



NORDIC EDITION
POLSTJÄRNEPRISET
SWEDEN VÄNERSBORG THE NORDICS

Göteborg, January 5, 2023

PRESS INFORMATION

Cellist Inez Karlsson won the Polstjärnepriset in 2023

- I'm overwhelmed. This is an amazing experience!

So says cellist Inez Karlsson, who is the first ever winner of the Nordic edition of the Polstjärnepriset – a highly ranked competition with participating young classical musicians from all five Nordic countries.

There are many strong experiences that 15-year-old Inez has with her from the competition in the Gothenburg Concert Hall on Thursday, January 5.

– The most exciting and extremely fun was being able to play together with a symphony orchestra in such a large and beautiful concert hall. It has been one of my dreams to do it. The sound on stage was absolutely fantastic.

– Having been able to participate through the various stages of the competition, and to meet many young musicians from other countries, has also been very exciting.

In addition, she won the competition, which was decided for the first time with participants from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

– I almost couldn't believe it happened. I am very grateful that I have been given this wonderful opportunity.

The jury's reasoning reads:

"An elegant musician with an extreme focus and a wonderful sound, with a strong and obvious presence – reaching out to the audience. A young musician that can go wherever she wants with her talent."

Inez Karlsson is a Swedish citizen, but she was born in England and lives in Surrey, south of London. Her father is Swedish and the family has many contacts with Sweden. Inez's cello teacher also has plenty of Swedish contacts and it was he who encouraged his student to stand up and compete in the Polstjärnepriset.

There is another talented musician in the family. Inez's older sister plays the violin and has participated in international music competitions.

- She is actually much more talented than I am.

Closest to Inez's plans when she gets home to Surrey, is to participate in some local competitions and music festivals.

- Then I will come back to Sweden and, among other things, play concerts. I am very much looking forward to that.

As the winner, Inez Karlsson receives SEK 50,000.

Second prize winner Pekko Aakko from Finland, who plays the bassoon, wins SEK 10,000.

SEK 5,000 each goes to the third prize winner, the Danish pianist Valdemar Wenzel Most, and to the fourth prize winner, Norwegian Clara Yuna Friedensburg, who plays the cello.

All the four finalists traditionally performed their competition entries together with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra in front of an audience in the Gothenburg Concert Hall.

For any additional questions regarding this press information, please contact:

Ulrich Kaatz, Polstjärnepriset competition leader, ulrich.kaatz@vanersborg.se, + 46 70-2731713

Polstjärnepriset in brief

With the motto "More than a competition", the Polstjärnepriset is a unique venture and a Nordic meeting place for young talents in classical music. It is a forum where young musicians can meet like-minded people, test their technical and stage skills in the competition stage and, not least, get the opportunity to be taught by a very renowned collection of instructors. Parallel to the competition, the Polstjärnepriset course is arranged. It is open to young musicians up to 20 years of age. In total, around 70 young people are involved in the Polstjärnepriset each year.

Through individual teaching, master classes, and playing in chamber and orchestra settings, a system is offered where each competition and course participant grows as a musician both individually and in a group. First, everyone meets for four days during the autumn holidays to get to know each other, receive instruction and rehearse together. The next time everyone gathers, is the first week of January. Then the focus is on the competition, which consists of three stages, and preparations for the concerts where the highlight is the final concert in the Gothenburg Concert Hall.

The winner receives SEK 50,000.

In 2023, the Polstjärnepriset competition will be held for the 16th time and the development has gone rapidly upwards. The competition is based in Vänersborg. This has been expanded with courses for young talents and long-term collaborations with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. The young people who apply for the competition and course are the Nordic countries' very best in their age groups.

It is the National Center for Music Talents, based in Vänersborg, that organizes the Polstjärnepriset. Eight of the country's orchestras, including the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and all music academies as well as the municipality of Vänersborg, are involved in the talent centre. In addition to the Polstjärnepriset, the centre organizes regular course weekends for young talents.