



Contact: Jennifer Wada Communications
718-855-7101
jennifer.wada@verizon.net

**WHO WILL WIN A GEORGE LONDON AWARD IN 2016?
THE 45TH ANNUAL GEORGE LONDON AWARDS COMPETITION FOR SINGERS –
FINAL ROUND AND AWARDS ANNOUNCEMENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2016, AT 4:00 PM
AT THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM'S GILDER LEHRMAN HALL**

The Panel of Judges Includes Harolyn Blackwell, Alfred F. Hubay, Nora London, George Shirley, Richard Stilwell (One of the First Winners of the George London Award), and Frederica von Stade

On Friday, February 19, 2016, 24 of the best young American and Canadian opera singers will perform with pianist Craig Rutenberg before a panel of judges and an enthusiastic audience at The Morgan Library & Museum, hoping to win a **George London Award**, an honor that has been conferred upon hundreds of the best young singers since 1971.

This will be the final round of the 45th annual **George London Foundation Awards Competition**, one of the oldest and most prestigious vocal competitions in the U.S. and Canada. Over three days of preliminary auditions on February 15-17, 90 singers will compete to reach the finals.

At the event, each singer performs one selection, and the winners are announced, all at The Morgan Library & Museum's Gilder Lehrman Hall on **Friday, February 19, at 4:00 PM**. After the finalists' performances, the audience is invited to a reception while the judges deliberate. The audience is then asked back into the hall for the announcement of the winners.

The singers will be competing for five George London Awards of \$10,000 each, and five George London Encouragement Awards of \$1,000 each. In addition, all of the finalists who do not win George London Awards or Encouragement Awards will be given a \$500 Honorable Mention.

This year's panel of judges includes soprano Harolyn Blackwell, former Metropolitan Opera administrator Alfred F. Hubay, George London Foundation President Nora London, tenor and voice professor George Shirley, baritone Richard Stilwell (who won a George London Award at the first competition, in 1971), and mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade. The competition pianist is renowned collaborative pianist Craig Rutenberg.

The 2015 George London Award winners were soprano Julie Adams, mezzo-sopranos Julia Dawson and Sarah Mesko, tenor Michael Brandenburg, baritone Reginald Smith, Jr., and bass Adam Lau.

Since 1971, the annual competition of The George London Foundation for Singers has been giving its George London Awards, and a total of more than \$2 million, to an outstanding roster of young American and Canadian opera singers who have gone on to international stardom – the list of past winners includes Christine Brewer, Joyce DiDonato, Renée Fleming, Christine Goerke, Catherine Malfitano, James Morris, Matthew Polenzani, Sondra Radvanovsky, Neil Shicoff, and Dawn Upshaw.

One of the oldest vocal competitions in the United States and Canada, the George London Foundation Awards Competition offers among the most substantial awards. As is seldom the case in musical competitions, no fee is charged to the applicants or competitors, a pianist is provided for the competition rounds, and prizes are awarded immediately.

After the competition, the **George London Foundation's 2015-16 season** continues with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the recital series, as well as the final duo recital of the season:

- ***George London Foundation Celebration Concert: Twenty Years of Recitals In Collaboration with the Morgan*** on Wednesday, April 6, 2016, at 7:00 PM. Renowned Canadian tenor **Ben Heppner** is master of ceremonies for the starry event that features eight George London Award winners who are among opera's biggest stars, and one recent winner: **Ailyn Pérez**, soprano; **Sondra Radvanovsky**, soprano; **Christine Brewer**, soprano; **Susanne Mentzer**, mezzo-soprano; **Matthew Polenzani**, tenor; **James Morris**, bass-baritone; **Eric Owens**, bass-baritone; and **Brandon Cedel**, bass-baritone. Joining the singers on the recital stage will be two of the opera world's finest pianists, **Ken Noda** and **Craig Rutenberg**. The event also includes a festive post-concert reception.
- **Dimitri Pittas**, tenor, and **Jennifer Johnson Cano**, mezzo-soprano, with Christopher Cano, piano. Dimitri Pittas is a 2004 George London Award winner; Jennifer Johnson Cano won her award in 2014. Sunday, May 15, 2016, at 4:00 PM.

The Legacy of George London

The goal of the London Foundation, the support and nurturing of young singers, was an abiding interest of the great American bass-baritone George London, who devoted a great part of the time and energy of his later years to this purpose. "Remembering his difficult road to success, George wanted to devise a way to make the road a little easier for future generations of singers," said George London Foundation President Nora London. Initially created under the auspices of the National Opera Institute, the George London Awards program has been administered since 1990 directly by the Foundation as a living legacy to George London's own exceptional talent and generosity.

"I have never forgotten how George accepted my performance of Donna Anna with himself as [Don Giovanni] in Vancouver in 1958. His belief in my ability gave a huge boost to my confidence, something he did for so many young singers during his spectacular career."

-Dame Joan Sutherland

***Friday, February 19, 2016, at 4:00 PM
Gilder Lehrman Hall at The Morgan Library & Museum
225 Madison Avenue at 36th Street, New York City***

***The George London Foundation for Singers Presents
The 45th Annual George London Foundation Awards Competition –
Final Round and Awards Presentation***

***Tickets: \$20, \$10 to George London Foundation Recital Series subscribers
For reservations and information, call (212) 956-2809, or e-mail info@georgelondon.org
www.georgelondon.org***

January 19, 2016

George London Award Winners 1971-2015 – A Selected List

Paul Appleby	Angela Meade
Dominic Armstrong	Bejun Mehta
Kathleen Battle	Susanne Mentzer
Isabel Bayrakdarian	Erie Mills
Rockwell Blake	Leona Mitchell
Russell Braun	Latonia Moore
Christine Brewer	James Morris
Measha Brüggergosman	Mark Oswald
Vinson Cole	Eric Owens
Barbara Daniels	Sean Panikkar
Alexandra Deshorties	Susanna Phillips
Michelle DeYoung	Dimitri Pittas
Joyce DiDonato	Deborah Polaski
Maria Ewing	Matthew Polenzani
Ruth Falcon	Florence Quivar
Renée Fleming	Sondra Radvanovsky
Christine Goerke	Gianna Rolandi
Sheri Greenawald	Lisa Saffer
Jill Grove	Neil Shicoff
Eric Halfvarson	Marietta Simpson
Alan Held	Diana Soviero
Barbara Hendricks	Maria Spacagna
Gwendolyn Jones	Richard Stilwell
Isola Jones	Dawn Upshaw
Kyle Ketelsen	James Valenti
Dominique Labelle	Carol Vaness
Anthony Laciura	Willard White
Catherine Malfitano	Corinne Winters
Mary Ann McCormick	