

Asian participation in the Tibor Junior 2022 Competition down – Covid effect?

The 3rd Tibor Junior International Violin Competition, which will take place from 29 August to 3 September 2022 in Sion, has attracted proportionally fewer young Asian talents than in previous editions, only five, out of a pleasing total of 31 candidates aged between 14 and 17. The pandemic, which continues to affect the Asian continent, could explain this decrease. The level of the competition remains very high, which is why 14 violinists - instead of 12 - were selected to take part in the public rounds. A new feature of this year's competition is that a Senior Jury will evaluate the finalists and award a Senior Prize.

"It was very difficult to choose from all these excellent candidates", says the President of the Jury, **Pavel Vernikov**. It was therefore decided to select 14 candidates, of which 8 are from Europe (1 Swiss), 3 from North America and 3 from Asia. As is often the case, women clearly predominate (11).

31 young talents were registered (2021: 37 / 2018: 24). Among them, only 5 Asian candidates (2021: 8 / 2018: 9), and exceptionally no Chinese violinist. The severe health restrictions in some Southeast Asian countries may have had a negative impact on the participation of candidates from this region. "*The Chinese are often not allowed to leave their homes*", says **Olivier Vocat**, President of the Sion Violin Music Foundation. To this may have been added "*the specter of war in Europe*".

The young people selected will compete in the first and second rounds on **30 August and 1 September**. On **3 September**, there will be only three for the final, which will also be a tribute to the Hungarian violinist Tibor Varga, whose centenary was celebrated last year. The **Korean Chamber Orchestra**, which will accompany the finalists, will be conducted by Tibor Varga's son, **Gilbert Varga**. **Maria Ioudenitch**, laureate of the International Tibor Varga Competition 2021, will be the special guest of this concert, which will be part of the programme of the Sion Festival 2022 and broadcast via livestream.

No less than **six prizes** are at stake: a **First Prize** (CHF 8,000, under the patronage of the Judith Justice Foundation), a **Second Prize** (CHF 2,000) and a **Third Prize** (CHF 1,000), an **Audience Prize** (CHF 500), the **Foundation Prize**, i.e. a violin awarded to a candidate who does not have an instrument worthy of his or her talent (sponsored by the Association Valaisanne des Entrepreneurs AVE-WBV), and lastly the **Senior Prize** (CHF 500).

The latter will be awarded by the **Senior Jury**, which will intervene from the second round, coached by the musicologist Marie Favre; a particularity this year. Those interested – aged 65 and over – should make themselves available on September 1st and September 2 and on the evening of September 3rd.

The **Jury** will be composed of internationally renowned personalities: **Pavel Vernikov** (Israel-Ukraine, President), **Kevork Mardirossian** (Armenia-Bulgaria-USA), **Tedi Papavrami** (Albania-Switzerland), **Monika Urbaniak** (Poland-Switzerland) and **Thomas Wei** (England).

Launched in 2018, the Tibor Junior International Violin Competition takes place every two years, alternating with the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition. Unique among its kind, it is characterized by the fact that candidates are accompanied by a chamber orchestra from the first round, and those who are eliminated join the Jury for the following rounds.

The Tibor Junior Competition is the youngest “child” of the Sion Violin Music Foundation, which since 2017 has brought together the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition, the Tibor Varga Music Academy and the Sion Festival, three events created by the Hungarian violinist Tibor Varga. This year, the **Music Academy** will take place from **11 July to 13 August** and the **Sion Festival** - whose programme was unveiled on 4 May - from **19 August to 4 September**. Tickets have been on sale since 9 May.

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