

For Immediate Release

## Local and international artists claim top prizes at Kalamazoo's Stulberg String Competition

(269) 343-2776

stulbergcomp@yahoo.com

www.stulberg.org

KALAMAZOO, MI — Natives of Israel and Taiwan earned gold and silver awards, while a Battle Creek, Michigan musician took home a special recognition, at the 2016 Stulberg International String Competition, May 21 at Western Michigan University.

More than 160 young adult musicians applied for this year's Competition. Twelve were selected for performances before a trio of judges, and four were awarded prizes for their performances of pieces by Bach, Sibelius, Bloch and more.

Burdick-Thorne Gold medal winner Daniel Hass, 18, originally from Israel, is a cellist who has studied in Toronto and is now at the Juilliard School, taught by Joel Krosnick. He has also played with conductor Itzhak Perlman. Hass played Ernst Bloch's Schelomo Rhapsody Hebraique that earned him first place.

Silver medalist Zeyu Victor Li, 19, began playing the violin at age 4, in Taiwan. He released his first album, *The Charm of the Violin*, at age 16, and has been a soloist with symphonies in the U.S., Canada and throughout Asia. Li now studies at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia with Aaron Rosand. Li played the Concerto in D minor, Op. 47 by Jean Sibelius.

Pinehurst Bronze medal winner Austin Haley Berman, 20, is a Philadelphia native who now attends Princeton University. He studies violin with Li Lin of the Juilliard School. Berman has served as concertmaster of the Philadelphia and Delaware County Youth Orchestras, and is a distinguished fellow of the Aspen Music Festival, among other accomplishments. Like Li, Berman also performed the Concerto in D minor, Op. 47 by Jean Sibelius at the Competition.

Each year, the Bach Festival Society of Kalamazoo joins with the Stulberg International String Competition to bestow the Bach Award to the semifinalist with the best performance of a solo Bach selection. This year's winner was Zachary Brandon, a 17-year-old violinist from Battle Creek, Michigan. He has received a scholarship to the Academy of Music Institute of Chicago, and, closer to home, performs with the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony and Battle Creek Symphony Orchestra.

The winners each receive cash prizes and the opportunity to return to west Michigan for concerto performances with area orchestras like the Grand Rapids Symphony, Kalamazoo Junior Symphony and Western Michigan University Symphony.

Judges for the 2016 Stulberg International String Competition were Glenn Dicterow (violin), Steven Tenenbom (viola) and Peter Wiley (cello).

More than 2,500 young string musicians between the ages of 11 and 20 have participated in the Stulberg International String Competition, which marked its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015. The Stulberg has attracted world-renowned musicians to Kalamazoo to serve as judges and instructors in master classes exclusively for the competitors. The Competition was established in 1975 in honor of former WMU faculty and long-time conductor of the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony, Julius Stulberg.

*For more information, contact the Stulberg International String Competition at (269) 343-2776, [stulbergcomp@yahoo.com](mailto:stulbergcomp@yahoo.com), or [www.stulberg.org](http://www.stulberg.org).*