



INSPIRING FUTURE
GENERATIONS OF SINGERS

PRESS CONTACT:

Linda McAlister, Executive Director
Linda@schmidtvoalarts.org | (513) 783-2583

Benjamin Truncale Wins New York Schmidt Vocal Competition

Mannes School of Music hosts prestigious singing competition that presents thousands of dollars in awards each year

(New York, NY) November 3, 2019– On November 3, 2019 Mannes School of Music hosted the Schmidt Vocal Competition, a prestigious singing competition for sophomore, junior, and senior high school singers that provides awards to more than 150 people annually. This year’s first prize winner was Benjamin Truncale, from Malverne, NY, who was awarded \$2,500 for his performance of “Lungi dal caro bene” by Giuseppe Sarti.

Additional winners were: Isabel Merat, Second Place; Benjamin Riveron, Third Place; Jerek Naim Fernández Báez, Allison Brook, Catherine Creed, Sarah Lekaj, Cassidy Rieder, Astrid Westberg, finalist; Cassidy Rieder, V Matthew Steinbaum, Sara Zerilli, Encouragement Award; Javon Nobles, Broadway Bound Award; Benjamin Riveron, Most Promising Sophomore.

“We are so proud of Benjamin and the many other talented singers who participated in this year’s Schmidt Vocal Competition,” said Linda McAlister, Executive Director of Schmidt Vocal Arts. “Each year the Schmidt Vocal Competition provides young singers with the opportunity to perform in front of a live audience, participate in master classes with world-renowned artists and professionals, and connect with both their peers and mentors who will help foster their continued vocal growth.”

“I am so incredibly honored and excited to have come in First Place at this year’s New York Schmidt Vocal Competition,” remarks Benjamin Truncale. “It was completely unexpected, and I really enjoyed performing for and speaking with the distinguished judges, as well as forging new connections and friendships with the other competitors. It was an incredibly worthwhile experience, and I would recommend competing to any young singer with serious aspirations of pursuing a career in opera.”

Margo Garrett (The Juilliard School, retired), Anthony Dean Griffey (Eastman School of Music), and Beth Roberts (Mannes School of Music) were adjudicators and master clinicians for the competition day.

A Schmidt Vocal Arts
6 East 5th Street, Suite 406
Covington, KY 41011

T (513) 783-2583
E info@schmidtvoalarts.org
W www.schmidtvoalarts.org





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About Schmidt Vocal Competition

The Schmidt Vocal Competition has impacted the lives of thousands of young students over the past two decades, offering awards, scholarship and educational experiences for more than 150 students annually. The Schmidt Vocal Competition is held annually in 17 locations throughout the U.S. in partnership with regional colleges and universities and is open to sophomore, junior and senior high school singers. Competitors perform in front of a live audience in two rounds and participate in educational master classes with some of today's most renowned professionals between the preliminary and finalist rounds.

Schmidt Competition participants have gone on to gain entrance into the world's finest music schools and include winners of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the George London Competition, the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Awards, Classical Singer, and the National Opera Association Award. The Schmidt Vocal Competition is funded by the William E. Schmidt Foundation, which encourages aspiring young singers to pursue their passion in vocal arts and provides support and inspiration to future generations of singers.

About Benjamin Truncale

Benjamin Truncale, 17-years old, is a high school senior from Long Island, New York. He attends Kellenberg Memorial High School, where he is an active member of the Drama Club, Model United Nations, the Speech and Debate Team, and various singing ensembles. Benjamin has competed in many competitions and festivals, including the 2019 Classical Singer Competition, where he placed as one of 10 national finalists. He has also had the honor of participating in many prestigious programs and intensives, including the Metropolitan Opera Guild High School Opera Singers Intensive. Benjamin currently studies with Sherry Overholt and he looks forward to furthering his vocal studies in college next year.

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