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## IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### THE STECHER AND HOROWITZ FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE EIGHTH NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

*Aristo Sham wins Joyce B. Cowin First Prize after weeklong competition*

The **Eighth New York International Piano Competition** (NYIPC), presented under the auspices of **The Stecher and Horowitz Foundation** of New York, has crowned the winners of the competition. **Aristo Sham**, age 20 and a student at Harvard University claimed the *Joyce B. Cowin First Prize*, along with a \$10,000 cash award and concert and recital appearances presented by the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation. Aristo Sham was also awarded *Best Performance of the Required Contemporary Work by Lowell Liebermann*, who was commissioned to write a piece for the competition. Mr. Sham was also granted \$1,500 for this prize. *Second Prize* was awarded to **Angie Zhang**, earning \$6,000 and concert and recital appearances. *Third prize* went to **Jiacheng Xiong**, and the *Fourth Prize* winner was **Evelyn Mo**.

The NYIPC is unique in that it presents awards to the best one-piano, four hands ensembles. The pairs are introduced for the first time at the beginning of the competition and have only the week to practice together. *The Melvin Stecher and Norman Horowitz First Prize One-Piano, Four Hands Ensemble* was awarded to **Jooyeon Ka**, Age 20, and **Prudence Poon**, Age 19. *Second Prize* was awarded to **Zhiye Lin** and **Aaron Kurz**. An awards ceremony and performance by the winners took place on Friday, June 24 at 7:00pm at the Greenfield Hall of The Manhattan School of Music.

*Joyce B. Cowin First Prize:*

**Aristo Sham**, Age 20

Award of \$10,000, Concert and Recital Appearances

*Second Prize:*

**Angie Zhang**, Age 20

Award of \$6,000, Concert and Recital Appearances

*Third Prize:*

**Jiacheng Xiong**, Age 19

Award of \$3,000, Concert and Recital Appearances

*Fourth Prize:*

**Evelyn Mo**, Age 17

Award of \$2,000, Concert and Recital Appearances

*Melvin Stecher and Norman Horowitz First Prize One-Piano, Four Hands Ensemble:*

**Jooyeon Ka**, Age 20

**Prudence Poon**, Age 19

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Award of \$3,500 divided between the winning team

*Second Prize One-Piano, Four Hands Ensemble:*

**Zhiye Lin**, Age 19

**Aaron Kurz**, Age 20

Award of \$2,500 divided between the winning team

*Best Performance of Required Contemporary Work by Lowell Liebermann:*

**Aristo Sham**, Age 20

Award of \$1,500, Concert and Recital Appearances

In addition to the prizes awarded to the winners, a finalist's award of \$1,000 was presented to each of the remaining contestants: Junhui Chen (*China*), Sophie Druml (*Austria*), Ryan Jung (*United States*), Brian Le (*United States*), Junwen Liang (*China*), Yuan Liu (*China*), Jiaqi Long (*China*), Mengjia Lu (*China*), Jiana Peng (*China*), Ada Aria Ruckschloss (*Germany*), Adam Szokolay (*Hungary*), Charissa Vandikas (*Canada*), Tracy Wong (*United States*), Ailun Zheng (*China*).

Twenty-two pianists, ages 16-21, gathered from across the globe for the week-long event, which included four rounds plus a series of masterclasses and seminars. Awards are also given to the best duo, paired at the beginning of the competition, to perform in the ensemble round. The New York International Piano Competition's policy of no elimination is unique to the competition; each contestant performed in all four rounds and was judged by a jury of some of the most distinguished members of the music community. Every participant returns home either as a prize winner or finalist award recipient. The level of competition has been uniformly high over the event's 12 year history; former winners have gone on to win the Gilmore Young Artist Award, The Juilliard School's William Petschek Recital Award, the Louis Sudler Prize in the Arts at Harvard University, the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, the 2010 Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh Competition, and some to become National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts Presidential Scholars. Among them, Charlie Albright, Michael Brown, Kate Liu, Adam Golka, Jeannette Fang, Frank Huang and Larry Weng.

Monetary awards total \$45,000, but just as important as the monetary awards are the opportunities for concert and recital appearances that are awarded to winners and finalists. Held every two years, the New York International Piano Competition is dedicated to providing artistic development, educational enhancement, seminars, master classes, and performance opportunities.

The internationally lauded composer **Lowell Liebermann** was commissioned by the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation to compose a "required" piece for this year's competition that was learned and performed by all contestants. Called by the *New York Times* "as much of a traditionalist as an innovator." Mr. Liebermann's music is known for its technical command and audience appeal. Having written over one hundred works in all genres, several of them have gone on to become standard repertoire for their instruments, including his Sonata for Flute and Piano, which has been recorded more than twenty times to date, and his *Gargoyles* for Piano, which has been recorded fifteen times. A pianist himself, Mr. Liebermann has written a wealth of music for the solo instrument, much of which frequently appears on concert and competition programs. Mr. Liebermann was awarded the very first American Composers' Invitational Award by the 11th Van Cliburn Competition after the majority of finalists chose to perform his Three Impromptus, which were selected from works submitted by forty-two contemporary composers. In an interview with newscaster Sam Donaldson, Van Cliburn described Mr. Liebermann as "a wonderful pianist and a fabulous composer."

The Stecher and Horowitz Foundation, a non-profit organization, is an outgrowth of the renowned Stecher and Horowitz School of the Arts which was founded in 1960 in Cedarhurst, New York. Until 1999 the school was Nassau County's leading conservatory of music, attended by some 15,000 students during its thirty-nine year history. The Foundation is now dedicated to an expanded concept that seeks to inspire and support outstanding young musicians worldwide.

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**Melvin Stecher and Norman Horowitz**, Executive Directors of the **Stecher and Horowitz Foundation**, have devoted a lifetime to the musical education of young people. Internationally recognized as one of the most distinguished duo-piano teams of their generation, Stecher and Horowitz are equally renowned for their multi-faceted activities as performers, teachers, composers and educational consultants – activities that have earned them a unique position in the world of music. Having been co-directors of the Stecher and Horowitz School of the Arts for 39 years, (1960-1999) it was apparent to both principals that the most important years for developing interested young musicians were the pre-teen years and into the early twenties, a good decade of concentrated and formative development. The New York Piano Competition was originally founded on this premise.

In 2009, the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation announced two major changes in its biennial New York Piano Competition (NYPC). For the first time the Competition accepted contestant applications from outside the United States effective for the summer of 2010, a change in the procedures of accepting applications only from students (American or foreign) who were pursuing studies in the United States. Since then Competition is known as the **New York International Piano Competition**. In addition, it expanded its age category upwards from 14-18 years to 16-21 years – this affords contestants in the late teens the opportunity to interact musically with promising young adults, serving as a challenging incentive toward greater achievement. The original concept of allowing all contestants to complete their participation without elimination remained the same, fostering the fullest musical interaction between contestants throughout the entire span of the competition. The New York International Piano Competition remains true to its predecessor's philosophy that the primary goal of a musical competition is to further the musical development of its contestants.

For further information, please contact Hemsing Associates (212) 772-1132 or visit [www.hemsingpr.com](http://www.hemsingpr.com)