



**For Immediate Release**  
**Contact: Marcy Straw**  
**415.252.1122**

## **CALIFORNIA MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCES**

### **THE 34<sup>th</sup> IRVING M. KLEIN INTERNATIONAL STRING COMPETITION JUNE 1 - 2**

*One of the world's top music competitions takes place at SF Conservatory of Music*

(SAN FRANCISCO, MARCH 25 2019) Celebrating 34 years of helping the world's top young string musicians gain prominence in the competitive world of classical music, the **Irving M. Klein International String Competition** returns to the **San Francisco Conservatory of Music** June 1-2, 2019. This year's nine semifinalists showcase the burgeoning talent from the top teachers and conservatories in America.

Selected from 118 entrants hailing from 17 countries, the semifinalists are:

- **James Baik**, cello, 17; attends New Trier High School, Wilmette IL; student of Hans Jørgen Jensen.
- **Dakota Cotugno**, cello, 23, attends University of Colorado; student of David Requiro (Klein '06).
- **James Hettinga**, cello, 19; attends Cleveland Institute of Music; student of Dr. Melissa Kraut.
- **Julia Mirzoev**, violin, 22; attends Yale University; student of Ani Kavafian.
- **Zechariah Mo**, viola, 17; studies at Music Institute of Chicago; student of Roland and Almita Vamos.
- **Gabriel Polinsky**, bass, 20; attends Curtis School of Music, Philadelphia; student of Hal Robinson and Edgar Meyer.
- **Strauss Shi**, violin, 23; attends University of Southern California; student of Midori Goto.
- **Lucia Ticho**, cello, 21; attends Columbia University; student of Richard Aaron.
- **Hannah White**, violin, 19; attends the Colburn School, Los Angeles; student of Robert Lipsett.

*(ages as of June 1, 2019)*

In the semifinal round, each performer will play an unaccompanied work of Bach, movements from notable concertos and a new commissioned composition by [Carlos Oliver Simon](#). In the final round, the artists must perform additional portions of their selected concerto and one major sonata movement.

The grand prize includes cash and performances with the Peninsula and Santa Cruz Symphonies, Gualala Arts Chamber Series, among others. The grand prize is valued at \$13,000. The second prize is valued at \$6,300. It includes a performance with the San José Chamber Orchestra and the Piedmont Center for the Arts. Ruth Short gives this prize in honor of Elaine H. Klein. Third prize is \$2,500. Two fourth prizes of \$1,500 each are awarded. Each semifinalist not awarded a named prize will receive \$1,000. Awards of \$500 are given for best performance of the commissioned work by **Carlos Simon**, and of the solo Bach. Klein winners also participate in educational outreach in the Bay Area.

The distinguished jury includes violist **Cathy Basrak** (Klein winner '95), assistant principal viola of the BSO, where she occupies the Anne Stoneman Chair, and principal viola of the Boston Pops Orchestra; **Daniel Carlson**, principal second violin San Francisco Symphony; violinist **Nikki Chooi** (Klein winner '09) prominent soloist and 2016-17 Concertmaster of New York's Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; this year's commissioned composer, **Carlos Simon**; **Amir Eldan** (Klein winner '97), Professor of Cello, Chair, Strings and Director, Division of Strings at Oberlin; violinist **Ian Swensen**, Chair of Violin at SF Conservatory's String Department; and **Barbara Day Turner**, Music Director of San José Chamber Orchestra. **Ariel Horowitz** (Klein winner '15) will serve as mentor.

The Irving M. Klein International String Competition, presented by California Music Center and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, is open to musicians between ages 15 and 23. The Klein Competition has achieved international recognition as one of the most prestigious classical music competitions, recognized for the high caliber of the contestants; its unique, nurturing environment; and its commitment to the commissioning of new works.

Its award carries the prestige that has helped many top soloists gain prominence in the competitive world of classical music, including **Jennifer Koh**, **Mark Kosower**, **Vadim Gluzman**, **Jennifer Frautschi**, **Alban Gerhardt**, **Frank Huang**, and **Robert deMaine**. The competition is named for the late cellist and master teacher who devoted himself untiringly to the development of young artists.

#### FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

##### SEMIFINALS - SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 10AM – 4PM

Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall  
San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 50 Oak St  
\$10 VIP reserved seating; FREE general admission.  
Advance tickets or RSVP:  
[2019kleincompetition.eventbrite.com](https://2019kleincompetition.eventbrite.com)  
or at the door.  
Nine 25-minute programs including concerto movements, solo Bach, and a commissioned work by Carlos Simon with a lunch break.

##### FINALS - SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 3PM

Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall  
San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 50 Oak St  
\$25 VIP reserved seating; \$20 general admission; \$10 seniors/students/youth  
Advance tickets:  
<https://2019kleincompetition.eventbrite.com>  
or at the door.  
Three dynamic 35-minute recitals featuring well-loved sonata and concerto movements.  
Awards ceremony and reception will follow.

#### About the California Music Center

CMC was founded in 1974 by Irving M. Klein, a virtuoso chamber musician and master cello teacher, as the sponsoring organization for a summer music institute and chamber music series for young artists. Following Mr. Klein's passing in 1985, CMC inaugurated the Irving M. Klein International String Competition ("the Klein") in 1986; since then, the Klein has become one of the most prestigious events of its kind, attracting ever-increasing numbers of entries annually from throughout the world and helping to enhance the developing careers of players who have gone on to become renowned soloists, chamber musicians, teachers, and prominent members of the world's finest orchestras. The Klein Competition is supported in part by the Mervyn L. Brenner Foundation, New Music USA, the Ross McKee Foundation, and the Sam Mazza Foundation; and presented in partnership with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Learn more at [californiamusiccenter.org](http://californiamusiccenter.org).