

PRESS RELEASE

A Local Violin Shop Sponsors an International Violin Competition Hosted by the University of Utah School of Music. The winner will play a concert presented by the Utah Symphony.

Salt Lake City, Utah, August 16, 2006—The Stradivarius International Violin Competition announces its first competition in Salt Lake City, Utah. Charles W. Liu Fine Violins teams with the University of Utah School of Music to Sponsor a violin competition involving some of the most talented young players in the world. These players will compete before a panel of internationally acclaimed judges for money, prizes and the privilege of performing with the Utah Symphony.

Charles W. Liu Fine Violins sponsors *The Stradivarius International Violin Competition*. The University of Utah School of Music will host the event on June 11-14, 2007 at Libby Gardner hall on the University of Utah Campus.

The idea for this competition was the inspiration of Charles W. Liu. He established *The Stradivarius International Violin Competition*, a non-profit corporation, as a way of showing members of the string instrument community his gratitude for their overwhelming support for his violin shop.

Dr. Robert Walzel, Dean of the School of Music at the University of Utah, extended his support of this ambitious undertaking and immediately offered to host the event at Libby Gardner Hall.

Several Utah Symphony players, music professors and heads of music departments in most of the local universities are extending their support for the competition as well, and they have offered access to ideas and other resources in order to ensure that this competition attracts the best players to compete.

Dr. Judd Sheranian, a violinist with the Utah Symphony, is the director of the committee from which judges are drawn for the early rounds of the competition. Mr. Kory Katseanes, Conductor of the orchestra at BYU and former assistant conductor of the Utah Symphony, also serves on the committee.

The first task was to ensure that the competition had the ability to assemble an appropriate panel of judges. Within days all of the judges had committed to come to Salt Lake City to participate in the final rounds of the competition. That panel reads as follows: Andres Cardenous (Concert Master of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra) will act as the presiding judge followed by Robert Lipsett (professor at USC), Victor Danchenko (Professor at Curtis Institute of Music & Peabody School of Music), Alvaro DeGranda (Retiring Assistant Concert Master of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra), David Park (Assistant Concert Master of the Utah Symphony Orchestra), Jenny Oaks Baker (National Symphony), and (Tula) Nokuthala Ngwenyama (soloist).

The judges will select five finalists, all of whom will win a prize. The grand prize is \$10,000 in cash and a hand made violin by Charles W. Liu (valued at \$10,000). The most coveted part of the Grand Prize will be the concert appearance with the *Utah Symphony* in 2008. *The Stradivarius International Violin Competition* Will make a Stradivarius violin available for the winner to use for this concert appearance.

Charles W. Liu has arranged for (perhaps as many as) 3 Antonio Stradivari violins to be present for the top 3 finalists to use in the public portion of the competition, the *Finalist Concert*. These violins are valued at (several) million dollars each.

The Stradivarius International Violin Competition is sending written invitations to the finest music schools and the most reputable violin teachers in the world in search of young talent. This level of activity combined with the quality of the panel of judges should ensure a remarkable event.

In addition to the main competition, young local violinists may enter a youth category and experience the excitement of international competition first hand, thus encouraging local youth to reach for international standards.

The final concert of the competition is dedicated to Melba Lindsay Burton. Many of the violinists in the Utah Symphony studied with her, and she was one of the most skilled violin teachers that Utah has seen. She has made the kind of artistic contribution to Salt Lake City that Charles W. Liu hopes to make, and dedicating the first concert to her is his way of paying respects.

Representatives of *The Stradivarius International Violin Competition* state that the goal of the competition is to direct world-wide attention to Utah as a respected center for the arts. When asked, Charles Liu said, "This city has an excellent fine arts community with a symphony orchestra that rivals the finest in the world. This competition should help the world experience Utah's artistic focus while discovering some of the greatest new musical talents of our time."

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