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NEWS *from Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

FOUR FIRST PRIZE WINNERS CHOSEN BY YOUNG CONCERT ARTISTS AT THE 2009 INTERNATIONAL AUDITIONS

November 23, 2009 – **Charlie Albright**, 21-year-old American pianist; **Caroline Goulding**, 17-year-old American violinist; **Aleksandr Haskin**, 26-year-old flutist from Belarus; and **Jennifer Johnson**, 25-year-old American mezzo-soprano, were announced as First Prize Winners after the Finals of the 2009 Young Concert Artists International Auditions held at the 92nd Street Y on Saturday, November 21. The YCA Winners were chosen from ten Finalists, selected out of 146 applicants from 30 countries.

Each First Prize Winner will be presented in a debut recital in the 2010-2011 Young Concert Artists Series in New York and in Washington D.C. at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, and also in Boston at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. All four Winners join the roster of Young Concert Artists, Inc., which also offers management services, including concert engagements, promotion, and career development. Young Concert Artists has been discovering and launching the careers of extraordinary musicians since 1961. Famous former YCA artists include Emanuel Ax, Pinchas Zukerman, Richard Goode, and Dawn Upshaw.

The members of the Jury for the Final Auditions were Pamela Frank (violin), Gary Graffman (piano), Irene Gubrud (voice), Marya Martin (flute)*, Scott Nickrenz (viola), Christopheren Nomura (voice)*, Todd Palmer (clarinet)*, Fred Sherry (cello)*, James Sinclair (conductor), Jeffrey Swann (piano)*, Scott Yoo (violin/ conductor)*, and Susan Wadsworth (Chairman). The Semi-Finals Jury members included Edward Arron (cello), Michael Barrett (voice), Cho-Liang Lin (violin), and Seymour Lipkin (piano). (* Alumnus/Alumna of Young Concert Artists)

The other six Finalists were awarded Second Prize. They were *Ga Hyun Cho*, 25-year-old Korean violinist; the *Curtis String Quartet* (*Joel Link* and *Bryan Lee*, violinists; *Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt*, violist; *Camden Shaw*, cellist); *Sharleen Joynt*, 24-year-old Canadian soprano; *Michael Kelly*, 27-year-old American tenor; *Denis Kozhukhin*, 23-year-old Russian pianist; and the *N-E-W Trio* (*Andrew Wan*, violinist; *Gal Nyska*, cellist; *Julio Elizalde*, pianist).

The Young Concert Artists International Auditions are unlike a competition: there are no rankings, and any number of winners in a wide range of instruments and voice can be selected. The criteria are musicianship, virtuosity, individuality and readiness to begin a concert career.

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Press Contact: Susan Wadsworth, Director Lindsay Schweriner, Management Associate
Telephone: (212) 307-6655 **E-mail:** susan@yca.org lindsay@yca.org

YOUNG CONCERT ARTISTS, INC. 250 West 57 Street New York, NY 10107
Telephone: (212) 307-6655 **Website:** www.yca.org

**FOUR FIRST PRIZE WINNERS
OF THE 2009 YOUNG CONCERT ARTISTS INTERNATIONAL AUDITIONS**

Caroline Goulding, violinist

17-year-old Caroline Goulding is from Ohio, where she began to play the violin at the age of three. At 13, she won the Concerto Competition at the Aspen Festival to perform with the orchestra. As a young prodigy, she was invited to perform concerts with orchestras including the Cleveland Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic and the Louisville Youth Orchestra. She has appeared on the popular music program "From the Top," hosted by YCA Alumnus Christopher O'Riley, on National Public Radio (WQXR in New York) and on PBS television, as well as Martha Stewart's show and the "Today" Show. With the collaboration of Christopher O'Riley as pianist, she made her debut recording for Telarc. She has studied with Paul Kantor at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Aleksandr Haskin, flutist

26-year-old Aleksandr Haskin was born in Minsk, Belarus, and graduated with a PhD degree from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow. He has already won top prizes at Competitions including the Penderecki Flute Competition (2008) and the International Contemporary Chamber Music Competition (2005) - both in Krakow, Poland, the Astana International Music Competition in Kazakhstan, and Leonardo DeLorenzo Flute competition in Viggiano, Italy. He received career grants from the Guzik Foundation in Moscow and a scholarship to the Yale University School of Music where he studied with Ransom Wilson and won the Woolsey Concerto Competition. He is presently a member of the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra.

Charlie Albright, pianist

21-year-old Charlie Albright was born in Centralia, Washington, and received a degree in Science from Centralia College. He won a Vendome Virtuoso Prize and the Elizabeth Leonskaya Special Award at the 2009 International Vendome Piano Competition in Lisbon, Portugal, and a Gilmore Young Artist Award to perform at the 2010 Gilmore Keyboard Festival in Kalamazoo, Michigan. In 2006 he won the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation's New York International Piano Competition. At the age of 18, he performed with cellist Yo-Yo Ma at a ceremony at which Senator Ted Kennedy received an honorary degree from Harvard University. He is currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree at Harvard University, majoring in economics, and a Master's degree at the New England Conservatory of Music, studying with Wha-Kyung Byun.

Jennifer Johnson, mezzo-soprano

25-year-old mezzo-soprano Jennifer Johnson is a native of St. Louis, Missouri, and is a member of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera. Last summer she was a participant of the Marlboro Music Festival, and also performed in Russia at the St. Petersburg Palaces Music Festival. Recent appearances include Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* with the New York City Ballet and roles at the Chicago Opera Theater and the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. She makes her Met debuts this season singing a Bridesmaid in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and the Sandman in *Hansel and Gretel*. She received a 2009 Sullivan Foundation Award and was a 2008 Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.