

Media Release

Cellist Kian Soltani wins the 2018 Credit Suisse Young Artist Award

Vienna/Lucerne, 13 December 2017. The Credit Suisse Young Artist Award for 2018 goes to the cellist Kian Soltani. The selection committee, which is chaired by Michael Haefliger, Executive and Artistic Director of Lucerne Festival, chose the winner following yesterday's competition performance at the Musikverein in Vienna. With a cash prize of CHF 75,000, the award is one of the most highly endowed distinctions in the industry and will be conferred for a tenth time in 2018. The prize includes the opportunity to perform in a concert with the Vienna Philharmonic during the Summer Festival. The concert will take place on 8 September 2018, under the direction of Franz Welser-Möst, in the KKL Luzern Concert Hall.

The cellist **Kian Soltani** comes from a Persian musical family. Born in 1992 in Bregenz, Austria, at the age of twelve he commenced cello studies with Ivan Monighetti at the Basel Academy of Music. He additionally took part in master classes led by such figures as Sol Gabetta and Jens Peter Maintz, completing his studies as a "Young Soloist" with Frans Helmerson at the Kronberg Academy. In 2013 Soltani took first prize at the International Paulo Cello Competition in Helsinki; he won the Luitpold Award at the Kissinger Summer in 2014. He also received the Leonard Bernstein Award at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival and has been supported as a scholarship fellow by the Anne-Sophie Mutter Foundation. Soltani has concertized as a soloist with the NDR Symphony Orchestra, the Helsinki Philharmonic, the London Sinfonietta, the Symphony Orchestra Basel, and the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra. In 2015 and 2017, Kian Soltani appeared at Lucerne Festival as the solo cellist with the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra led by Daniel Barenboim. His debut album, of works for cello and piano by Schubert, Schumann, and Reza Vali, is scheduled for release at the beginning of 2018.

The Credit Suisse Young Artist Award is an initiative of Lucerne Festival, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Society for the Friends of Music in Vienna, and the Credit Suisse Foundation. Outstanding young musical personalities receive the award for extraordinary achievements. The winners are given funding and an opportunity to perform as part of Lucerne Festival. The award includes a cash prize of CHF 75,000 and is conferred every two years (with the Prix Credit Suisse Jeunes Solistes given in alternating years to support highly talented young musicians in Switzerland). The maximum age is 30. Invitation to participate is based on nominations by a panel of experts. Together with the Chairman Michael Haefliger, the Selection Committee consists of Professor Alexander Steinberger, Vice-Chairman of the Vienna Philharmonic; Dr. Thomas Angyan, Director of the Society for the Friends of Music in Vienna; music critic Dr. Peter Haggmann; and Pamela Rosenberg, Director Emeritus of the Berlin Philharmonic. The previous prize winners have been Quirine Viersen (cello/2000), Patricia Kopatchinskaja (violin/2002), Sol Gabetta (cello/2004), Martin Helmchen (piano/2006), Antoine Tamestit (viola/2008), Nicolas Altstaedt (cello/2010), Vilde Frang (violin/2012), Sergey Khachatryan (violin/2014), and Simone Rubino (percussion/2016). Credit Suisse has been Main Sponsor of Lucerne Festival in Summer since 1993 and supports the annual concerts by the Vienna Philharmonic.

More information about the artist can be found at: kiansoltani.com

More information on the cultural commitment of the Credit Suisse Foundation and on the cultural sponsoring programs of Credit Suisse can be found at credit-suisse.com/foundation and credit-suisse.com/sponsorship

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