semi-final performance. Additionally, numerous prestigious concert engagements will be made available.

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At the invitation of the artistic directors, several prominent concert hosts and representatives have confirmed their attendance of the competition. By participating in the semi-final round, young musicians will have a chance to be selected for concerts in cooperation with, for example, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, the Düsseldorf Symphony Orchestra, the MDR Sinfonieorchester, Tonhalle Zürich, Camerata Bern, Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels, Beethoven House Bonn, and festivals such as the Heidelberger Frühling, Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Heimbach, or Hitzacker. The respective representatives will select the musicians they wish to invite.

Stiftung Niedersachsen has been hosting the “Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition Hanover” since 1991. The competition is named after Joseph Joachim, the exceptional musician who started his career in Hanover, Germany. It constitutes the foundation’s largest endowment program. The 11th competition season will take place from September 26 until October 9, 2021 in the capital of Lower Saxony.

For further questions, please contact:

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