

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Francisco Conservatory of Music Students Sweep the 2009 KDFC Classical Star Search Grand Finals

SAN FRANCISCO, May 12, 2009

In a virtuosic demonstration of musical brilliance, **Emre Sagbas**, graduate flute student at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, with accompanist Yeo Jin Seol on piano, performed F. Borne's *Carmen Fantasy* for flute and piano. Praised by judges as "a performance with flair and tenderness" and "very challenging for flute, and you throw it off without problems – bravo for this!", Sagbas took home the \$1,500 adult division award. The 28-year old San Francisco resident enjoys scuba diving and participating in community service programs that allow him to visit local hospitals and share his music. Sagbas is a student of Professor **Timothy Day**.

In the Youth Category, **Stephen Waarts**, Preparatory Division violinist, performed Glazunov's *Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op.82*, 1st and 4th Movements: Moderato and Allegro. A stand-out among a field of amazing young performers, Waarts won top honors and received judges' comments such as "heartfelt, vulnerable...I stopped noticing his playing...what soul!" Stephen took home a \$1,500 cash prize and an invitation to perform at the Festival del Sole at the Jarvis Conservatory in Napa, Sunday, July 19. The 12-year old resident of Los Altos began his violin studies at age five and piano studies at age eight. He has played in Carnegie Hall and will play in a June festival in Moscow. Since April of 2008, he's played five different concertos with five different orchestras! Waarts is a student of Preparatory Division faculty member **Li Lin**.

KDFC Classical Star Search received hundreds of video entries and narrowed them down to 10 semi-finalists in each category – Adult Category (age 21+) and Youth Category (age 10-20). Three adult and five youth finalists were chosen to advance to the Grand Finals and performed for the audience and judges at the Conservatory's Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall on Monday, May 11th, 2009.

The celebrity judges for this year's Finals competition were Donald Runnicles (Music Director and Principal Conductor of the San Francisco Opera), Zuill Bailey (renowned cellist), and KDFC's midday air personality Dianne Nicolini.

Who: A. Emre Sagbas, flute and Stephen Waarts, violin

What: [KDFC Classical Star Search Grand Finals](#)

When: Monday, May 11, 2009

Where: San Francisco Conservatory of Music
Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall
50 Oak Street, San Francisco

(more)

ABOUT EMRE SAGBAS

Critics have praised **A. Emre Sagbas** for his sound, virtuosity and musicality. He has performed as a chamber musician, as principal in orchestras and as soloist in major cities across Turkey, Italy, Spain, Holland, Japan, Canada and the United States. He has recently performed as soloist with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, assistant principal flute with the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, and at the Luminato Festival as solo flute of the multi-media opera *Passion of Winnie*. He was a winner of the 2008 Young Artist Competition of the International Kirishima Music Festival, Japan.

Originally from Ankara, Turkey, Emre Sagbas is currently a graduate student at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studies with Professor Timothy Day.



ABOUT STEPHEN WAARTS

Stephen Waarts, age 12, is a seventh grader at the School for Independent Learners in Los Altos. He began his studying the violin at age five and the piano at age eight. He is currently a student in the Preparatory Division at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studies the violin with Li Lin.

Stephen was named 2009 Debut Artist by the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, with whom he performed the Mendelssohn Concerto in D Minor. He a winner in the Palo Alto Philharmonic 2009 Concerto Movement Competition and will perform in the Winners Concert in May 2009.

Stephen's recent win at the American Fine Arts Festival competition resulted in an invitation to travel to Russia to perform in the Moscow Meets Friends festival.



High resolution photos are available upon request.

ABOUT THE CONSERVATORY

The San Francisco Conservatory of Music is one of the world's most distinguished schools of Western musical culture. It is the oldest college of music in the American West and has earned an international reputation for producing musicians of the very highest caliber. Its better known graduates include Yehudi Menuhin, Isaac Stern, Jeffrey Kahane, Aaron Jay Kernis, among others.

The Conservatory offers its nearly 400 collegiate and graduate students fully accredited Bachelor's and Master's degree programs in all areas of study related to the creation and performance of music. Its Preparatory Division provides over 550 younger students the finest pre-collegiate music education available in the United States. The Conservatory's faculty and students give more than 400 public performances each year, most of which are offered free to the public.

Formerly located at 19th Avenue and Ortega Street in San Francisco's Sunset District, the Conservatory moved to its new home in the very heart of San Francisco's Civic Center in 2006. The new school is an architectural and acoustical masterwork for the Conservatory's second century. For more information or to view a schedule of concerts, please visit www.sfcm.edu.

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