

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

For more information, contact:

Don Sipe (262) 439-5681

dsipe@wilson-center.com

**SECOND ANNUAL WILSON CENTER GUITAR COMPETITION & FESTIVAL**

**Announces Winners of 2014 Competition**

*First place winners hail from four countries.*

**Brookfield, WI (August 26, 2014)** – Guitarists from seven countries and 21 states competed in the second annual **Wilson Center Guitar Competition & Festival,** which took place August 14-16 at the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts in Brookfield, Wisconsin.

The competition showcased guitarists competing in four separate genres—classical, jazz, fingerstyle and rock/blues. First place ($3,000 cash prize), second place ($1,500 cash prize) and third place ($1,000 cash prize) winners were awarded in each genre.

The first place winner of the classical competition was Canadian **Steve Cowan**, a Montreal-based guitarist currently pursuing his DMA with master teacher Jerome Ducharme. American **Gabe Condon** was the first place winner of the jazz competition. Condon is a graduate student at the Eastman School of Music, and has an upcoming CD titled *I’ve Never Been in Love Before (Like I am Now)*. Australian **Gabriel Andrews**, who studies locally with UW-Milwaukee guitar department chair John Stropes, took first place in the fingerstyle competition. Taking first place in the rock/blues competition was **Jernej Bervar**, a Slovenian guitarist studying at the Berklee School of Music in Boston, MA.

In addition to the competition, the festival featured evening performances. Milwaukee guitarist **Greg Koch** headlined the festival on Friday, August 15, and Canadian rumba flamenco guitarist **Jesse Cook** performed on Saturday, August 16 at the Wilson Center’s Gerlach-Haack Outdoor Theater.

This year’s festival activities also included free master classes by **jazz guitarist Jack Grassel** and **classical guitarist Anne Waller**, and a question and answer session with featured performer Jesse Cook.

Local music vendors were showcased in the Kuttemperoor Grand Hall, filling the space with almost 100 fine instruments. Featured vendors included **Cascio Interstate Music,** who presented the 60th Anniversary Stratocaster display by **Fender**; **Hartland Music,** who displayed Breedlove Guitars; luthiers **Bruce and Matt Petros**; and classical guitar dealer **Jonathan Marshall**.

**A complete list of the competition winners by category is listed below:**

**Classical Genre:**

Steve Cowan — First place

Mark Edwards — Second place

Xavier Jara — Third place

**Jazz Genre:**

Gabriel Condon — First place

Robert Andrew Corder, Jr. — Second place

Matthew Rotker-Lynn — Third place

**Fingerstyle Genre:**

Gabriel Andrews — First place

Brock Camden — Second place

Rachael Carlson — Third place

**Rock/Blues Genre:**

Jernej Bervar — First place

Mark Mendoza — Second place

Christopher Schuck — Third place

**About the Competition**

Developed as a means to showcase talented guitarists of all ages, the **Wilson Center Guitar Competition & Festival** is a multi-genre competition which features four different categories—Rock/Blues, Fingerstyle, Jazz, and Classical. Sixty-three guitarists from Canada, Slovenia, Israel, and Australia, as well as throughout the United States, traveled to Brookfield to take place in the live, invitation-only semi-final competition rounds at the Wilson Center on Thursday, August 14, and Friday, August 15, 2014. Semi-finalist winners in each genre category then advanced to the final rounds on Saturday, August 16 to compete for $22,000 in prize money. **For complete details on the Wilson Center Guitar Competition & Festival, please visit www.WilsonCenterGuitarCompetition.com.**

The Wilson Center Guitar Competition & Festival is sponsored by Kate and Don Wilson, Enterforce, Inc., the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, and the D’Addario Foundation. Promotional support is provided by Cascio Interstate Music.

**About the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts**

Now in its 13th season, the **Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts** is a non-profit, multi-disciplinary cultural arts center that presents performances by world-renowned artists and ensembles, offers myriad arts education opportunities, and curates an ever-changing art gallery featuring nationally renowned artists.

Recognized as one of Southeast Wisconsin’s most important cultural anchors, the Wilson Center has achieved widespread recognition for its eclectic programming featuring internationally acclaimed artists and ensembles. Audra McDonald, Pilobolus, Mandy Patinkin & Patti LuPone, Mark Morris Dance Group, The King’s Singers, Jane Monheit, John Pizzarelli, Rosanne Cash, Parsons Dance, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Jesse Cook and many more artists have graced the Wilson Center’s stage as part of its *Performing Arts Series.*

As an integral part of its mission, the Wilson Center promotes lifelong learning in the arts, offering innovative programs and classes for children, teens, and adults of all abilities in its state-of-the-art studios and classrooms. Many of Southeast Wisconsin’s finest arts organizations have partnered with the Center to offer on-site professional instruction, including First Stage Theater Academy and the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music.   
  
The Center’s acclaimed Ploch Art Gallery presents six rotating exhibitions each year, showcasing Wisconsin fine artists that have achieved national acclaim. The Wilson Center also presents one of the Midwest’s most distinguished art festivals; now in its ninth season, the *Hidden River Art Festival* features 120 of the Midwest’s finest artists.

**The Wilson Center for the Arts is just minutes west of Milwaukee, nestled in Brookfield’s Mitchell Park, south of Capitol Drive, just west of Brookfield Road. For additional information about the Wilson Center and its programming, visit wilson-center.com or call (262) 781-9470.**

**###**