



SAMRO Hubert van der Spuy National Music Competition 2018 Press release 29 September 2018

SAMRO Hubert van der Spuy National Music Competition celebrates 30th anniversary with flair.

Heritage day was celebrated with flair this year at the Hugo Lambrechts Auditorium in Parow, thanks to the annual SAMRO Hubert van der Spuy National Music Competition's stellar opening concert on Monday, 24 September.

Now in its 30th year, this week-long prestigious event—aimed at fostering young talent and encouraging professional kinship within a competitive environment—officially kicked off with a stirring rendition of Franz von Suppé's *Light Cavalry Overture*, performed by the Hugo Lambrechts Orchestra under the direction of Liam Burden. This was followed by a riveting execution of Chopin's *Andante Spianato et Grande Polonaise Brillante, Op. 22* by last year's competition winner, Mike Wang, on piano.

Over the following four days, 55 competitors (aged 7 - 13) from Cape Town, Durban and Gauteng competed in nearly 20 categories—each with an attractive cash prize attached to it—under the scrupulous watch of adjudicators Sharon de Kock, Dr Grethe Nöthling and Prof Chatradari Devroop.

Says South African Society of Music Teachers (SASMT) Tygerberg branch committee member, Shane Goodall: "It's always so exciting to see how the young musicians bloom during the competition week. Each year I'm amazed to be able to witness this incredible transformation—from auditioning to that moment they eventually get to walk on stage for the first round. Once again this competition has been a fabulous celebration of young musical talent in South Africa."

This week of youthful showmanship and professional camaraderie came to a stellar conclusion on Friday, 28 September, when the Top 8 were each given the opportunity to perform three pieces for final consideration. The finalists were, in order of appearance, Yu Qing Peng (10) from Gauteng, Heinrich Sutton (11) from Gauteng, Eléna Monvoisin (8) from the Western Cape, Weien Amy Luo (10), KwaZulu-Natal, Teboho Motsatse (12) from Gauteng, Minkyum Kim (13) from the Western Cape, Daniel Spies (12) from Gauteng, and Danielle Kock (13) from the Western Cape.

Before the announcement of the winners, SASMT Tygerberg chairperson Hilda Boonzaaier congratulated all the participants and finalists, adding that "winning doesn't always mean being first. Instead, winning means you've done better than you have ever done before." She further broke the very exciting news that Artscape's CEO, Dr Marlene le Roux, has graciously agreed to become the patron for SAMRO Hubert van der Spuy National Music Competition.

Then it was time to award South Africa's most gifted young musical stars. Among the evening's many notable moments were pianist Nina Grobler receiving an honorary mention for qualifying and participating in every competition for six consecutive years, recorder player Khumo Mpetshwa being capped with the Most Promising Development Candidate award, as well as violinist Danielle Kock who walked away with Best Performance of a South African Composition (*Threes* by Pieter-Louis van Dijk).

The atmosphere was filled with excitement when it came to the announcement of this year's Top 3 candidates.

Mesmerising the listener with her maturity and graceful way of interacting with the piano, 12-year-old Teboho Motsatse from Gauteng was first-up and announced as the third prize winner. All three of this anti-bullying campaigner from Jozi's executions—Mozart's *Piano Sonata in A, K. 331:1*, Mendelssohn's *Fantasy for piano in F*, and Aram Khachaturian's *Toccata*—proved hits with the audience.

Along with her winning a bronze medal and R7 500, Motsatse's teacher, Mario Nell, also walked away with R1 500. It is also worth noting that, earlier during the evening, Motsatse also scooped Best Performance of a Romantic Work during the competition's third round, as well as second prize in the Piano Category.

Thanks to his impressive, refreshing approach to mastering the secrets of his instrument, Roodepoort flautist Daniël Spies managed to impress both the audience and adjudicators with his interpretations of Debussy's *Syrinx*, Telemann's *Suite in A, Minuet 1 & 2*, and Widor's *Suite Op 34: 1*. In addition to his second place prize of a silver medal and R10 000, Daniël's teacher, Helen Vosloo, was awarded R2 000.

Spies—who plays the piano, recorder, piccolo and flute as well—also proved one of the evening's most successful competitors in the other categories, including Best Performance of a Baroque Work During the first round, the Category Prize for Woodwinds, as well as the sought-after Audience Prize.

But it was 10-year-old Durban pianist Weien Amy Luo, however, who ended up sparkling the brightest at the end of the evening. Dressed in a red princess dress and big black sneakers, she kept dazzling the audience with her jaw-dropping technique and enchanting stage persona.

Luo says when she plays music she feels happy, and this was undeniable when seeing her in action during her performances of James Wilding's *Water Nymphs*, Haydn's *Sonata in F, HobXVI/23: 1*, and Copland's *The Cat and the Mouse*.

The clear joy and bond that they share between them radiated through the Hugo Lambrechts Auditorium as soon as her teacher, Phillippa Greenwood, joined her on stage—reminding one and all of the magic this annual competition has created over the past 30 years.

As this year's winner, Luo walked away with R15 000 (Greenwood received R2500). The future classical superstar also palmed the Category Prize for Piano, the award for Most Promising Candidate of 10 Years and Younger, as well as the Leon Hartshorne Prize for being the highest achieving candidate of national SASMT members.

In addition to her cash prizes, Luo also won the opportunity to perform as a soloist during next year's Hugo Lambrechts Concerto Festival, sponsored accommodation at the Welgemoed Manor for the opening of 2019's National Music Competition, as well as an invitation to perform at the Oude Libertas Amphitheatre in Stellenbosch.

For the full list of winners, please contact **Elzaan Steyn**: elzaan@wishlistevents.co.za. To see photos of the performances and prize ceremony, also be sure to visit the competition's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages.

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