

Natsuhō Murata wins the Tibor Junior Competition 2022

Natsuhō Murata is the winner of the Tibor Junior International Violin Competition 2022. In the final on Sunday, 3 September in Sion, the 15 years old Japanese won against her two competitors, Calvin Alexander (17 years old, United States) and Ani Panova (17 years old, Bulgaria), who won the Second and Third Prizes respectively. The three finalists were accompanied by the Korean Chamber Orchestra conducted by Soo-Yeoul Choi. A total of 12 young violinists between the ages of 14 and 17 participated in this excellent 3rd edition, which returned to meet the public at the Jesuit Church after a previous edition behind closed doors due to Covid. This innovative competition was created in 2018 by Pavel Vernikov, Artistic Director of the Sion Festival.

Calvin Alexander also won the **Audience Prize** as well as the **Senior Jury Prize**. The latter was awarded by five non-professional "senior" jurors who had been coached by musicologist Marie Favre. This novelty was a great success, with 13 people initially interested in participating.

This year, thanks to the commitment of the sponsors Vaudoise Assurances and the Association Valaisanne des Entrepreneurs AVE, **two Prizes of the Foundation** could be awarded. **Sofiia Plakhtsinska** (16 years old, Ukraine) and **Barbare Ana Roinishvili** (17 years old, Georgia) each won a bow worthy of their talent, made in the 1920s by renowned French luthiers.

As in previous editions, the Competition commissioned a contemporary piece. The *Danse Macabre* by the Russian-born Israeli composer **Uri Brener** for violin and chamber orchestra was performed as a **world premiere** by all the candidates in the second round on 1 September.

The candidates were accompanied by a chamber orchestra throughout the rounds - the **Festival Orchestra** for the 1st and 2nd rounds - and played in duet with another candidate in the 1st round and with a member of the Jury in the Final, three particularities of the Tibor Junior Competition.

The International **Jury** was composed of: **Pavel Vernikov** (Ukraine / Israel), President; **Min Kim** (South Korea) - only for the Final; **Kevork Mardirossian** (Armenia / Bulgaria / USA); **Tedi Papavrami** (Switzerland); **Monika Urbaniak** (Poland / Switzerland); **Thomas Wei** (Great Britain).

31 candidates had registered to participate in this 2022 edition of the Tibor Junior International Violin Competition (2021: 46). The Jury selected 14 young violinists on video, of whom 12 finally participated in the Competition: 9 women and 3 men with an average age of 16 years. The candidates came from 10 different countries; one was Swiss.

All events have been livestreamed on the Internet and Facebook, while the final will be broadcast at a later date on regional television Canal 9. The next edition will take place in 2024.

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Candidates list and illustrations:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/lmcEcCKMr8RAJppkr8eXpJREqF3Dyh6KX?usp=sharing>

