

Gala Concert to celebrate the best of 2018 Kiwanis Festival

May 7, 2018

The 2018 Kelowna Kiwanis Festival made a positive difference in the lives of Okanagan amateur performers with awards and scholarships totaling more than \$10,000, and 23 participants honoured to represent Kelowna at Provincial competitions in Victoria later this month (see Backgrounder attached).

Local media personality Duane English will host the festival's Gala Concert, Friday, May 18th featuring some of the competition's highest achieving performers. One of these stellar performers is 22-year-old Conagher Jones, who achieved a \$100 scholarship in Senior Classical Voice and the honour to represent Kelowna at Provincials.

Jones, who works as practice manager at Bill Nelems Pain and Research Centre in Kelowna, "caught the opera bug" at age 12 during a stint at Bumbershoot Theatre. He's been singing opera almost exclusively ever since, with weekly lessons from Alexandra Babbel, Artistic Director of Opera Kelowna. She teaches two of the festival's three provincial nominees in the classical voice category: Jones and Lara Moshaver. Collaboration with Opera Kelowna and other arts and community partners is critical to the festival's success.

"The Kiwanis Festival is a much-needed institution that provides performance opportunity for young musicians in numerous disciplines. The arts are profoundly important to a community and such training is profoundly beneficial to youth," said Babbel.

Jones has performed at the Kiwanis Festival about eight times since he fell in love with opera, and he credits these opportunities and hard work for his achievements as a singer.

"The festival has been a significant part of my life as an amateur singer. It's given me a chance to sing solo repertoire. We usually sing in groups and choirs, but to sing on a stage by yourself, in front of people, really helps you learn and grow as a performer and in your life beyond singing."

The 2018 Kelowna Kiwanis Festival featured competitions in dance, voice and music from February 26 until April 27, and included entries from more than 1,300 solo and group performers. As the festival is dedicated to providing a place for participants to perform, learn and grow, every participant received an assessment of their performance from a professional festival adjudicator.

To enjoy this celebration of amateur performing arts in the community, book your Gala tickets on-line at the RotaryCentrefortheArts.com or by phone at 250.717.5304. Tickets cost \$20 for adults and \$5 for youth 17 and under. The Gala Concert runs from 7 to 9:30 pm on Friday, May 18, in the Mary Irwin Theatre of Kelowna's Rotary Arts Centre.

The Kiwanis Festival, which is in its 92nd year, was founded as the Okanagan Valley Music Festival in 1926, as a one-day event. It became a tri-city event in 1936 with Kelowna, Penticton and Vernon taking turns hosting. The Kiwanis Club of Kelowna became the festival's main sponsor in 1980, changing the name to the Kelowna Kiwanis Festival and making Kelowna its permanent home in 1981.

Media inquiries

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Festival Results

Click [here](#) for complete festival results in the following categories: brass and woodwinds, choral, composition, concert band, musical theatre, orchestra/chamber, piano, speech and dramatic arts, strings, and voice (both classical and popular).



Conagher Jones, a high achiever at Kelowna's Kiwanis Festival, will perform at the Gala Concert on May 18. He will also represent Kelowna at Provincial competitions later this month.



PERFORMING ARTS BC

May 29 - June 2, Victoria



2018 KELOWNA KIWANIS FESTIVAL PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

DANCE

PROVINCIAL NOMINEE

Emily Nguyen (Ballet - Jr) - Penticton
Brynn Streadwick (Ballet - Inter) - Rossland
Amy Cox (Ballet - Sr) - Kamloops

Kate Zulinick (Modern - Jr) - Kamloops
Tatum Clement (Contemporary - Inter) - Rossland
Sophia McNolty (Contemporary - Sr) - Kaleden

Gene Hayer (Stage-Jr Tap) - West Kelowna
Sunny Sokolowki (Stage-Inter Tap) - Lake Country
Nicola Hopley (Stage-Sr) - Penticton

MERITED PARTICIPANTS

Kylie Hildebrant (Ballet - Inter) - Kelowna
Erica Vaz (Contemporary-Senior) - Vernon
Abigail Goncalves (Stage - Inter) - Penticton
MacKenzie Denis (Stage-Senior) - Kelowna

CLASSICAL VOICE

PROVINCIAL NOMINEE

Kaela Peever (Jr) - Kelowna

Lara Moshaver (Inter) - Penticton

Conagher Jones (Sr) (Provincial & National) - Kelowna

MUSICAL THEATRE

PROVINCIAL NOMINEE

Beckett Johnson (Jr) - Kelowna

Megan Edwards (Inter) - West Kelowna

SPEECH ARTS

PROVINCIAL NOMINEE

Hayden Anthony (Jr) - Penticton

STRINGS / CHAMBER

PROVINCIAL NOMINEE

Wooden Boxes - Chamber Trio (Inter) - Penticton / West Kelowna

Angela Zeng (Jr B Strings) - Coldstream

PIANO

PROVINCIAL NOMINEE

Mihai Covaser (Jr A Piano) - West Kelowna

Jennika Bobryk (Inter Piano) - Coldstream

FESTIVAL RESULTS AND MORE INFO

kelownakiwanisfestival.com

bcprovincials.com