

HONENS MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JON KIMURA PARKER ASSUMES ROLE AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR FOR HONENS

CALGARY, AB, January 9, 2018—The Esther Honens International Piano Competition Foundation is pleased to announce that Jon Kimura Parker has assumed the role of the organization’s Artistic Director. Mr. Parker’s appointment was first made public in March of last year.

“My history with Honens dates back to the inception of the competition; I was on the inaugural Honens jury in 1992, and performed privately for Esther Honens that year,” Mr. Parker comments. “She loved piano music, and would be so happy to know that her gift has brought so many fine young artists to Calgary, and that her legacy is felt throughout the musical world.”

Mr. Parker is a veteran of the international concert stage, with multiple solo appearances in the Berlin Philharmonie, Carnegie Hall, London’s South Bank, the Sydney Opera House, and the Beijing Concert Hall, Jon Kimura Parker continues to perform to great acclaim. In 2016, he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship at the Royal Conservatory of Toronto, and this past May was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. He was invested as an Officer of The Order of Canada in 1999.

“I am thrilled to assume the position of Artistic Director at Honens,” continues Mr. Parker. “My career started from winning the CBC Young Artists Competition and The Leeds International Piano Competition. I’ve served on juries from Honens to Cliburn, and I prepare my students at The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University for competitions every year. One of the things I love most about a piano competition at the level of Honens is that it inspires young artists to outdo themselves. When I was in my twenties and preparing for competitions, I was terrified of the high standard around me and I always managed to work harder than ever before.

“We have a brilliant team in place to ensure Honens’ continued stature in the international music community and I look forward to building on its commitment to quality and artistry.”

Mr. Parker is available for further comment at jkparker@honens.com.

Backgrounder Attached

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BACKGROUND

JON KIMURA PARKER OC, DMA

Jon Kimura Parker is a pianist known for his passionate artistry and engaging stage presence. He has performed as guest soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Wolfgang Sawallisch in Carnegie Hall, toured Europe with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Andre Previn, and shared the stage with Jessye Norman at Berlin's Philharmonie. He has worked with some of the world's leading conductors including Teddy Abrams, Pablo Heras-Casado, Claus Peter Flor, Hans Graf, Matthew Halls, Jeffrey Kahane, Peter Oundjian, Larry Rachleff, Bramwell Tovey, Xu Zhong, and Pinchas Zukerman. A true Canadian ambassador of music, Parker has given command performances for Queen Elizabeth II, the U.S. Supreme Court, and the Prime Ministers of Canada and Japan. He is an Officer of The Order of Canada, Canada's highest civilian honor.

Parker performs as duo partner with James Ehnes, Aloysia Friedmann, Lynn Harrell, Jamie Parker, Orli Shaham, and Cho-Liang Lin, with whom he has given world premieres of sonatas by Paul Schoenfield, John Harbison, and Steven Stucky. He performs regularly with the Miró Quartet and is a founding member of the Montrose Trio with violinist Martin Beaver and cellist Clive Greensmith. *The Washington Post's* review of the Montrose Trio's first tour in 2015 proclaimed it "poised to become one of the top piano trios in the world." As a member of the outreach project *Piano Plus*, Parker toured remote areas including the Canadian Arctic, performing classical music and rock 'n' roll on everything from upright pianos to electronic keyboards. In commemoration of his special performances in war-torn Sarajevo in 1995, he was a featured speaker alongside humanitarians Elie Wiesel and Paul Rusesabagina at the 50th Anniversary of the relief organization AmeriCares.

An unusually versatile artist, Parker has jammed with Audra McDonald, Bobby McFerrin, and Doc Severinsen, and this season performed tangos on two pianos with Pablo Ziegler. He also tours his new project *Off the Score* in a quintet that includes legendary Police drummer Stewart Copeland, featuring both original compositions and fresh takes on music by Ravel, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky. He hosted the television series *Whole Notes* on Bravo! and CBC Radio's *Up and Coming*. His YouTube channel showcases the *Concerto Chat* video series, with illuminating discussions of the piano concerto repertoire.

Recent and upcoming engagements include performances as concerto soloist with the Ann Arbor, Colorado, National (Washington, D.C.), Pittsburgh, San Diego, Toronto and Vancouver Symphony Orchestras as well as the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. He gives recitals with Cho-Liang Lin and throughout the season performs with the Montrose Trio.

Parker is a committed educator and is Professor of Piano at The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. His students have won international piano competitions, performed with major orchestras across the United States, and given recitals in Amsterdam, Beijing, New York, and Moscow. He has lectured at The Juilliard School, The Colburn School, Ravinia's Steans Institute, New York University, and Yale University. He is also Artistic Advisor of the Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival where he has given world premieres of new works by Peter Schickele and Jake Heggie. Parker has recorded the music of Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Chopin and P. D. Q. Bach for Telarc, Mozart for CBC, and Stravinsky, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Di Liberto, and Hirtz on his own label. His new recording *Fantasy* features fantasies of Schubert and Schumann, as well as the sensational *Wizard of Oz Fantasy* by William Hirtz, receiving this praise from *Classical Candor*: "The reading is riveting. Parker scores with another favorite recording of the year."

Jackie Parker studied with Edward Parker and Keiko Parker privately, Lee Kum-Sing at the Vancouver Academy of Music and the University of British Columbia, Robin Wood at the Victoria Conservatory, Marek Jablonski at the Banff Centre, and Adele Marcus at The Juilliard School. He won the Gold Medal at the 1984 Leeds International Piano Competition. He lives in Houston with his wife, violinist Aloysia Friedmann, and their daughter Sophie.

ABOUT HONENS

Honens discovers, nurtures, and presents Complete Artists—21st century pianists for 21st century audiences. The Honens International Piano Competition takes place every three years and is considered one of the world's most prestigious events of its kind. Honens prepares its Laureates for the rigours and realities of professional careers in music and creates opportunities for growth and exposure. The annual Honens Festival is one of Canada's premier classical music events, intended to share Mrs. Honens' love of world renowned music with Albertans every year. The 2018 Honens International Piano Competition takes place in Calgary from August 30 to September 8.

Esther Honens created a legacy of musical excellence to be enjoyed for generations. In 1991, Mrs. Honens gave \$5 million to endow an international piano competition in her hometown of Calgary, Canada. Her generosity, vision, and love of music continue to touch the lives of musicians and music-lovers at home and around the world. Legacy Partners follow in Esther Honens' footsteps by securing Honens' future and ensuring its continued ability to offer a broad scope of programming and community outreach projects.