

media release

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Canada's Honens International Piano Competition to award top prize in world of international music competitions

Calgary-based Honens Announces Strategic Enhancements

CALGARY, AB, January 24, 2011 – Honens International Piano Competition, one of the world's most prestigious international music competitions, announces strategic enhancements to be implemented for its 2012 Competition (October 17 to 26, 2012 in Calgary). Honens, a pioneer in delivering a comprehensive artistic and career development program to its Laureates since its first competition in 1992, will intensify the search for the unique, imaginative and informed talent that comprises the "Complete Artist." The enhancements, which affect pianist eligibility, competition length, jury composition, pianists' requirements, and the cash and artistic and career development awards, aim to redefine the world of music competitions for the 21st century.

Competitions and conservatories now discover and graduate an abundance of potential professionals. With limited performance opportunities posing challenges to emerging artists, some musicians are in danger of becoming "career competitors" who rarely have an opportunity to discover their own musical personalities. With the following enhancements, the Honens Competition serves as a meaningful audition process that the world's music community respects and on which it increasingly relies to deliver musicians who have great career potential.

COMPETITION ENHANCEMENTS

Eligibility and Competition Process

- Professionally-managed pianists may no longer take part in the 2012 Competition.

Pianists with professional representation have already made big steps in their careers by securing management and therefore cannot take full advantage of Honens' three-year Artistic & Career Development Program. A Honens Laureate may sign with a management company after the first year of this program. He/she would then be managed jointly for the remaining two years.

- **Quarterfinals: International Audition Round** – Fifty pianists (formerly 90) will be selected from the applicants to perform in important music cities including Berlin, London, Los Angeles and New York; ten pianists (formerly 21) advance.
- **Semifinals: Recital Round** – Ten pianists perform 60-minute solo recitals and 65-minute chamber music recitals in the Recital Round; five pianists advance.
- **Finals: Concerto Round** – Five pianists perform a concerto of their choice; one Competition Laureate will be named (reduced from three).

Honens narrows and intensifies its search for the Complete Artist by limiting the number of pianists invited to take part in all stages of the Competition.

Requirements of Pianists

- Two professional arts journalist interviews will be added to the competition process.

To establish a career in music today, a pianist must have his/her unique and distinctive voice, be a versatile musician and an effective communicator. To this end, Honens introduces an interview component to the 2012 Competition. A professional arts journalist will interview pianists twice – the first, a five-minute videotaped interview during the International Audition Round; a second ten-minute interview will be conducted with the five finalists. The Artist Selection (First) and Laureate Selection (Second) Juries evaluate the interviews based on a pianist's ability and willingness to communicate and his or her readiness and suitability for a major career in music. The language of all interviews is English, but proficiency in English will not be a factor in evaluation. However, Honens believes that a willingness to learn English is critical for the development of an international career. These interviews make up 10% of each jury's evaluation.

- Pianists may perform any solo repertory for their two solo recitals (40-minute International Audition Round recital and, when they advance, a 60-minute Recital Round recital).

Applicants are advised to consider each performance a concert and to design programs with the same care and on the same principles as for a public recital. While no repertory is required, pianists are asked to include a pivotal work from the piano literature. Juries are instructed to look for intelligent and imaginative programming. Recital Round pianists are encouraged to perform an encore after their solo recitals. While there is no commissioned work for the Competition, pianists are encouraged to include contemporary music in their programs.

- Recital Round pianists perform a 65-minute collaborative recital.

Honens enhances its commitment to chamber music and art song collaboration. The collaborative recital includes a violin sonata, a cello sonata and ten minutes of art song.

- Five pianists advance to the Concerto Round for a performance of their choice of concerto with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra.
- Pianists are evaluated as follows:
International Audition Round: 90% recital; 10% interview.
Recital and Concerto Rounds: 30% solo recital; 30% chamber music and art song recital; 30% concerto; 10% interview.

Competition Length

- The 2012 Competition will be shortened to ten days (October 17 to 26, 2012), reduced from 16 days. A juror's commitment for the Competition will now be 11 days. Collaborating artists are now required for one week, previously ten days.

Shortening the duration of the Competition facilitates the recruitment of jurors and collaborating musicians, many of whom are successful touring concert artists. Furthermore, most pianists taking part in competitions are still in school and can be penalized if they take too much time away from classes.

- Honens introduces a Mentor-in-Residence Program in 2012.

A highly respected, actively touring pianist will attend the final week of the Competition during which five pianists who do not advance to the Concerto Round perform free concerts for the public. The mentor listens to each concert and provides valuable feedback to each pianist during a 30-minute meeting. The mentor will perform a recital on the evening prior to the Finals, enhancing the Competition's festival atmosphere. The mentor also attends the Concerto Round after which he/she meets with the four finalists and Competition Laureate.

Jury Composition

- Honens will alter its jury composition to be more inclusive of those in the musical world who play a role in the concert artist's career.

Honens' seven-member Laureate Selection or Second Jury has always included pianists who actively tour. Four such pianists will serve as members of this Jury in 2012. In order to better identify musicians who are ready to professionalize their careers, the remaining jurors will represent essential partners in a concert artist's career: a conductor, a record executive, and a concert presenter. Similarly, the Artist Selection or First Jury, which selects pianists to advance from the International Audition Round to the Recital Round includes two pianists, an artist management representative and a concert presenter.

Cash Awards

The Enbridge Cash Awards

- The Honens Laureate will receive \$100,000 CAN, the largest prize in the world of international music competitions for emerging concert artists.
- Four unranked Finalists will each receive a cash award of \$10,000 CAN.
- All pianists advancing to the Recital Round are eligible for a \$2,500 CAN cash award.

Because of the Competition's festival atmosphere, Honens considers its \$2,500 CAN award for each pianist a fee rather than a prize. The five Recital Round pianists who do not advance to the Finals are eligible for this amount only if they stay through to the Competition's conclusion and perform a free public concert during the final week and meet with the Mentor-in-Residence and Laureate Selection Jury for feedback. Honens strongly believes that the value of its Competition is the opportunity for young artists to grow.

Artistic & Career Development Program

- One pianist will be named the 2012 Honens Laureate and be awarded the half-million dollar (CAN) three-year Artistic & Career Development Program.

At previous Honens Competitions, an Artistic & Career Development Program was shared by the three top-ranked pianists. By presenting this award to a single Laureate, Honens intensifies its efforts in delivering a transformative experience to a young artist that translates into a meaningful career.

- Honens will present debut performances and develop partnerships in career-building markets

Debuts will be presented in markets that may include Amsterdam, Berlin, London, Munich, New York, Paris and Toronto. The Laureate may be presented twice in these cities in order to build momentum. Publicists will be hired in each market. Honens will develop strategic partnerships with concert presenters, festivals and orchestras with an emphasis on the ability of engagements to further a career. The quality of engagements and these partnerships outweighs the needs for their quantity.

- The Laureate will now be in residence at The Banff Centre twice (previously once) over three years, where he/she will collaborate with potential touring partners and develop repertory and innovate performance projects.

- The Laureate will record for the Hyperion record label.

Hyperion Records, known especially for its catalogue of outstanding piano recordings, is one of the world's most successful independent classical music labels. Pianists recording for the London-based Hyperion include Marc-André Hamelin, Angela Hewitt, Stephen Hough and Steven Osborne. There is a natural synergy between Honens and Hyperion as both are committed to the long-term development of their artists.

Pianists may apply to take part in the 2012 Honens International Piano Competition starting April 1, 2011 at honens.com. The application deadline is February 1, 2012. Competition Quarterfinals take place in cities around the world in Spring 2012, and Semifinals and Finals takes place in Calgary, October 17 to 26, 2012. The Honens Competition is presented by Nexen Inc.; Lead Sponsors include Enbridge Inc., Statoil and TransAlta; Macleod Dixon LLP is a Supporting Sponsor.

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