



Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition Awards Gold Medal Prize to the Calidore String Quartet

The audience was buzzing at the announcement of this year's Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition winners at the historic Avalon Theatre in Easton, MD on March 31, 2012. Over 200 ticket holders remained at the Avalon from the Competition's beginning at 1 p.m. to its end at 9:30 p.m. to witness each of the five Competition finalists – the Axiom Brass Quintet, Russian Trio, the Calidore String Quartet, the Sun-Silverstein-Lyon Trio, and the Quartet LaMi – perform traditional, as well as more contemporary, chamber music works, competing for the big prize. In the end, the Gold Medal prize of \$10,000, one of the largest chamber music competition awards, went to the Calidore String Quartet. The Russian Trio received the \$5,000 Silver Medal prize and the Audience Choice Award. A special tribute was given to Arnold Lerman and his wife Zena for their insight and leadership in creating the biennial Competition in 2004.

The Calidore String Quartet pays homage to its home base in California, the golden state, by blending "California" and "dore" (French for "golden"). The quartet, which was formed in 2010 at the Colburn School Conservatory of Music, was the Grand Prize and Gold Medal winner of the 2011 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. Members of the quartet, which includes two violinists, a violist, and a cellist, shared their excitement about being in Easton for the Competition. Cellist Estelle Choi comments, "We have felt very welcomed here on the Eastern Shore and it is such a beautiful place. During the Competition, we really felt the energy of the audience and their support. It was especially nice to have people stay for the entire day's Competition, which is not typical of most competitions."

The newly formed Russian Trio, whose members share a Russian heritage, met while pursuing graduate degrees at The Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University. They have already performed extensively throughout the United States and internationally. Russian Trio winners, Katherine Harris, pianist; Dmitry Volkov, cellist; and Nikita Borisevich, violinist, found the Avalon Theatre's superb acoustics were exceptional in capturing everything about the sound of chamber music. Katherine Harris comments, "This is our first competition as a trio. The Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition effusively engaged all of the community – it was a real community event. The people have been as friendly and welcoming as they could be. It has just been a great experience for all of us."

Cellist Marcy Rosen, artistic director of Chesapeake Chamber Music since its inception in 1986, along with judges Ursula Oppens and David Jolley, selected the final winners amidst the live audience.

Rosen comments, "This is an important event for everyone involved. For the contestants, it is an opportunity to achieve both the recognition and satisfaction of winning a major award, but winning also adds credibility to the work of the ensemble." She adds, "Some of our past winners have gone out into the world and are making great contributions to the world of Chamber Music. It is an honor to be a part of Chesapeake Chamber Music and to represent the quality and integrity of the organization."

Following the March 31st Competition, the finalists presented individual concerts at other local venues on April 1. The Gold Medal prize winner will be further honored with additional concerts, including a featured appearance during the 2012 Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival held from June 3 through June 17, 2012 in Easton and other locations on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

For many past winners of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition, the Competition has opened doors that enabled their careers to soar. The Harlem Quartet, Silver Medal and Audience Choice Award winner at the 2010 Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition, has since been invited to perform with such orchestras as the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Pops, and the Baltimore and National Symphonies. For the Exit 9 Percussion Group, the most profound change was in their repertoire. The dazzle of their 2008 gold medal caught the attention of composers, and new music was written specifically for them.

The Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition, sponsored biennially by Chesapeake Chamber Music, draws qualified applicants from the United States and around the world. The average age of an ensemble must be under 31, and some include members as young as 21. For further information, visit ChesapeakeChamberMusicCompetition.org or call the CCM office at 410-819-0380. The Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition is underwritten by private benefactors.

CUTLINES:

Photo #1:

Pictured is the Calidore String Quartet from California, the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition Gold Medal prize award of \$10,000, one of the largest chamber music prizes to be awarded today.

Photo by Jerry Michael

Photo #2:

Pictured is Russian Trio, the Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition \$5,000 Silver Medal prize and Audience Choice Award winner. Photo by Jerry Michael

Photo #3:

Cellist Marcy Rosen, artistic director of Chesapeake Chamber Music since its inception in 1986, along with judges Ursula Oppens and David Jolley, selected the final winners of the 2012 Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition amidst a live audience on March 31.

Photo #4:

Pictured are Arnold and Zena Lerman who received a special tribute at the Competition for their insight and leadership in creating the biennial Competition in 2004. Photo by Amy Steward







