

Sandro Gegechkori is awarded First Prize in the 66th edition of the Maria Canals International Music Competition by Fundació Jesús Serra

The Georgian pianist won the top prize of €25,000 at the end of the renowned musical contest.

The pianist Sandro Gegechkori has been recognised with the first Fundació Jesús Serra Prize at the 66th edition of the Maria Canals International Music Competition in Barcelona. The runner-up in the final, which took place at the Palau de la Música Catalana on 14 July, was Ziming Ren of China, 25, with Rafael Kyrychenko of Portugal, 24, winning third prize. The three pianists reached the grand finale after three previous elimination tests held at the Petit Palau, with the participation of 35 pianists of 20 nationalities.

In the final, the three young pianists were accompanied by the Orquestra Simfònica del Vallès under the direction of Jordi Francès. The winner, Sandro Gegechkori, performed the Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23, by Tchaikovsky. The award ceremony took place on 15 July the Saló de Ciento in Barcelona City Hall.

The first prize, worth €25,000, is sponsored by the Fundació Jesús Serra, of Grupo Catalana Occidente. The institution was created in memory of Jesús Serra Santamans, founder of the insurance group and recognised as a patron and promoter of different projects in the field of culture, music and, specifically, piano.

In total, the competition awards more than €70,000 in prize money among the winners, including major prizes, special prizes and paid concerts in Spain and abroad. In addition, with the aim of promoting their musical career, these promising young pianists will participate in concerts in an established season with the Madrid Symphony, Seville Symphony, Bilbao Symphony and Tenerife Symphony, offered by Fundació Jesús Serra.

Profile of Sandro Gegechkori

He has performed in important concert halls such as the Royal Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Kaisersaal (Vienna), Mozarthaus (Vienna), Rorsch (New York) and the Nanjing Concert Hall (Nanjing). He has also given piano recitals in countries such as Italy, Armenia and Georgia, among others.

Before winning the top prize in the competition, he won the First Prize and Special Prize at the A. Bababanyan Yerevan International Competition and the Third Prize at the Chopin Contest for Young Pianists in Georgia.

About Fundació Jesús Serra

Fundació Jesús Serra is a non-profit organisation created in memory of Jesús Serra Santamans, a well-known businessman and sponsor and founder of Grupo Catalana Occidente. The Foundation develops and supports projects in the areas of research, education, business, social action, sports, and promotion of the arts, with the common goal of a responsible commitment to society.

About the Maria Canals International Music Competition

The Maria Canals International Music Competition, founded in 1954, is the leading music competition in Spain and a renowned annual event in the international piano scene. Maria Canals and her husband Rossend Llates created the Competition along with the collaboration of many people and families from civil society in the city of Barcelona.

In 1958, the Competition became a member of the World Federation of International Music Competitions and is still the only Catalan member of the federation. Currently, it is one of the competitions with the most international presence and prestige.

More information at www.mariacanal.org

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