

## Short Article

### The 1st National Forum "Ars Lituania"

*The patron of the forum is President of the Republic of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė*

- National competition for violinists and cellists to win fine modern string instruments;
- An exhibition and presentation of fine modern string instruments, workshops with luthiers;
- Masterclasses;
- Concerts

The 1st National Forum "Ars Lituania" has passed with a big success. The event attracted a lot of attention in the press and television - over 30 articles appeared in the main newspapers of Lithuania, Lithuanian National Radio interviewed the organizers of the forum, Lithuanian National Television was filming the first concert of the prize winners on the 21st of December and showing a reportage on the main evening news.

The National Forum "Ars Lituania" started on the 3rd of December. In the opening concert performed violinist, professor at the University of music and performing arts in Vienna Christian Altenburger, violinist Dalia Dedinskaite, cellist Gleb Pyšniak and pianist Inga Vyšniauskaite. Violinist Christian Altenburger performed for the first time in Lithuania. We received many outstanding reviews from the listeners.

On the 4th of December started the national violin and violoncello competition. There were selected 18 young musicians to participate in the first round. The participants were divided in two age groups: A group 14-17 years old, B group 18-22 years old. The first round was held on the 4th and the 5th of December. The jury of the first round: prof. Christian Altenburger (Austria), violinist Dalia Dedinskaite, cellist Gleb Pyšniak, cellist Giedre Dirvanauskaite (Kremerata Baltica Chamber Orchestra).

After the first round 8 participants were selected for the final round - 2 violinists and 2 cellist in each group. In the final round on the 7th of December joined three additional jury members: composer, cellist at the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra Arvydas Malcys, conductor, director of the St. Christopher Chamber Orchestra Donatas Katkus and the general director of the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society Rūta Prusevičienė.

Because of the high level of the competition participants the jury has decided to award each competitor with Pirastro strings sets and P. Guillaume rosin (Pirastro GmbH and P.Guillaume-Archetier-Bruxelles are partners of the forum). The winners of the competition received the main prizes - one violin and one cello made by Valdas Stravinskas (age group A), one violin and one cello made by Wolfram Ries (age group B) for one year use. As well there were plenty of special prizes, including concert engagements (chamber music and solo with orchestra), professional photoshoot, CD's, scores and etc. It was the first national competition in Lithuania with so many valuable, professional prizes.

The first exhibition of the modern string instruments in Lithuania, which was held from the 4th until 7th of December, received exceptional attention - it was full with visitors all four days. The luthiers were consulting students, teachers and professional musicians, making small adjustments and new

bridges for violins and cellos, rehairing bows. According to the huge interest of the visitors, the exhibition and workshop time was prolonged each day to maximum.

On the 6th of December luthiers held a workshop about the history of string instruments, answering the questions and giving tips to the listeners about the proper care of their instruments. On the same day prof. Christian Altenburger, violinist Dalia Dedinskaite and cellist Gleb Pyšniak gave masterclasses for the young Lithuanian musicians and competition participants. The masterclasses qualified as an important event in Lithuania and the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre provided official qualification certificates for all the teachers and professors, who were listening.

The Forum ended on the 7th of December with the concert of the competition prize winners and the prize-giving ceremony.

The 1st National Forum "Ars Lituanica" surpassed our expectations - everyone was happy and excited about the new idea, valuable prizes, interesting and useful events and really great atmosphere! This event was a completely new and important event in Lithuanian cultural life. We will do our best to find the necessary sources for organizing this event next year again and we believe that it will turn to a beautiful tradition.