

HONENS MEDIA RELEASE

**ILLIA
OVCHARENKO**

2022 HONENS PRIZE LAUREATE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HONENS ANNOUNCES ILLIA OVCHARENKO FROM UKRAINE AS 2022 HONENS PRIZE LAUREATE

CALGARY, CANADA, October 28, 2022—Ukrainian pianist Illia Ovcharenko (age 21) has been named Prize Laureate of the 2022 Honens International Piano Competition. He wins one of the world's largest prizes for piano \$100,000 (CAD) and an Artist Development Program valued at a half-million dollars. Finalists Rachel Breen (United States / age 26) and Sasha Kasman Laude (United States / age 27) each received Finalist Prizes of \$10,000 (CAD). Additional prizes are awarded to Ádám Balogh for the Best Performance of a Commissioned Work (\$2500 CAD), and Angie Zhang for the Best Performance of a Beethoven Violin Sonata (\$2500 CAD) and the Audience Choice Award (\$2500 CAD).

"The world is in the throes of change and while Honens continues to adapt as it moves forward in its mission, we are pleased to remain consistent and true in our search for the "Complete Artist", says Neil Edwards, Honens' President & CEO.

The Competition's Jury included Michel Béroff (France), Earl Blackburn (United States), Katherine Chi (Canada / United States), Imogen Cooper (United Kingdom), Stewart Goodyear (Canada), Ick-Choo Moon (Korea), and Orli Shaham (Israel / United States).

“Over the past two weeks, our jury and devoted audiences have experienced world-class pianism of the highest possible level,” adds Jon Kimura Parker, Honens’ Artistic Director. “The Honens International Piano Competition has brought artistry, emotion, virtuosity, and creativity to Calgary and to the world. We offer our warmest congratulations to all of the pianists and special congratulations to the 2022 Honens Prize Laureate, Illia Ovcharenko.”

In addition to the \$100,000 (CAD) prize, the Honens Prize Laureate is awarded a comprehensive three-year Artist Development Program, which includes debut recitals in some of the world’s leading concert houses, concert opportunities with leading orchestras, professional management, residencies, and recordings.

Archived video recordings of the entire 2022 Honens International Piano Competition can be viewed at honens.com/livestream-2022.

Backgrounder Attached

- 30 -

Information

Alberta Media Relations

Amanda Smith
Honens
(403) 975 7438
asmith@honens.com

Worldwide Media Relations

Patricia Price
8VA Music Consultancy
1 800 530 3318
patricia@8vamusiconsultancy.com

BACKGROUNDER

ILLIA OVCHARENKO

Ukraine | Age 21

Currently pursuing a bachelor's degree at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv under the tutelage of Arie Vardie, Illia Ovcharenko has already performed with leading orchestras including the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, Pomeranian Philharmonic Orchestra (Poland), National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, National Radio of Ukraine, and the Versailles Conservatory String Orchestra. He has also collaborated with prestigious conductors such as Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Arie Vardi, Ian Hobson, Mykola Diadyura, Kai Bumann, Benoit Girault, Volodymyr Sirenko, Nicolo Giuliani, and Vitaly Protasov.

Ovcharenko is a frequent participant at music festivals worldwide in countries including France, Ukraine, Israel, United States, Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, and Italy. He has appeared at the Arthur Rubinstein Piano Festival (Israel), Aspen Music Festival (USA), Festival Auvers-sur-Oise and the Pontoise Piano Campus (France), and Bern Interlaken Classics (Switzerland), among others. The recipient of the Polonsky Fellowship (2019, 2021), he studied at the Aspen Music Festival (Colorado) with Yoheved Kaplinsky and Hung Kuan Chen.

His most recent achievements include Second Prize at the Hilton Head International Piano Competition in 2022, becoming a Laureate of the Busoni International Piano Competition (Italy) in 2021, winning the Michelangeli Prize at the Eppan International Piano Academy (Italy), as well as First Prize at the Horowitz International Piano Competition (Ukraine) in 2019.

Ovcharenko is a recipient of the Presidential Scholarship of Ukraine.

ABOUT HONENS

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.

Esther Honens created a legacy of musical excellence to be enjoyed for generations. In 1991, knowing she was near the end of her life, 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 Calgarians, Canadians, musicians, and music-lovers around the world.

Honens Legacy Partners support the ongoing growth and development of Esther Honens' vision by securing the organization's future. The Legacy Partners Endowment Fund enables Honens to provide wide-reaching programming through its annual festival and other enriching community education and outreach initiatives.

The 2022 Honens International Piano Competition is supported by Steinway & Sons / Steinway Piano Gallery Calgary, RBC Emerging Artists Project, the Azrieli Foundation, and IDAGIO. Other partners include Masters Gallery Ltd., Taylor Centre for the Performing Arts at Mount Royal University, Arts Commons, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, ARTHUR / HUNTER, 8VA Music Consultancy, Viewpoint Foundation, Moffatt Piano Service, Hyatt Regency, Alt Hotels by Le Germain, Calgary Herald, Deluxe Design Group, Pattison Outdoor Advertising. Honens also thanks Gather Catering, Philip Chong Flower Bar, United Active Living, Ferrier Charitable Trust, RPM Piano Movers, Hip Image; and industry partners Calgary Downtown Association, Calgary Hotel Association, Travel Alberta and Tourism Calgary. Public and Foundation Partners include Calgary Arts Development / City of Calgary, Calgary Foundation, Alberta Foundation for the Arts / Government of Alberta, Rozsa Foundation, Alberta Lottery Fund, and Department of Canadian Heritage.

THE COMPLETE ARTIST

The Competition's mission is to identify talent that is unusual, imaginative, and informed—an artist not limited to displays of virtuosity but one who is capable of thoughtful, expressive music-making, and is ready for a professional career. Honens sees the Complete Artist as a consummate communicator and collaborator, a risk-taking explorer, a dreamer. Through performance and programming choices, he / she expresses and interprets ideas from a wide cultural context with keen imagination, informed and seasoned by a fascination for life outside the practice studio. The Complete Artist inspires the heart and engages the intellect.

The Complete Artist's interpretations are founded upon the intellectual and emotional understanding of musical text and upon his / her ability to synthesize and express such understanding so as to challenge and stir both the intellect and the emotions of the listener. This creative awareness stems not only from knowledge of a particular composition itself but, equally importantly, from a wide knowledge of related music, of musical literature as a whole, and of the other arts, including, but not limited to, the visual and literary. If the resulting interpretation appears unusual and unconventional, it does so freshly and naturally. Pianists taking part in the Honens Competition must also express—through their stage deportment, program design, and interviews with arts journalists—sensitivity to contemporary culture and a willingness and ability to communicate effectively with audiences of today.

CASH AWARDS

Honens Prize Laureate (one)
\$100,000 CAD

Finalists: Raeburn Prizes (two)*
\$10,000 CAD each

Semifinalists (seven)*
\$2,500 CAD

Best Performance of Commissioned Work*
\$2,500 CAD

Best Performance of a Beethoven Violin Sonata*
\$2,500 CAD

Audience Award*
\$2,500 CAD

*Judith Kilbourne generously provides support for these awards.

ILLIA OVCHARENKO

Ukraine | Age 21

Currently pursuing a bachelor's degree at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv under the tutelage of Arie Vardie, Illia Ovcharenko has already performed with leading orchestras including the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, Pomeranian Philharmonic Orchestra (Poland), National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, National Radio of Ukraine, and the Versailles Conservatory String Orchestra. He has also collaborated with prestigious conductors such as Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Arie Vardi, Ian Hobson, Mykola Diadyura, Kai Bumann, Benoit Girault, Volodymyr Sirenko, Nicolo Giuliani, and Vitaly Protasov.

Ovcharenko is a frequent participant at music festivals worldwide in countries including France, Ukraine, Israel, United States, Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, and Italy. He has appeared at the Arthur Rubinstein Piano Festival (Israel), Aspen Music Festival (USA), Festival Auvers-sur-Oise and the Pontoise Piano Campus (France), and Bern Interlaken Classics (Switzerland), among others. The recipient of the Polonsky Fellowship (2019, 2021), he studied at the Aspen Music Festival (Colorado) with Yoheved Kaplinsky and Hung Kuan Chen.

His most recent achievements include Second Prize at the Hilton Head International Piano Competition in 2022, becoming a Laureate of the Busoni International Piano Competition (Italy) in 2021, winning the Michelangeli Prize at the Eppan International Piano Academy (Italy), as well as First Prize at the Horowitz International Piano Competition (Ukraine) in 2019.

Ovcharenko is a recipient of the Presidential Scholarship of Ukraine.