

Berlin, 23 March 2021

Press Release

The Carl Bechstein Foundation supports 86 young pianists with grants amounting to €352,000

The Carl Bechstein Foundation supports 86 young pianists with 18 scholarships of €12,000 each and 68 one-off payments of €2,000 each, with a total amount of €352,000.

Professor Christian Höppner, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Carl Bechstein Foundation and secretary general of the German Music Council, stated: “The financial support that the Foundation provides to young pianists boosts not only their budding careers, but also their confidence. [...] As all concerts have been cancelled due to the pandemic, the 18 scholarships and 68 one-off payments provide effective support to help the young artists to stay the course. The dramatic situation of many creatives evidences the deficiency of social provisions and shows that we must ensure long-time security for cultural life after the end of the pandemic. Culture is not only essential to our humanity, but also a prerequisite for living together in harmony. I sincerely thank all those in the Bechstein world who contribute to this pioneering support project.”

In February 2021, the Carl Bechstein Foundation launched a competition for ten scholarships for talented young classical pianists who plan to take up careers as soloists. Gregor Willmes, member of the Foundation’s Executive Board, stated: “More than ninety people applied, 86 of whom met the application criteria. We noticed that all young pianists are on the edge of indigence. [...] Artists at the beginning of their careers used to finance their living through concerts and competition prizes, but this became impossible last year.” Based on this observation, the Board of Trustees and the Executive Board unanimously decided to increase the number of scholarships to eighteen and to provide a one-off payment to all applicants who were not selected.

Among the scholarship holders are several prize winners of major competitions such as the ARD-Musikwettbewerb, the Internationaler deutscher Pianistenpreis, the Felix-Mendelssohn-Bartholdy-Wettbewerb and the Gina Bachauer Competition. And although the rules state that applicants must either be German or Austrian citizens or have been living in Germany or Austria for at least two years, the list of selected scholarship holders includes pianists from many different countries (China, France, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Russia, South Korea, Ukraine), which underscores the international flair of the music world.

More information is available at www.carl-bechstein-stiftung.de.

Press contact: Gregor Willmes (member of the Carl Bechstein Foundation’s Executive Board)

Tel.: +49 30 22 60 55 93 23 and +49 15 90 45 48 323; willmes@carl-bechstein-stiftung.de

