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Finalists Announced for the 2019 James Toland Vocal Arts Competition

Oakland, CA – (April 28, 2019) – James Toland Vocal Arts, Inc. announced today the 14 finalists for its annual JTVA Vocal Competition, to be held in Oakland on June 14 & 15. The prestigious JTVA competition awards $100,000 in prize money and gives gifted, emerging singers exposure to expert judging, master classes, performance opportunities, and more.

This year's 14 finalists were chosen from a pool of 238 applicants from 34 states and 26 countries, the largest in the competition's six-year history.

"Every year I am thrilled by the impressive talent participating in our competition and this year we'll be treated to yet another sensational lineup," said James Toland, founder and general director. "Given the musicianship and spectacular vocalism we've seen from their audition videos, these competitors will make it extremely challenging for the panel of distinguished of judges. Our competition audience is in for a thrilling experience."

The competition will be held at the Valley Center for the Performing Arts at Holy Names University at 3500 Mountain Boulevard in Oakland. The weekend will include two public master classes featuring renowned American composer Jake Heggie and SF Opera Dramaturg Clifford "Kip" Cranna on June 14. Following the Friday master classes, there is a board hosted reception open to everyone in the theater lobby. The next day, June 15, the public competitions will take place on. A panel of judges will choose the winners except for the Audience Favorite Award, which is selected by an audience vote. For a complete summary of competition events, visit http://www.jamestolandvocalarts.org/events2.

Finalists were announced April 28 at JTVA's annual event, The Finalists Revealed, featuring a vocal performance by baritone Thomas West and a video montage of the finalists' performances.

Cash prizes are awarded to the top three finishers in each of the two competitor tiers, as well as the Audience Favorite Award in each tier. In addition, all other finalists will receive a Bell Investment Advisors Encouragement Award. The first place Tier 1 competitor is also awarded a performance with the Oakland Symphony and Conductor Michael Morgan. This year's competition also features the Richard Rittelmann Award, a cash prize plus an all-expenses-paid trip to Provence, France to perform in July 2020 at the Saint Vallier de Thiey/Grasse cultural center.

Further, it was announced at The Finalists Revealed event, a new prize in collaboration with Musica Marin will be inaugurated at this year's competition, the Ruby Wentzel Award. Musica Marin's composer in residence, Clint Borzoni, will select one finalist who will debut a new composition at a future concert of Musica Marin. www.musicamarin.org.

JTVA finalists were selected based on technical ability, vocal experience, and readiness to begin a professional career.

This year's JTVA finalists are:

Tier I

Kara Dugan, Mezzo-Soprano

Andrew Manea, Baritone

Brian Michael Moore, Tenor

Felicia Moore, Soprano

Alexandra Nowakowski, Soprano

Mario Rojas, Tenor

Camille Sherman, Mezzo-Soprano

Tier II

David Catalano, Baritone

Cara Gabrielson, Soprano

Taylor Haines, Soprano

Madeleine Lew, Soprano

Lindsey Reynolds, Soprano

Thomas West. Baritone

Jason Zacher, Bass-Baritone

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Founded in 2012 and based in Oakland, California, James Toland Vocal Arts, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to encouraging and cultivating, through competition and education, the emerging talents of singers who aspire to a professional career in vocal performance. Learn more about the James Toland Vocal Arts, Inc here.