



Olympics of the Violin 2012: The Menuhin Competition goes to Beijing

(London, 03/03/2010) **The Menuhin Competition Trust is delighted to announce that its 2012 Competition will be held for the first time ever outside Europe. It will be hosted in Beijing, China by the Central Conservatory of Music April 6-15, 2012. "Yehudi would have been thrilled!" says Menuhin's daughter Zamira Menuhin Benthall.**

The connection between Menuhin and China goes back a long time. Yehudi Menuhin was the first Western musician to receive an Honorary Professorship from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 1979. Chinese competitors and jury members have been a prominent part of the competition throughout its history.

Held in a different city and country every two years, the Competition is the world's leading event for young violinists. Forty two are selected to take part out of hundreds of applicants from every continent. Over its 27-year history it has always taken place in Europe. This is about to change.

Of the several conservatoires around the world which had expressed their interest in hosting the 2012 Competition, the UK based Menuhin Competition Trust was pleased to accept Beijing's invitation. "China is musically and culturally such an exciting place at the moment. Beijing is an ideal location for the competition and its associated festival of events. It is home to a world-class conservatoire with truly spectacular concert venues" says Competition Director Gordon Back.

Wang Cizhao, President of the Central Conservatory of Music, looks forward to the inspiration and talent the Menuhin Competition will bring to Beijing.

Each host country brings to the Competition its own unique musical heritage. Moving on from London in 2004, the 2008 Competition in Cardiff, Wales reached a new global audience with a live web-stream and an ambitious local schools outreach programme. With "Music Connects" as its theme, the 2010 competition in Oslo will be a true musical and educational feast, celebrating the anniversary of the great Norwegian violinist Ole Bull and bringing together two dozen Norwegian music organisations.

The handing over of the musical Olympic torch – in this case a violin – will take place at the Closing Gala Concert of this year's competition at the Oslo Opera on 25th April 2010.

Next competition dates:

Menuhin Competition Oslo 2010 – 16 to 25 April 2010

Menuhin Competition Beijing 2012 – 6 to 15 April 2012

Website: www.menuhincompetition.org

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About the Menuhin Competition

Over the 27 years since it was first held in the small English town of Folkestone, the Menuhin Competition has grown to become **the world's leading international violin competition for young violinists under the age of 22**. Some of the youngest performers are only 11 or 12 years old, and it often is their first opportunity to meet their peers on an international level.

The competition attracts the world's most gifted young violinists. Many **previous winners like Isabelle van Keulen, Julia Fischer and Nikolaj Znaider have gone on to achieve international success at the highest level**. The Junior winner of the Menuhin Competition Cardiff 2008, Chad Hoopes, became the youngest violin soloist ever signed by IMG Artists. The 2008 Senior winner, Ray Chen, went on to win last year's Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels.

In addition to the outstanding talent of its competitors, the competition's profile is shaped by several very special elements:

- it is the **world's only competition at which** the star-studded **jury members** each **perform individually in concert and give masterclasses**. Jury members 2010 include Maxim Vengerov, Renaud Capucon, Kyoko Takezawa and Arve Tellefsen.
- it is also the **only competition where every participant is given additional performance opportunities** throughout the ten-day event, **even if they do not progress to the finals**.

Uniquely among such competitions, **the Menuhin Competition is held in a different world city every two years**, organised in cooperation between the Menuhin Trust and local Host Organisations.

While the Trust strictly maintains the core musical integrity of the competition, each location adds its own individual flavour to the event. **This year, for the first time, the competition has been invited to Norway**, where the Oslo Hosts have created "Music Connects", a feast of musical and educational activity of which Yehudi Menuhin would be extremely proud. **Oslo has probably never seen such an extensive collaboration of music organisations** to deliver a 10-day festival of events.

The Menuhin Competition Trust's activities do not stop when the competition ends. In collaboration with festivals and music organisations it provides its winners with a variety of opportunities to develop their musical careers. Creating a stimulating environment for young and highly talented violinists to learn and to grow has always been and will remain at the heart of the Menuhin Competition.

The Menuhin Competition Trust is a UK registered charity.

Chairman: Duncan Greenland; Trustees Zamira Menuhin Benthall, Jeremy Menuhin, Sir John Boyd, Joji Hattori, John Hughes, Celia Blakey, Farad Azima.

Artistic Director: Gordon Back

Menuhin Competition Oslo 2010 – Oslo Host Organisation:

Norwegian Academy of Music, Barratt Due Music Institute, Oslo Opera House, The Norwegian Council for Schools of Music and Performing Art and The Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra