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High-resolution photos of the winners can be found [here](#).

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Flutist Jonah Murphy, 24, Wins First Place at Texas Music Festival's Cynthia Woods Mitchell-Ima Hogg Young Artist Competition

*Competition's Second Year Honoring the Combined Legacies of
Two Legendary Local Music Lover Philanthropists, in Association with Houston Symphony*



Winners, L-R: percussionist **Izaiah Gonzales** (Audience Favorite), pianist **Han Sol Jeong** (2nd), flutist **Jonah Murphy** (1st), cellist **Fiona Tsang** (4th), and violinist **Takeru Niihara** (3rd)

HOUSTON, TX – The winners of the **Cynthia Woods Mitchell-Ima Hogg Young Artist Competition** were declared on Sunday, in a thrilling end to Week 1 of the annual Texas Music Festival (TMF) at the University of Houston.

“We are excited to announce this year’s competition winner!” said TMF General and Artistic Director **Austin Alan**. “Having the opportunity to be a soloist with an orchestra is rare for young musicians, and our first prize comes with multiple opportunities to perform with the TMF Orchestra and the Houston Symphony.”

Flutist **Jonah Murphy** placed first, winning a \$3,000 cash prize and the honor of playing a solo with the TMF Orchestra at the festival’s final concert on June 22, under the baton of **Maestro Hans Graf**. As the top winner, Murphy will also be invited to perform next season with the Houston Symphony, which will introduce him to music lovers in Houston and beyond.



The remaining prizes were \$2,000 (2nd), \$1,000 (3rd), \$750 (4th), and \$500 (Audience Favorite).

This year's winners were as follows:

- **1st Prize:** flutist **Jonah Murphy**, 24. A Brooklyn native, Murphy is getting his master's degree at the Manhattan School of Music and is also an award-winning composer. On Saturdays, he teaches flute lessons in Washington Heights (NYC), and since some of his students are learning English and Murphy speaks no Spanish, they embody the adage that music is a universal language.
- **2nd Prize:** pianist **Han Sol Jeong**, 28. A native of Christchurch (New Zealand), Jeong has won performance awards in three countries and is a doctoral student at UH's Moores School of Music, where he also teaches class piano to undergraduate students.
- **3rd Prize:** violinist **Takeru Niihara** 18, a Hiroshima (Japan) native whose family relocated to Houston when he was in middle school. He just graduated from the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and will enter Rice University's Shepherd School of Music this fall.
- **4th Prize:** cellist **Fiona Tsang**, 18. As a high school junior, Tsang moved across the country from San Jose, CA to begin college early, at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she is now in her third year.
- **Audience Favorite:** percussionist **Izaiah Gonzales**, 19. An Eastman School of Music student from Harlingen, TX, Gonzales wowed the audience with his charismatic and technically impressive performance on marimba.

The remaining finalists were **Andrew Bell** (bassoon), 21, from Falls Church, VA; **Uicheol Uhm** (piano), 30, from Incheon, South Korea; and **Christian Harvey** (double bass) 24, from Riverdale, GA.

This was the second year of the new competition, which merged the formerly separate Ima Hogg Young Artist Competition and the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Young Artist Competition, two competitions renowned in Houston for bringing fresh talent to light.

As the competition is a collaboration between TMF and the Houston Symphony, the judges' panel was composed of stellar talent from the Houston Symphony, including **Gonzalo Farias** (Assistant Conductor), **Adam Dinitz** (English horn), **Christopher French** (cello), **Richard Harris** (trumpet), **Ian Mayton** (French horn), **Sophia Silivos** (violin), as well as **Diego Caetano** (piano) from Sam Houston State University's faculty.



The finalists are all Fellows in the Texas Music Festival, a three-week summer academy for young, highly-advanced orchestral musicians seeking a career in classical music. The Fellows receive intensive coaching, lessons, and masterclasses, and learn from some of today's most talented conductors and performers while providing Houstonians with high-quality, remarkably affordable concerts.

The Festival continues for two more weeks. This week's highlight is the return of University of Houston alumnus **Kenny Broberg**, now a famous concert pianist, who will perform a recital and lead a masterclass. For more details, see the schedule below.

REMAINING 2024 SEASON DATES (THRU JUNE 22)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Tuesdays:	Faculty Chamber Music Concert
Thursdays:	Piano Recital by Guest Artist
Saturdays:	Full-Orchestra Concert

WEEK 2

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 7:30PM

Faculty/Fellows Chamber Music Concert

Transformations: Faculty share the stage with Orchestra Fellows in music of Bach, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn.

Bach: Brandenburg No. 3; Beethoven: Octet; Mendelssohn: Sextet

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12

2:00PM, **FREE**

Master Class: KENNY BROBERG, featuring College Piano Institute participants.

7:30PM, **FREE**

College Piano Institute Chamber Music Concert

Performances by participants in the Piano institute.

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 7:30PM

Sharon Ley Lietzow Piano Series

Recital: KENNY BROBERG

UH/Moores School alum and renowned concert pianist Kenny Broberg returns to Houston.

Poulenc: Melancolie; Mozart: Piano Sonata, K.311; Medtner: Two Skazki; Chopin: Polonaise Fantasie; Dukas: Piano Sonata

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 7:30PM, FREE

Fellows Chamber Music Recital

Performances by Fellows in the Orchestral and Piano Institutes.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

2:00PM, **FREE**

College Piano Institute Final Performance

**SATURDAY, JUNE 15 (CONTINUED)****6:30PM, FREE**

- Pre-concert music: members of Virtuosi of Houston
- Pre-concert lecture: **Settling the Score, Dr. Andrew Davis**

7:30PM**Festival Orchestra Concert****CARL ST. CLAIR**, conductor

Ravel: Daphnis & Chloe Suite No. 2; Strauss: Ein Heldenleben

WEEK 3**TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 7:30PM****Chamber Music Concert**

Memories: Faculty artists perform music by Martinů and JacobTV and are joined by Orchestra Fellows for Brahms's lush String Sextet.

Martinů: *La revue de cuisine*, JacobTV: Garden of Love, Brahms: String Sextet No. 2

THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 7:30PM*Sharon Ley Lietzow Piano Series***Recital: WILLIAM WOLFRAM**

Liszt: Sonata in B minor; Schumann: Fantasie; Chopin: Mazurkas

FRIDAY, JUNE 21**3:00PM, FREE****Fellows Chamber Music Marathon**

Performances by participants in the Orchestral Institute.

7:00PM, FREE**Jazz Institute Middle School & High School Orchestras****Noe Marmolejo**, Institute director**Jesse Espinosa**, middle school director

Classic to contemporary big-band jazz, played by Houston middle and high school all-stars.

7:30PM, FREE**Honors Chamber Music Concert**

A performance of selections from the best ensembles comprising Orchestral Institute winds & strings.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22**6:30PM, FREE**

- Pre-concert music: members of Virtuosi of Houston
- Pre-concert lecture: **Settling the Score, Dr. Andrew Davis**

7:30PM**Festival Orchestra Concert****HANS GRAF**, conductor**with 2024 Cynthia Woods Mitchell–Ima Hogg Young Artist Competition Winner, TBA**

Festival finale! A Ravel jewel and an epic Bruckner, plus a piece selected to showcase yesterday's competition winner, accompanied by the full orchestra.

Ravel: *Une barq sur l'ocean*; Bruckner: Symphony No. 9; TBD

Locations: All events are at the University of Houston, at Moores School of Music (MSM), 3333 Cullen Blvd at Elgin, entrance 16, Houston, TX 77204.

- Chamber Music, Recitals, and listed Master classes are in Dudley Recital Hall.
- Orchestra Concerts are in Moores Opera House.
- Pre-concert lectures are in MSM Room 108.



More information, including dates for additional Master classes: tmf.uh.edu

Tickets: tmf.uh.edu and click on Ticket Information or call box office (713-743-3388)

Season Subscriptions: Full season pass (all 9 ticketed concerts on UH campus): \$200 (\$125 student/senior)

Individual Tickets:

Individual Orchestra Series Ticket: \$30 (\$18 student/senior)

Individual Piano Series Ticket: \$20 (\$16 student/senior)

Individual Faculty Recital Series Ticket: \$20 (\$16 student/senior)

The Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival is sponsored, in part, by support from The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation, and the City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance.

Presented in association with the Houston Symphony.

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About the Competition

The Ima Hogg Young Artist Competition began in 1976, while the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Young Artist Competition was founded at the inception of the Texas Music Festival in 1990. Both competitions existed to foster the talent of outstanding young instrumentalists and to help pave the way for their future success as classical musicians. Both women were pillars of the Houston arts community—their names are seen on programs, scholarships, and buildings across the region, and their legacy is felt by the millions of people who attend Houston concerts every year. Because of them, Houston has a worldwide reputation for excellence in classical music, both in its institutions and the musicians trained here.

About Texas Music Festival

Founded in 1990, [The Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival](http://tmf.uh.edu) was created to provide young professional musicians with a nurturing environment to develop skills in orchestral, chamber music and solo performance. The program's various training institutes prepare musicians for future careers in music while offering the chance to learn from today's leading conductors and coaches, and to experience the vastly varied musical cultures of the most diverse city in the U.S. The festival provides a rich foundation for young musicians to hone their performance skills while providing Houston concertgoers with an affordable summer festival of classical music and jazz starring some of the world's most talented performers.

About the Houston Symphony

Under Music Director Juraj Váčuha, the Houston Symphony continues its second century as one of America's leading orchestras with a full complement of concert, community, education, touring, and recording activities. One of the oldest performing arts organizations in Texas, the Symphony held its inaugural performance at The Majestic Theater in downtown Houston on June 21, 1913. Today, with an operating budget of \$34.325 million (FY23), the full-time ensemble of professional musicians presents more than 130 concerts annually, making it the largest performing arts organization in Houston. Traditionally, musicians of the orchestra and the Symphony's two Community-Embedded Musicians also offer over 1,000 community-based performances each year at various schools, community centers, hospitals, and churches reaching more than 200,000 people in Greater Houston annually.

After suspending concert activities in March 2020, the Symphony successfully completed a full 2020–21 season with in-person audiences and weekly livestreams of each performance, making it one of the only orchestras in the world to do so, while the Symphony's Education and Community Engagement team continued to fulfill its mission through creative and virtual means throughout the COVID pandemic. The Houston Symphony remains committed to livestreaming all of its 2023–24 season to a broad audience in over forty-five countries and all fifty states, one of few American orchestras dedicated to transmitting live performances to a size-able audience outside its home city through this technology.

The Grammy Award-winning Houston Symphony has recorded under various prestigious labels, including Koch International Classics, Naxos, RCA Red Seal, Telarc, Virgin Classics, and, most recently, Dutch recording label Pentatone. In 2017, the Houston Symphony was awarded an ECHO Klassik award for the live recording of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* under the direction of former Music Director Hans Graf. The orchestra earned its first Grammy nomination and Grammy Award at the 60th annual ceremony for the same recording in the Best Opera Recording category.