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Tholen Fellows Celebrate with Public Recital and Master Class with Pianist Alexander Shtarkman at Southern Oregon University February 27

(Ashland, OR) After a year of intense study and coaching with renowned pianist Alexander Shtarkman, five Tholen Fellows – all piano teachers from Southern Oregon – will present a celebratory recital on February 27 at 3pm at the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University. Mr. Shtarkman will also perform as a special guest.

On the same day preceding this recital, local students will have their own opportunity to shine in a public master class with Mr. Shtarkman starting at noon. The young pianists participating in the Master Class are students of the Tholen Fellows. Mr. Shtarkman is a Busoni International Piano Competition Winner and now teaches at the esteemed Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University.

These free events are open to the public and is co-sponsored by Portland Piano International and the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University. Funding is provided by the Nellie Tholen Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation.

What is the Tholen Fellows Project?

A new initiative of Portland Piano International, the Tholen Fellows Project offers piano teachers in Oregon a potentially transformative professional development experience – the opportunity to study with a renowned concert pianist and teacher. Tholen Fellows receive one-on-one lessons and coaching on four separate occasions between June 2015 and May 2016. Each session will consist of three hours of instruction over several days.

Our Tholen Fellow master teachers for 2015 / 2016 are Busoni Competition Winner Alexander Shtarkman and Van Cliburn Gold Medalist Stanislav Ioudenitch. The Tholen Fellows Project is funded through the Nellie Tholen Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation.

About Alexander Shtarkman

Alexander Shtarkman's debut recitals in Los Angeles, Chicago and New York City prompted strong words of praise from audiences and critics alike. Martin Bernheimer, Los Angeles Times, wrote "Alexander Shtarkman. Remember the name... He plays the piano with all the strength, flash and eagerness that his age would suggest. He also plays with the sensitivity and mellow refinement one associates with certain grand old men of the keyboard, most of them Russian." James Keller of The New Yorker staff wrote of Mr. Shtarkman's 92nd Street Y appearance: "Shtarkman's was a debut recital of importance. In fact, debuts just don't come much better than this. Of the young pianists currently entering the international spotlight, Shtarkman is unquestionably among the most musicianly."

Recital appearances in the United States include the Ambassador Foundation, Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, Tisch Center for the Performing Arts, Ravinia Festival's Rising Stars Series, San Francisco Performances, Regional Arts Foundation at the Kravis Center, The Peace Center and Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. Orchestral appearances include the Dallas Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, Fort Worth Chamber Orchestra, Chicago Sinfonietta at Orchestra Hall, Northwood Festival Orchestra, Marin Symphony and the Chamber Orchestra of Albuquerque.

In August 1995, Mr. Shtarkman was awarded the First Prize of the Busoni International Piano Competition in Bolzano, Italy. As a result of this prize, he was offered more than sixty recitals and orchestral engagements in Europe within the following seasons.

In addition to the Busoni Prize, Mr. Shtarkman is a major prizewinner of the 1989 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition and the 1994 Tchaikovsky Piano Competition. He also won the First Prize of the First Taipei International Piano Competition and was engaged for numerous concerts throughout Asia.

Mr. Shtarkman performs and gives master classes in Europe, Asia, South and North Americas, and in Russia where he is a frequent guest performer at the prestigious Great and Small Halls of the Moscow Conservatory.

Since 2002 Mr. Shtarkman has been serving as a member of the Piano Faculty at the Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

Portland Piano International is dedicated to presenting the finest pianists in the world in recital settings and outreach activities for the purpose of enriching and educating our community. Funders and sponsors include The Oregon Community Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, Regional Arts & Culture Council, Work for Art, James F. and Marion Miller Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, Portland Piano Company, Higgins Restaurant, Portland State University and All Classical Media.

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