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OPERA COMPETITION CROWNS WINNERS

November 1, 2011, Union City, New Jersey - The final round of this year's Altamura/Caruso International Voice Competition was held Sunday October 30 at the Liederkranz Hall in New York City. Preliminary rounds in Italy and in Canada had winnowed the field of singers from over one hundred to just twelve.

The Altamura/Caruso competition, now in its 22nd year, is dedicated to the discovery and development of operatic talent from around the world. All winners received cash awards of between \$5,000 and \$12,500. This year's grand prize winners were Naomi O'Connell, **Ireland**, Mika Nisula, **Finland**, and Ann Tormela of the **United States**. Miss Tormela also received an award as the audience's favorite. Mr. Nisula was chosen to study with noted tenor Francisco Casanova, who also sat on the jury.

Additional jurors from the classical and opera world included Carmela Altamura, Michel Brousseau, Anton Coppola, Camile Coppola, Lewis Ehlers, Stefanos Koroneos, and Roger Malouf,

Mrs. Altamura who founded and directed the competition noted that the depth of this year's field made the judges' decision difficult but spoke well for the future of opera. Kim In Hui, Korea; Sheri Jackson, USA; Steeve Michaud, Canada; Alessandro Moccia, Italy; Raphaëlle Paquette, Canada; Maurizio O'Reilly, Mexico; Maria Tomassi, Italy; and Anna Tonna, USA, all delivered excellent performances and were acknowledged with Honorable Mention and cash awards.

This year's Altamura/Caruso International Voice Competition was dedicated to the memory of mezzo soprano Giulietta Simionatto who was the first President of the jury at its inauguration in 1988. The 12th 2011 edition was held under the auspices of the Consul General of Italy in New York, Natalia Quintavalle.

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