



For immediate release

First Warner Music Prize will be presented in association with Carnegie Hall in 2015

Contact Glenn Petry (212) 625 2038

gpetry@21cmediagroup.com

Warner Music Prize Created to Support Young Classical Talent; Inaugural 2015 Award to Be Presented To Artist Featured on Carnegie Hall's 2014-2015 Season

NEW YORK, NY – November 3, 2014: Warner Music Group is thrilled to announce the creation of the **Warner Music Prize**, established with support from the Blavatnik Family Foundation. Featuring a cash prize of \$100,000, the award will be given to a classical musician aged 18 to 35 who demonstrates exceptional talent and promise, regardless of any label affiliation. In its inaugural year, the prize will be presented to a selected artist with nominees drawn from those young singers and instrumentalists presented by Carnegie Hall in significant solo roles during the 2014-15 concert season, who meet specific eligibility criteria.

The candidates' performances will be evaluated by a jury of renowned classical musicians and industry leaders, who will announce the winner in the spring of 2015. In conjunction with the cash award, the winner will be showcased at Zankel Hall as part of the **Warner Music Prize Gala** at Carnegie Hall on October 27, 2015, which will raise funds for philanthropic and educational purposes. In addition to the Warner Music Prize, the winner will be offered the opportunity to record with Warner Classics.

The young artists under consideration, and the dates of their Carnegie Hall performances, are: sopranos **Sarah Shafer** (Feb 22) and **Jennifer Zetlan** (Dec 4); mezzo-sopranos **Jamie Barton** (Feb 17), **Rachel Calloway** (Dec 4), **Cecelia Hall** (Jan 17), **Alisa Kolosova** (Feb 1), and **Peabody Sowell** (Dec 4); bass-baritones **Aubrey Allicock** (Dec 4) and **Evan Hughes** (March 8); tenor **Dominic Armstrong** (Dec 4); violinists **Augustin Hadelich** (Dec 28) and **Itamar Zorman** (Nov 5 & March 26); cellist **Brook Speltz** (March 26); double bassist **Roman Patkoló** (Nov 11); harpist **Sivan Magen** (Oct 21); and pianist **Behzod Abduraimov** (Jan 27 & Feb 18).

Stu Bergen, President, International, **Warner Recorded Music**, said: "The Warner Music Prize has been created to recognize and reward promising musicians early in their careers, when they need it the most. We are thrilled to work with Carnegie Hall for the inaugural prize and are looking forward to a series of exciting performances this season and the gala celebration of the first recipient next fall."

Clive Gillinson, Executive and Artistic Director of **Carnegie Hall**, commented: “Support of young talent and the next generation of great performing artists are goals that are central to Carnegie Hall’s mission. Aligned with this, we’re excited to work with Warner Music Group as it launches the Warner Music Prize, shining a spotlight on the many exceptional young artists presented on the Hall’s three stages this season, including the prize’s first honored recipient. We also thank Warner for selecting Carnegie Hall’s Weill Music Institute as a beneficiary of the prize's gala, supporting music education programs designed to nurture young talent and creativity.”

Len Blavatnik, Founder of the **Blavatnik Family Foundation** and Chairman of Access Industries, said: “One of the primary missions of our foundation is to support and encourage creative young people in a diversity of disciplines. Acknowledging and helping young musicians is essential if we are to see classical music thrive for generations to come.”

Proceeds from the gala will benefit the **Harmony Program**, a nonprofit organization that provides afterschool music education programs in underserved communities across New York City, and the **Weill Music Institute**, which creates Carnegie Hall’s music education and community programs, serving people of all ages in New York City and throughout the world.

Anne Fitzgibbon, Founder of the **Harmony Program**, observed: “The Harmony Program is honored to have been chosen as a beneficiary of the inaugural Warner Music Prize Gala. As an organization committed to bringing music education into the city’s under-served communities, the Harmony Program appreciates the importance of inspiring and celebrating emerging talent. Perhaps one day a former Harmony student will be considered for the Warner Music Prize.”

The day-to-day running of the Warner Music Prize is being overseen by Warner Music Group Senior Vice President **Elijah Seton**.

About Warner Music Group

With its broad roster of new stars and legendary artists, Warner Music Group is home to a collection of the best-known record labels in the music industry, including Asylum, Atlantic, Big Beat, East West, Elektra, Fueled by Ramen, Nonesuch, Parlophone, Reprise, Rhino, Roadrunner, Rykodisc, Sire, Warner Bros., Warner Classics, Warner Music Nashville, and Word, as well as Warner/Chappell Music, one of the world's leading music publishers, with a catalog of more than one million copyrights worldwide.

About Warner Classics

Warner Classics is one of the world’s leading global classical music recording companies. Based in Paris, Warner Classics and Erato exclusively record some of the finest musicians around the world, including Alison Balsom, Natalie Dessay, Joyce DiDonato, Philippe Jaroussky, Emmanuel Pahud, Sir Antonio Pappano, and distinguished organizations like the Berliner Philharmoniker; the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; and Orchestra dell’Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. The company boasts an unrivaled catalog of recordings by international superstars Plácido Domingo, Maxim Vengerov, Nigel Kennedy, Kiri Te Kanawa, Itzhak Perlman, André Previn, Daniel

Barenboim, and Riccardo Muti, and the historic recordings of Mstislav Rostropovich, Maria Callas, Victoria de los Angeles, Dame Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Jacqueline du Pré, Herbert von Karajan, Otto Klemperer, Sir Adrian Boult, and Sir John Barbirolli, as well as the longest-serving artist in the history of the record industry, violinist and conductor Yehudi Menuhin.

About the Blavatnik Family Foundation

The Blavatnik Family Foundation is an active supporter of many leading educational, scientific, cultural and charitable institutions throughout the world. The Foundation is headed by Len Blavatnik, an American industrialist and philanthropist, and the founder and chairman of Access Industries, a privately held U.S. industrial group with global interests in natural resources and chemicals, media and telecommunications, and real estate. Among its numerous activities involving young people, the foundation created the Blavatnik Awards for Young Scientists in 2007 to acknowledge the excellence of the most noteworthy young scientists and engineers in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The awards program was expanded in 2014 to encompass faculty-level scientists on a national level. Likewise, in 2010 Blavatnik and the foundation established the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford to train outstanding graduates from across the globe in the skills and responsibilities of government.

About Carnegie Hall

Since 1891, **Carnegie Hall** has set the international standard for excellence in performance as the aspirational destination for the world's finest musicians. Carnegie Hall presents a wide range of performances each season on its three stages—the renowned Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, intimate Weill Recital Hall, and innovative Zankel Hall—including concert series curated by acclaimed artists and composers; citywide festivals featuring collaborations with leading New York City cultural institutions; orchestral performances, chamber music, new music concerts, and recitals; and the best in jazz, world, and popular music. Many concerts each season are heard by listeners worldwide via the *Carnegie Hall Live* radio and digital broadcast series, produced in partnership with WQXR. Complementing these performance activities, Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute creates extensive music education and community programs that annually serve 450,000 people in the New York City area, nationally, and internationally, playing a central role in Carnegie Hall's commitment to making great music accessible to as many people as possible. For more information, visit carnegiehall.org.

For more information on the Warner Music Prize please visit: www.warnermusicprize.com.

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