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**Hermitage Artist Retreat and Aspen Music Festival and School
Celebrate 10th Year of Hermitage Prize in Composition ahead of
announcing this year's winner on August 13**

***“The surest way to remain vital in our relationship to old music
is in the creation of new music.”***

~Robert Spano, AMFS Music Director, Hermitage Fellow, Grammy Award Winner

(August 9, 2022) **The Hermitage Artist Retreat** (Sarasota County, Florida) and the **Aspen Music Festival and School** (Aspen, Colorado) are commemorating the 10th year of the **Hermitage Prize in Composition** with a [video](#) celebrating the impact of the unique prize. The video features exclusive interviews with past winners, renowned AMFS faculty members, and leading Hermitage Fellows in the field of music reflecting on the impact of the award in its first ten years.

At each festival since 2013, an exemplary composition student attending the **Aspen Music Festival and School** is awarded the distinguished **Hermitage Prize** in recognition of their accomplishments and to foster the development of future work. The recipient is selected by a distinguished panel of AMFS composition faculty and leadership, and receives a residency at the Hermitage, along with a \$1,000 stipend. The idea for this recognition was first conceived when Hermitage Fellow **Robert Spano**, Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony and the AMFS, was in residence at the

Hermitage. Spano emphasized how beneficial the Hermitage had been for him and his work: “The opportunity to be so focused and undistracted – it’s unbelievable – not only because of the time, but because of the space itself.” Thus, the **Hermitage Prize in Composition** was created to offer the same experience to young talented composers just beginning their careers.

Since then, eight gifted young composers have had the privilege of being honored with this recognition, and a ninth recipient will be selected this summer. (The Aspen Music Festival was on a hiatus in 2020 due to the pandemic.) For most recipients of this honor, it is their first professional experience of uninterrupted time to focus on their craft and create their music. **The Hermitage Prize** is the only student residency awarded amidst approximately 75 curated residencies each year; all other Hermitage Fellows are accomplished working professionals and national leaders in their respective fields. This provides the recipient of the prize the opportunity to share this unmatched Hermitage experience with trailblazing artists from all around the world, including 14 Pulitzer Prize winners, multiple Grammy, Oscar, Emmy, and Tony winners, national Poets Laureate, MacArthur 'Genius' Fellows, and more. Hermitage Fellows regularly describe their time at the Hermitage as "magical," "transformative," and "life-changing."

The winner of the **Hermitage Prize in Composition** this year will be selected by a jury that includes celebrated composer **Alan Fletcher**, AMFS President and CEO; **Robert Spano**, AMFS Music Director and a longtime member of the Hermitage’s National Curatorial Council; and the composition faculty of the AMFS, including award-winning composer and Hermitage alumnus **Christopher Theofanidis**. The award is presented annually in August at the Aspen Music Festival by the distinguished jury and Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**, an accomplished director, writer, and Tony Award-winning producer. “It’s not just a recognition of who you are and what you’ve done,” notes Sandberg. “It’s a vote of confidence to go forward, to bring something new into the world, to come to the Hermitage and *create*.”

Last year’s recipient of the award, **David Clay Mettens**, noted: "My time at the Hermitage was such a gift – I found the natural beauty of the grounds to be rejuvenating and my interactions with artists from other disciplines so artistically fulfilling. I can't imagine a better opportunity for a young composer than to be in the presence of

creative luminaries in their respective fields.” During his time at the Hermitage, Mettens overlapped with Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright **Paula Vogel**, celebrated jazz musician **Luke Stewart**, and internationally acclaimed Jamaican poet **Ishion Hutchinson**, among others.

2018 recipient **Sid Richardson** noted that winning the **Hermitage Prize** has been “an affirmation of my musical explorations. I can’t think of a greater opportunity for a young artist than to be given time, space, and a community of like-minded individuals within which to work.” Richardson’s time in residence at the Hermitage overlapped with acclaimed flutist, MacArthur Genius Fellow, and Avery Fisher Prize winner **Claire Chase**; the director of the Iowa Writers Program **Christopher Merrill**; acclaimed musical theater composer **Adam Gwon**; author **Kirstin Valdez Quade**; playwright and director **Lisa Peterson**; and AMFS’ own Christopher Theofanidis.

Past residencies of **AMFS Hermitage Prize** recipients have led to exciting collaborations, lifelong friendships, and extraordinary new compositions. We invite you to learn more about the impact and legacy of this distinguished award and hear directly from past recipients at HermitageArtistRetreat.org/HermitagePrizeAspen.

The 2022 recipient will be announced on August 13th at the Aspen Music Festival as the culminating event of the young composer’s course of study – the AMFS Composer Showcase. This event features a full orchestra performing the works of the Hermitage Prize finalists, offering Aspen Music Festival audiences a unique look into the rehearsal and development process of a new piece of composition. This event is free to the public, and tickets are not required. The 2022 Composer Showcase will take place on Saturday, August 13th at 1:30pm MT in the Aspen Music Festival’s Benedict Tent, 960 North 3rd Street.

To learn more about the Hermitage and its upcoming programs, or to support this organization in its mission to champion artists and the creative process, visit HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

To learn more about the Aspen Music Festival and School and the current schedule of programming, visit AspenMusicFestival.com.

Past Recipients of the Hermitage Prize in Composition at AMFS:

2013 - **Patrick Harlin**
2014 - **Thomas Kotcheff**
2015 - **Phillip Sink**
2016 - **Andrew Hsu**
2017 - **Joel Thompson**
2018 - **Sid Richardson**
2019 - **Chelsea Komschlies**
2021 – **David Clay Mettens**

About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:

The Hermitage is a non-profit artist retreat located in Manasota Key, Florida, inviting accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included 14 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, MacArthur ‘Genius’ Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the \$30,000 Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the newly announced \$35,000 Hermitage Major Theater Award for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival’s Hermitage Prize in Composition.

For more information, visit HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

The Hermitage is supported by:

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About the Aspen Music Festival and School:

Founded in 1949, the Aspen Music Festival and School is regarded as one of the top classical music festivals in the United States, noted both for its concert programming and its musical training of mostly young-adult music students. The typical eight-week summer season includes more than 400 classical music events—including concerts by five orchestras, solo and chamber music performances, fully staged opera productions, master classes, lectures, and children’s programming—and brings in 100,000 audience members. In the winter, the AMFS presents a small series of recitals and music education programs for local youth and families. **For more information, visit AspenMusicalFestival.com.**

HermitageArtistRetreat.org

HermitageArtistRetreat.org/HermitagePrizeAspen

<http://www.aspenmusicfestival.com/hermitage-prize-at-the-aspen-music-festival-and-school/>