In March, the Stulberg was busy preparing for our 45th Stulberg International String Competition. Master Classes were being planned, semi-finalists were selected, hotels were reserved, and the excitement was building. Then the world came to a sudden halt. With the quickly spreading COVID-19 virus, it became apparent that the competition would not go on as planned.

After much evaluation and many conversations, the Stulberg Board of Directors and the Executive Director made the decision to move to a digital format. This had never been done before and required a lot of fast thinking, flexibility, and willingness to embrace the unknown.

This year's judges, Cho-Liang Lin (violin), Clive Greensmith (cello), and Yura Lee (violin/viola) welcomed the opportunity to move forward with the competition. As judge Cho-Liang Lin put it, “I am very glad this competition can go forward when the world has come to a stop. Anything to inspire musicians to keep going is worth doing.” Working together via Zoom, the judges were able to select the finalists, Bach Prize Winner and Gold, Silver, and Bronze medalists.

Semifinalists were asked to submit a solo Bach piece, which, in addition to their submitted audition video, was used to determine the finalists and medalists.

This year’s competition saw a record number of online viewers from around the globe -- over 6,000 people viewed the competition from 23 different countries! This was a 43% increase in online viewership over the previous year.

The 2020 Competition is still available to view on the Stulberg Youtube Channel.

New Virtual Concert Series This November!
Saturdays with the Stulberg

Saturday, November 7 | 10:30 AM
Oliver Herbert – cello, 2015 Silver Medalist

Saturday, November 14 | 10:30 AM
Haesue Lee – viola, 2015 Bronze Medalist

Saturday, November 21 | 10:30 AM
Charlotte Marckx, 2018 Gold Medalist

In conjunction with our fall annual appeal, we are thrilled to announce our first-ever virtual concert series, Saturdays with the Stulberg. The series will feature recitals by three of our most captivating recent Stulberg medalists: cellist Oliver Herbert, violist Haesue Lee, and violinist Charlotte Marckx, all of whom have wowed audiences from our physical stages here in Kalamazoo over the past five years and readily accepted the opportunity to play for us again -- this time in the comfort of our own living rooms. All three artists have commented on the unique creative space quarantine has provided for them to explore repertoire at a different pace, and we can’t wait to hear the fruits of their practice.

The recitals will be broadcast on Saturdays November 7, 14, and 21 via our website (www.stulberg.org). Each performer will offer a 45-60 minute program to be announced from their home stages. Recitals will be free, and we anticipate as vibrant and international an audience of music lovers as attended our virtual competition this past May.

While we missed connecting with the Stulberg’s generous supporters at our usual Summer and Stars Celebration in this highly unusual year, we relish this novel opportunity to share music and fellowship virtually. We are deeply grateful to the Stulberg community for your continued support of this organization, and of our stellar young musicians, in this uniquely challenging time. We hope you will join us in celebrating their artistry from afar this November!

The 2020 Stulberg International String Competition medalists receive both a cash prize and performance and outreach opportunities with our partner organizations. This year’s medalists are:

**GOLD**
Dongyoung Jake Shim (violin)

**SILVER**
Yeyeong Jin (violin)

**BRONZE**
Masha Lakisova (violin)

**BACH PRIZE**
Dongyoung Jake Shim (violin)

This year’s semifinalists and finalists were:

- Daniel Bae (violin) FINALIST
- Luka Coetzee (cello)
- Gabrielle Despres (violin)
- Albert Gang (violin) FINALIST
- Miray Ito (violin)
- Yeyeong Jin (violin)
- Isaiah Kim (cello) FINALIST
- Masha Lakisova (violin)
- Laura Navasardian (cello)
- Dongyoung Jake Shim (violin)
- Evan Tsai (bass)
- Sean Yu (cello)
Meet the Saturdays with the Stulberg Artists!

Cellist Oliver Herbert (2015 Silver), a San Francisco native, is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, and has studied under Carter Brey, Peter Wiley, and Clive Greensmith. In addition to the Stulberg, Herbert has won top prizes in the Irving M. Klein International String Competition (2015), the XI Witold Lutoslawski International Cello Competition (2018), and the Verbier Festival (2017). He has performed as a soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, and Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, among many others. His debut album, Frame of Mind: Fauré and Janáček (with Xiaohui Yang, piano), was released this past June.

On becoming interested in the violin: “My family and I saw The Nutcracker Ballet Christmas Eve when I was 5 years old and it made me get started with music. The concert was just beautiful. I was touched by the concert and I started to play some music on violin.”

On family: “My parents love listening as well as playing music. My mother plays the clarinet and my father plays the guitar as a hobby. My sister also plays the violin and these days, since I’m staying here in Korea, we often play some pieces together, which is fun. Also I have an 8-year-old dog with me. Although I miss my friends at NEC, I’m happy I can have time with my family as well as my dog during this time in Korea relaxing at home.”

On preparing for competitions and performances: “I always try to feel relaxed not only mentally but also physically. Practicing scales helps me a lot. Also, I try to visualize my sound projecting all the way to the end of the stage.”

Violinist Charlotte Marckx (2018 Gold) studies at the Colburn Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles with David Lipsett, and was recently awarded the prestigious Davidson Fellows scholarship. She has soloed with many ensembles, including the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, the Seattle Chamber Music Society and the Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival, and has been featured on NPR’s From the Top. In addition to classical repertoire, Charlotte has collaborated with groups of various genres, including Time for Three and Pink Martini, as well as arranging and performing for her duo Sempre Sisters with her sister, cellist Olivia Marckx.

If you could have a superpower, what would it be? “It might be cool if I can copy myself. I have so many things I want to do.”

If you didn’t have any responsibilities tomorrow, how would you spend your day? “I would like to steal Augustin Hadelich’s violin and play on it for a day.”

Favorite ice cream flavor? “Mint chocolate chip”

Advice for other young musicians? “Basics are crucial. Always practice scales. Always be there. Concerts are necessary. Trust yourself.”

What are some non-musical activities that keep you busy? “I have collected mini cars since when I was 5 years old. Also, I love reading.”

How has your musicianship changed or evolved during quarantine? “Besides practice, I take classes and have time with my friends going to concerts and eating food. These days, I teach some students as well waiting for the US to get better.”

The 2020 Stulberg Gold Medalist, 18-year-old Dongyoung Jake Shim, is a student of Donald Weilerstein and attends the New England Conservatory. He is now back in Gyeonggi-do, South Korea with his family to stay safe during the global pandemic. This summer, he shared a bit more about himself with the Stulberg family.

Songbird Board member, Sakhi Vyas sits down with 2020 Gold Medalist, Dongyoung Jake Shim, about his Stulberg win, life as a musician during a pandemic, and more...
Stulberg’s Executive Director position changes hands: “thank you” to Margaret Hamilton and “welcome” to Megan Yankee

New Executive Director Megan Yankee has replaced Margaret Hamilton, who had served in the position since 2013 and announced her year-end retirement earlier this year.

“We are delighted to welcome Megan to the Stulberg,” said past Board president Jane Rooks Ross. “Her energy, experiences and vision will serve us well as we support gifted young string players nationally, internationally, and in our own community.”

Yankee is a respected musician and leader with experience in the arts and social services. Her arts experience includes operations, marketing and development positions with the Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings, The Philadelphia Orchestra and The Music Center of South Central Michigan.

Her social service leadership positions include The Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors in Grand Rapids, The Boy Scouts of America and as Senior Development Manager of the Community Healing Centers in Kalamazoo.

Yankee is a graduate of Western Michigan University, with a Bachelor of Arts in Nonprofit Management and earned credentials through the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance as a Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP). She is a trained violinist, and has served as president of the Suzuki Academy of Kalamazoo and as a grant review panelist for Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs.

Megan lives in the Kalamazoo area and is COVID quarantining with her husband (Patrick), two virtually learning children (Rowan, 8, and Quinn, 4) and her two dogs, who double as her running buddies (Ruby and Banjo).

Applications Open October 15, 2020 for the 46th Stulberg International String Competition

Applications will be open on October 15, 2020 for the 46th Stulberg International String Competition. This year’s judges are violinist Mitchell Newman, violist Cynthia Phelps, and cellist Sara Sant'Ambrogio. For more information and to apply, please visit our website: www.stulberg.org.

Coming Soon…

The Stulberg announces a website redesign! Check it out at www.stulberg.org.

Become a Stulberg Supporter!

The Stulberg helps young musicians of all ages both nationally and right here in the Kalamazoo area through our competition, outreach, and valuable partnerships. We can grow and support these young musicians because of sponsors and individual donors. You can view our sponsorship opportunities on our website. Please consider supporting this important cultural gem by making a gift today either online at www.stulberg.org or by mail at 359 S. Kalamazoo Mall, Ste 14, Kalamazoo, MI 49007.
Outreach with Stulberg

The Stulberg International String Competition partners with local music schools such as Suzuki Academy of Kalamazoo, Cresendo Academy of Music and private studios to provide outreach opportunities for local string players. This year, we tried something new; a Play-In Challenge!

2019 Bronze Medalist Sory Park, returned to Kalamazoo in February, 2020. Approximately 60 local string students arrived for the first Stulberg Play-in Challenge, ready to test their skills by performing their chosen pieces and drawing a challenge from a hat. Challenges included hoola hooping while playing Bach, standing on one foot while playing Mozart, bowing for your neighbor and more! It was a great opportunity for local students to laugh and enjoy their instruments in a new way while also interacting and getting a wonderful demonstration from Sory Park.