



Mikhail Timoshenko and Elitsa Desseva | Photo: Marine Cessat-Begler

CROWNING MOMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL SERIES: LIEDDUO MIKHAIL TIMOSHENKO AND ELITSA DESSEVA WIN 1ST PRIZE AT THE WIGMORE HALL INTERNATIONAL SONG COMPETITION

The heart of international song beats in the renowned London Wigmore Hall. Now Liedduo, trained at the University of Music FRANZ LISZT Weimar, has won the first prize of £10,000 at the “Wigmore Hall International Song Competition”.

Bass baritone Mikhail Timoshenko and pianist Elitsa Desseva impressed a panel of distinguished judges in the finals of the competition on the 11th of September, which included world-wide stars in singing, such as Dame Felicity Lott and Thomas Quastoff.

The best duo was nominated per video audition out of **177 applicants** for the four-day competition with multiple judging rounds. The second prize of £ 5,000 was won by a duet with the 29-year-old British soprano Harriet Burns. The third prize of £2,500 went to British mezzosoprano Beth Taylor and her pianist.

“I am extremely happy about this prize, especially because we had worked on a competition programme intensively in Weimar this summer”, says **Professor for Lied and interpretation Thomas Steinhöfel** from the Weimar University of Music speaking about his successful alumni, who still regularly go to him for coaching.

“Wigmore Hall is the Mecca of Lied, and there was very strong competition from the English”. Apart from Lied interpretation classes, the 25-year-old Mikhail Timoshenko also took part in the Weimar singing

classes of Prof. Dr. Michail Lanskoi. Until recently, Elitsa Desseva took piano classes with the Weimar class of Prof. Balázs Szokolay.

Taking first place in London is the crowning glory in an **unparalleled series of successes** for the duo. In 2017, they won the Grand Prix and the gold medal at the 40th Grand Prix Maria Callas singing competition and in 2019, first prize at the 11th international Lied competition in Stuttgart, the second prize and Audience's Choice at the international Schubert Competition in Dortmund, as well as first prize at the Lied competition "Schubert and the Music of Modernity" in Graz. The duo was honoured with third prize and Audience's Choice at the International Chamber Music Competition in Lyon in spring 2019.
