

PRESS RELEASE

Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition starts on 26 September in Hanover The newly oriented competition is a forum for concert life

Hanover, Germany, September 23, 2021 | 32 exceptional talents will present themselves at the 11th Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition Hannover from September 26 to October 10. The new artistic directors, Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille, have turned the renowned competition into a forum for concert life. The focus is on the artistic personality of the young musicians and their concertal charisma. The audience can be excited about top-class concerts at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media and the NDR Landesfunkhaus. The Stiftung Niedersachsens' cooperation partners are the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media, the NDR Radiophilharmonie, NDR Kultur, Warner Classics, the Fritz Behrens Stiftung and the G. Henle Verlag.

World-class competition | According to the slogan *"Play Hannover, reach the world"*, five challenging rounds of competition are scheduled, in which the participants will present themselves in a multi-faceted way. *"The international concert business requires flexibility, courage and individuality. In the competition we will be able to experience who is a fantastic artist"*, says Antje Weithaas, artistic director of the competition. Only ten participants will pass on to the two semifinal sessions after the two-part preliminary round. In the first semifinal session, they prove their leadership qualities alongside the Camerata Bern with works by Mozart and Bartók. The second session of the semifinals requires them to create their own recital, thematically framed around the following quote: *"Home is where we start from, and it is no more and no less than that. It is where we begin, where we set off from. It's not where we stay; it's not somewhere that accompanies us unchanged. When we set off on our wanderings in pursuit of our desire, we are driven by a restless and a sense of exile to search for another home, another homeland."* (Emcke, Carolin: *How we desire, Melbourne/Australia 2018 [translated by Imogen Taylor], page 209-210*) The violinists had only two weeks to compile the programme. Apart from the theme, the only requirement is a first movement from a Haydn string quartet. The specific movement, however, is announced only about 40 hours before the performance and is to be played alongside the Kuss Quartett. *"The recital is a difficult and challenging task. It will show who can create a demanding concert evening in the shortest time, who can amaze us, shake us up, make us thoughtful and inspire us"*, explains Oliver Wille, artistic director of the competition.

In the final, only four musicians will perform together with the NDR Radiophilharmonie under the baton of Andrew Manze. In addition to a large violin concerto, they will present the commissioned work *"Im Garten zu spielen"* by Manfred Trojahn.

The new concept is also reflected in a new jury structure. It is composed of five violinists and four personalities from other concert life. Under the chairmanship of Carolin Widmann, who will serve on a jury for the first time, the violinists Ana Chumachenco, Suyoen Kim, Zohrab Tadevosyan, Ulf

Wallin and Donald Weilerstein as well as the singer Christine Schäfer, the pianist Robert Levin, the music journalist Eleonore Büning and the conductor Andrew Manze will decide.

Strong partnerships | The Joseph Joachim Violin Competition sets international standards. This is made possible by the long-standing cooperation with the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media (HMTMH), the NDR Radiophilharmonie and NDR Kultur as well as the Fritz Behrens Stiftung. *"Organising an international music competition in times of a pandemic is an enormous challenge. We are very grateful that we can make this classical music event possible together with our cooperation partners"*, says Lavinia Francke, Secretary General of the Stiftung Niedersachsen. *"The competition is a particularly important event for our university every three years"*, emphasises Prof. Dr. Susanne Rode-Breyman, President of HMTMH. *"We are delighted to be able to realise the idea of the COLOURED BOX, which we are working on in the course of our Masterplan 2030, for our students for the first time with Ana Chumachenko, Don Weilerstein, Robert Levin, Eleonore Büning as well as Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille."* Matthias Ilkenhans, manager of the NDR Radiophilharmonie, affirmed the orchestra's commitment to the competition: *"The orchestra appreciates the international appeal of the competition. Being able to pre-select for the competition has deepened our bond."* Since 2000, the Fritz Behrens Stiftung has awarded a violin by the Italian violin maker Giovanni Battista Guadagnini (Parma, approx. 1765) to a prize winner. *"With the valuable instrument of the Fritz Behrens Stiftung, the young artistic personalities can develop their talent"*, says Matthias Fontaine, Chairman of the Fritz Behrens Stiftung. With Warner Classics and the G. Henle Verlag, two important players have been acquired as new partners for the competition. A large number of cooperations with concert organisers, who will attend part of the concerts, offer new opportunities for the participants.

Prizes | The new main prize, the *"Joseph Joachim"*, comes with a monetary award of 30,000 EUR. Only one finalist will receive it on October 10. All four finalists will also be awarded 10,000 EUR each. Further prizes are the Audience Award with 2,000 EUR, the prize for the best interpretation of the commissioned work with 5,000 EUR and a Chamber Music Award with 3,000 EUR. The prize for the best interpretation of the commissioned work will be awarded by Manfred Trojahn together with the jury, the Chamber Music Award by the Kuss Quartett. In addition, various prizes will be awarded: the Fritz Behrens Stiftung will award the loan of the violin, Warner Classics will select one person from all the participants whose debut album will be communicated and marketed internationally, and the G. Henle publishing house will award a music voucher worth 500 EUR plus a 1,500 EUR cash prize. In addition, renowned concert organisers will award concert grants to selected semifinalists, such as the Lower Saxony State Orchestra, the Tonhalle Düsseldorf or the Heidelberger Frühling.

Complementary programme | The Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition Hannover will again send participants to special concerts in Lower Saxony in 2021. On Friday, October 8, they will perform in the stables of Agathenburg Castle, in the Evangelical Reformed Church in Göttingen, in the auditorium of the Juleum in Helmstedt, in Etelsen Castle (Langwedel), in the Haasenhof in Mandelsloh and in the Ruller Haus in Wallenhorst-Rulle. With the formats *"School Classes as Guests at the JJV"*, *"Young Reporters"* and *"Showtime"*, the competition again opens up exciting approaches to the world of classical music for children, teenagers and young adults. At the *"Terzett"*

*der Kritiker*innen*" on October 4, at the HMTMH, a dozen recordings of Mozart's G major Violin Concerto KV 216 will be discussed.

Competition facts

Since 1991, Stiftung Niedersachsen has been presenting the Joseph Joachim International Violin Competition Hannover. Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille, who took over the artistic directorship in 2019 from competition founder Krzysztof Wegrzyn, are seeking open-minded musicians who demonstrate impeccable mastery of their instrument while remaining humble servants of great composers and their scores – young artists who bravely strive for individuality, making bold musical statements with the violin: Musicians whose voice inspires deep emotions and shows an exceptional degree of versatility. Strong partners supplement the monetary awards offered by Stiftung Niedersachsen with around 30 concert invitations. Additionally, G. Henle is awarding sheet music and a three-year-loan of a Guadagnini violin will be awarded by the Fritz Behrens Stiftung. Warner Classics completes the price package with the distribution of a debut album worldwide.

Competition

Between September 26 and October 10, 2021 in Hanover, Germany

Stiftung Niedersachsen

Since 1987, Stiftung Niedersachsen has been supporting the arts, as well as cultural, academic, and educational programs throughout Lower Saxony. With its state-wide endowment efforts, the foundation supports non-profit projects, strengthening the region's diverse cultural profile. In addition to its active involvement, Stiftung Niedersachsen supports around 200 projects per year.

Artistic Directorship: Antje Weithaas and Oliver Wille

Antje Weithaas won the First Prize in the first Joseph Joachim Violin Competition in 1991. She is therefore the first competition winner to be directing the competition. Today, she is a world-renowned concert violinist and violin pedagogue. As a soloist, Antje Weithaas performs with some of the world's best-known ensembles. For over 10 years, she has directed the Camerata Bern, shaping the ensemble's musical profile. Her CD recordings have become reference milestones, sparking enthusiastic reactions, among them the complete recordings of Johann Sebastian Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for violin solo and the Solo Sonatas of Eugène Ysaÿe.

Oliver Wille will continue the close cooperation between the competition and the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Dance. Since 2011, he is Professor of Chamber Music at the university, leading an internationally renowned quartet studio. As a founding member of the acclaimed and innovative Kuss Quartet, he has been shaping the chamber music scene for over 25 years. Apart from their international concert careers, the four musicians have become known for pioneering new concert formats. Since 2015, the renowned violinist has been the artistic director of the Hitzacker Summer Music Days.



**Stiftung
Niedersachsen**

Partners

Important players in the Hanoverian music scene merge together for the Joseph Joachim Violin Competition. Stiftung Niedersachsen collaborates with the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media and NDR Radiophilharmonie, NDR Kultur, Fritz Behrens Stiftung (Fritz Behrens Foundation), Warner Classics as well as music publisher G. Henle.

Livestream

All competition concerts can be followed in the livestream at <https://www.jjv-hannover.de/live>.

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