



INSPIRING FUTURE
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Inayah Raheem Wins Washington Schmidt Vocal Competition

Modified “virtual” competition model gives high school singers the opportunity to still win cash awards and potential scholarships

(Tacoma, WA) May 23, 2020 – On May 23, 2020 the Schmidt Vocal Competition, in conjunction with its Washington cohort host, Pacific Lutheran University announced winners of its modified virtual singing competition for sophomore, junior, and senior high school singers. This year’s first prize winner was Inayah Raheem, from DuPont, WA who was awarded \$2,500 for her performance of "Che faro senza Euridice" by Christopher Willibald Gluck.

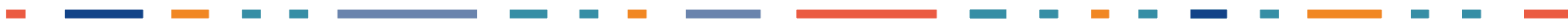
Additional winners were: Ava Kimmel, Second Place; Elena Oliveira, Third Place; Emily Amesquita, Andrew Bakun, Anna Bakun, Claire Dignazio, Liana Greger, Anne Ruhland, Isabelle Villanueva, Finalist; Kathleen Taylor, Encouragement Award; Elena Oliviera, Most Promising Sophomore.

Due to the closing of college and university campuses and the stay-at-home orders in place across the country, Schmidt Vocal Arts quickly pivoted in March to create a modified “virtual submission” model for its Spring 2020 Schmidt Vocal Competitions. Several signature elements traditionally associated with the Schmidt Vocal Competition were not possible in the virtual model – such as in-person, on-stage live performances, master classes led by renown members of the Schmidt Vocal Artist Network between the two rounds of competition, and connecting with fellow competitors throughout the day. However, competitors in the virtual cohort were able to showcase their talent as well as come together to hear from judges and celebrate the winners in a Facebook LIVE awards ceremony.

“We are so proud of Inayah Raheem and the many other talented singers who participated in this year’s virtual Schmidt Vocal Competition,” said Linda McAlister, Executive Director of Schmidt Vocal Arts. “Many of our competitors work hard all year to compete in this prestigious competition. We wanted to ensure they still had the chance to compete, earn cash awards, and become eligible for scholarship opportunities. In times of uncertainty, experiences like this are more important than ever.”

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"I am so happy to have placed first because the money that I have won can go towards my studies at Oberlin Conservatory next year," remarks Inayah Raheem. "I was beyond elated when I found out that I placed first because it means that I could take some of the financial burden off of my parents for college next year. The resources and opportunities provided by Schmidt Vocal Arts are allowing me to go to a school like Oberlin and I am beyond grateful for that!"

Schmidt Vocal Competition plans to return to its live, in-person competition model on the campus of Pacific Lutheran University next Spring. For more information, visit www.schmidtvocalarts.org.

About Schmidt Vocal Competition

The Schmidt Vocal Competition has impacted the lives of thousands of young students over the past two decades, offering awards, scholarships, 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 Competition, 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.

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