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YOUNG VIOLINIST AWARDED €8,000 AS WINNER OF THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL YOUNG MUSICIANS' AWARD 2009

Kilkenny violinist **Patrick Rafter (17 years of age)** was today awarded **€8,000** by The National Concert Hall as a reward for being announced overall winner of the inaugural **National Concert Hall Young Musicians' Award 2009**. Patrick Rafter plans to use the financial reward to purchase a violin. Runner-up **David Tobin (13 years of age)**, from Dublin, one of the youngest applicants was awarded **€2,000**, which he also plans to put towards an instrument upgrade. Both winners currently use violins on three-year loans from the Music Instrument Fund of Ireland (MIFI). Patrick and David came successfully through a process that saw 21 applicants whittled down to five finalists, who performed live for the panel of judges on March 6 2009.

Hailing from Threecastles in Co. Kilkenny, Patrick has been playing violin since he was four years old. Encouraged by his pianist mother, NAME, and operatic tenor father, NAME, he has excelled in the competition circuit including recent Feis Ceoil wins, and is currently leader of the Junior National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. Commenting on his win, Patrick said "INSERT QUOTE"

The 2009 National Concert Hall Young Musicians' Award panel of judges included National Concert Hall Director **Judith Woodworth**, Tel Aviv-born concert violinist **Yossi Zivoni**, and Vice-Chairperson of the Dublin Youth Orchestras (DYO) **Carmel Ryan** who is also a board member of the Irish Association of Youth Orchestras (IAYO).

Speaking about the competition, Judith Woodworth said "*We were very impressed by the standard of entrants and the young finalists, among whom Patrick shone with his excellent technical command and imaginative performance. We're particularly delighted with the response to this competition in its inaugural year, and I look forward to the award supporting the development of young musicians in Ireland in future years also.*"

The National Concert Hall's Young Musician Award 2009 was open to violin students between 13 and 17 years of age, to give young musicians the opportunity to win a prize of up to €10,000 to go towards costs faced by them as they develop their musical studies. It is planned that the award will be given biannually.

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