



Contact: Michael Russell
The Michael Russell Group
(310) 939-9024

**24 SEMI-FINALISTS SELECTED TO COMPETE FOR \$250,000 IN CASH PRIZES
AT THE JOSÉ ITURBI MUSIC COMPETITION PRESENTED BY CUNARD LINE**

LOS ANGELES, June 18, 2008 – The 24 semi-finalists in the The 2008 José Iturbi Music Competition were announced yesterday at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall. Semi-final rounds will take place June 18 and 19 and the final rounds will take place June 20 (vocal) and 21 (piano). The competition offers the highest cash prizes of any classical piano and singing competition worldwide.

The 12 piano semi-finalists are:

Ron Abramski, 29, England/Germany
Irina Bogdanova, 25, Russia
Tommaso Cogato, 27, Italy
Mariya Kim, 26, Ukraine/Germany
Anastasia Markina, 29, Russia/USA
Yevgeniy Milyavskiy, 23, Belarus/USA
Margarita Muzychenko, 22, Russia
Junghye Shin, 30, Korea/USA
Stepan Simonian, 26, Russia/Germany
Chetan Tierra, 24, USA
Agnieszka Ufniaz, 29, Poland/France
Xiaofeng Wu, 29, China/USA

The 12 vocal semi-finalists are:

Sarah Austin, 30, USA
Matt Boehler, 31, USA
Andrew Garland, 31, USA
Daniel Holmes, 30, USA
Christopher Job, 30, USA
Jamilyn Manning-White, 23, USA
Angela Meade, 30, USA
Naguanda Nobles, 31, USA
Ivo Posti, 32, Estonia/The Netherlands
Rodell Rosel, 32, Philippines/USA
Michael Todd Simpson, 30, USA
Noah Stewart, 29, USA

The schedule for the remainder of the competition is as follows:

Wednesday, June 18

10 am to 12:25 pm 3 pianists play 45 minute programs
 2 to 4:25 pm 3 pianists play 45 minute programs
 6 to 10:20 pm Semi-Final Rounds for 12 singers
 Announcement of 6 finalists in voice

Thursday, June 19

10 am to 12:25 pm 3 pianists play 45 minute programs
 2 to 4:25 pm 3 pianists play 45 minute programs
 Announcement of 6 finalists in piano

Friday, June 20

7 to 10:30 pm Final Round for 6 singers followed by Awards Ceremony

Saturday, June 21

1:30 to 5:10 pm 6 pianists play 30 minute programs
 7 to 9:40 pm 6 pianists play 20 minute programs followed by Awards Ceremony

“We are delighted that the public is turning out for this unique week-long competition that has brought some of the world’s most talented classical pianists and singers to Los Angeles,” said Donelle Dadigan, President of the José Iturbi Foundation. “It is thrilling to watch the world’s upcoming, emerging talent engaged in a rigorous life-changing competition.”

Photos and biographies of the semi-finalists can be viewed at www.joseiturbifoundation.org. In addition to presenting sponsor Cunard Line, sponsors of the 2008 José Iturbi International Music Competition include Alliance Bank, The Beverly Hilton, Fields Pianos and The Luxe Hotel.

About The Jose Iturbi Foundation

Created in 1985 by Donelle Dadigan and Marion Seabury, The José Iturbi Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to continuing the legacy of concert great José Iturbi, and to fulfill his desire of bringing to the public’s attention today’s greatest emerging classical pianists and vocalists. The foundation’s goal is to globally expand the passion for classical music through dynamic competition and compelling live performance. The competition distinguishes itself by giving the largest cash prizes (\$50,000 each) for first place winners for solo piano and voice in the world. Last year, the foundation gave away \$268,000 in prize money for the winners of The José Iturbi International Music Competition.

One of the greatest concert pianists of his time, José Iturbi was also a composer, conductor and performer of international acclaim who starred as himself in seven MGM musicals including “Anchors Away” (1945) starring Frank Sinatra and Gene Kelly. He was the first classical musician to receive a Gold Record representing record sales in excess of one million and receive a star on the world-famous Hollywood Boulevard Walk of Fame. Iturbi felt that classical music should be a more recognizable part of everyone’s entertainment. It was his hope that through live concerts, motion pictures, recordings, international competitions, and public forums, a larger number of people would learn to love classical music and attend live concert performances. For rules and regulations on The 2008 José Iturbi International Music Competition, go to www.joseiturbifoundation.org. Ticket requests are available online for the public to attend all rounds of the competition on a first come first served basis.

About Cunard Line

Cunard Line, operator of the luxury ocean liners Queen Mary 2, QE2 and Queen Victoria has long been synonymous with the quest for new discoveries and the epitome of British refinement since the company's first paddle-wheeled steamer, Britannia, crossed the Atlantic in 1840. Cunard voyages bring together like-minded travelers who relish the Cunard hallmarks of impeccable White Star Service™, fine dining, sophisticated adventure, the legacy of historic voyages and transatlantic travel.

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