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Instrumental Concerto Competition Finals

Erik Rohde, coordinator

Piano Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, op. 16 Sergei Prokofiev
IV. Finale: Allegro tempestoso

Camille Balleza, piano
Vakhtang Kodanashvili, piano

Concerto for Trombone Derek Bourgeois
I. Allegro

Spencer Schnetzer, trombone
Sean Botkin, piano

Double Bass Concerto, op.3 Serge Koussevitzky
I. Allegro
II. Andante

Martin Hachmann, double bass
Natia Shiohvili, piano

Concerto No. 1 for Marimba Anders Koppel
III. Andante

Tess Lorraine, marimba
Sean Botkin, piano

Trumpet Concerto Edward Gregson
I. Allegro vigoroso

Megan Bennett, trumpet
Sean Botkin, piano

About the Finalists

Camille Balleza, a second-generation Filipino-American pianist from Oregon, is a graduate student of Dr. Kodanashvili at UNI. She was a New Horizons Fellow at the Aspen Music Festival and has studied on scholarship at the Brevard and Bowdoin music festivals. As a collaborative pianist, she has performed in venues across the United States, including the Kennedy Center, the White House, and Carnegie Hall. Camille currently serves as a full-time staff collaborative pianist at Luther College.

Megan Bennett is in her fourth year of studies at the University of Northern Iowa where she is pursuing a dual major in Trumpet Performance and Music Education. At UNI, she is section leader of the Wind Ensemble, principal trumpet with the UNI Symphony Orchestra, and performs with the Biscotti Brass. In 2023, she was the winner of the Fort Dodge Young Artist competition in which she performed the Neruda Trumpet Concerto. In addition, Megan is a past winner of the UNI Northern Festival of Bands Concerto Competition, past finalist in both the 2022 and 2023 UNI Concerto Competition, finalist in the 2024 UNI Emerging Artist Competition and has been a featured soloist with the Cedar Rapids Municipal Band. Outside of UNI, she has performed with the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra, the Iowa Women's Jazz Orchestra and the Cedar Rapids Municipal Band. She is a student of Dr. Randy Grabowski.

Martin Hachmann is a sophomore music major and double bassist at the University of Northern Iowa, studying music education with a jazz emphasis. Martin has been active in the music scene across Iowa, gigging and collaborating with a varied list of musicians and ensembles based out of central Iowa and the Cedar Valley. Across Iowa, he has established himself as a sought-after jazz bassist, working with musicians such as Wayne Page, Nate Sparks, Anthony Orji, and University of Northern Iowa faculty members like prof. Chris Merz, Dr. Michael Conrad, and prof. Josh Hakanson. Recent opportunities include performing with a varied selection of both orchestral and jazz ensembles, such as the Iowa Jazz Composers Orchestra, the Nate Sparks Big Band, the Wartburg Community Symphony, and the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony. At UNI, he participates in a jazz combo, is co-principal of the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra, and bassist in Jazz Band One. He currently studies bass under Dr. Will Yager.

Tess Lorraine is a third-year percussionist at UNI. She has performed with the UNI Symphonic band, UNI Wind Ensemble and the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra, as well as municipal bands in the area. She is currently working to finish her Music Education Degree.

Spencer Schnetzer is currently a sophomore at the University of Northern Iowa, working towards his bachelor's degree in Music Performance. He was the winner of the 2023 Northern Festival of Bands Solo Competition and has been a featured soloist with the Le Mars and Sioux City Municipal Bands.

Special thank you to our external judges for this evening, Dr. Kenny Lee, Director of Orchestral Activities at the University of Iowa, Dr. Rebecca Nederhiser, conductor of the Wartburg Community Symphony Orchestra, and Alan Lawrence, principal timpanist of the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony.

Thanks also to our semi-final round judges, Dr. Melinda Boyd and Dr. Mike Conrad, and to our collaborative pianists, applied faculty and all who helped to make this year's competition a success!