



PASADENA  
SHOWCASE  
HOUSE  
*for the Arts*

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## **PASADENA SHOWCASE HOUSE FOR THE ARTS 31<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL INSTRUMENTAL COMPETITION AWARDS \$28,500 IN PRIZE MONIES TO ASPIRING MUSICIANS**

**PASADENA, CA**-- In a brilliant display of talent, 11 young musicians, ages 18 to 22, won a total of \$28,500 in the 31<sup>st</sup> annual Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts (PSHA) annual Instrumental Competition. The event was held October 20 at the Pasadena Conservatory of Music and chaired by longtime Pasadena resident Vikki Sung. To date, PSHA has awarded more than \$550,000 to promising music students since the competition began in 1985.

"It is our great privilege to support and encourage these tremendously talented students with their music education," stated PSHA President Dr. Lynn Mehl. "You can feel their passion and dedication to music in their performances."

"The caliber of talent on display at the competition was outstanding," remarked PSHA Instrumental Competition Chair Vikki Sung. "It's very gratifying to recognize and support such promising young musicians in their pursuit of a classical music education."

"It was a tremendous privilege to be able to hear the 11 young talents at the Pasadena Showcase Competition," said Jin-Shan Dai, who plays violin with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and served as the Judging Chair. "Words like 'gem in the making' and 'diamond in the rough' are often used to describe young musicians, but what we found was a treasure trove, filled with the most beautiful jewels. The experience was both eye opening and humbling," he concluded.

The Grand Prize for Exceptional Talent and Musicianship, in the amount of \$6,000, was awarded to Joachim Becerra Thomsen. The 21 year-old earned his Masters degree from the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen and is pursuing his Professional Studies Certificate in Flute Performance at The Colburn School. Joachim impressed the judges with his performance of Nielsen's Concerto for Flute and Orchestra. One judge called his performance "virtuosic and expansive." Joachim aspires to be an orchestral musician and perform as a soloist. Teaching will also be an element of his career. "I want to pass along what I have discovered about music to others," he said.

### **PSHA Awarded Ten Other Prizes**

Brass Awards: Second Place (\$2,500) to Cristina Cutts Dougherty (Colburn) and Connor Rowe (Colburn).

Woodwind Awards: First Place (\$4,000) to Eric Abramovitz to (USC Thornton School) and Victor Diaz (Colburn); Honorable Mention (\$500) to Elissa Brown (USC Thornton School).

String Awards: First Place (\$4,000) to Gallia Kastner (Colburn); Second Place (\$2,500) to Dong Nyounk Sunrise Kim (Colburn); Honorable Mention (\$500) to James Cooper (Colburn) and Nora Doyle (Colburn).

## ***PSHA Instrumental Competition Winners, page 2 of 3***

Jack Smith Memorial Award for Most Promising Talent: Twenty one year-old violinist Annelle Gregory (USC Thornton School) received the Jack Smith Memorial Award for Most Promising Talent in the amount of \$1,500.

After the performances, the finalists reflected on the significance of music in their lives.

James Cooper: "My advice to young musicians is to work hard, don't give up and never be satisfied to be the best kid in town."

Gallia Kastner: "Mom wanted me to focus on tennis like my sisters. But it became clear that wasn't my strength. When I picked up a violin, it was like reuniting with a missing limb."

Dong Nyouk Sunrise Kim: "I didn't pick the cello; it picked me. My sister played it and I wanted to be like her. I was nine and desperately wanted to learn to play "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star".

Selected from 43 applications, 11 finalists performed before a panel of seven dedicated judges, all of whom are musicians with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Jin-Shan Dai (Violin) headed the panel, which included Burt Hara (Clarinet), Elise Shope Henry (Flute), Thomas Hooten (Trumpet), Jonathan Karoly (Cello), Gregory Roosa (Horn), and Ben Ullery (Viola).

### **About Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts**

Each year, PSHA awards gifts and grants to a diverse list of non-profit organizations in support of their efforts in the community. This is in addition to their longstanding support of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association. The PSHA Instrumental Competition is one of many music education programs funded by the proceeds from the annual Pasadena Showcase House of Design, which will take place April 23 to May 21, 2017. To purchase tickets, or for more information or membership details about PSHA, please visit [www.pasadenashowcase.org](http://www.pasadenashowcase.org).



**Caption**

Seated left to right: Participants Annelle Gregory, Gallia Kastner, Nora Doyle, Dong Nyouk Sunrise Kim, James Cooper, Connor Rowe, Elissa Brown, Eric Abramovitz, Cristina Cuts Dougherty, Víctor Díaz, Joachim Becerra Thomsen.

Standing left to right: PSHA Instrumental Chair Vikki Sung, Judges Tom Hooten, Jin-Shan Dai, Gregory Roosa, Ben Ullery, Burt Hara, Elise Shope Henry, Jonathan Karoly, PSHA President Dr. Lynn Mehl.