

BOSNIA WINS THE HIGHEST AWARD IN THE 20TH LLOBET COMPETITION

- The Bosnian guitarist Belmin Okanović was proclaimed the winner of Llobet 2024. The Korean Jehee Lee and the French Émilie Fend came in second and third place
- The Argentine composer Jorge Cardoso was honored by the organizing commission with the 2023 Honorary Award for A Lifetime for the Guitar

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Photos: Oriol Miralles [@oriol_miralles_photo](#)

Barcelona once again dressed as a Guitar in a gala full of hopes and emotions shared by those who have followed and shared the trajectory in these twenty editions of the *Llobet Contest*. As it could not be otherwise, the Guitar Festival in Barcelona began on Saturday, October 14 with the *Art Llobet* festival and ended on the afternoon of Sunday, November 5 with the solemn awards ceremony at the *Conservatory Municipal Music*.

But before reaching the final, the 12 participants from Germany, Andorra, Bolivia, Bosnia, South Korea, Croatia, France, Mexico and Spain, began their competition in the first qualifying phase where they had to perform a mandatory repertoire selected by the organizing commission composed of a fragment arranged by **Miquel Llobet** on *Parsifal*, by **Richard Wagner**, who was inspired by the *Montserrat Monastery* to recreate his opera. They also performed *El lamento* by the composer and guitarist **Josep Viñas** in the commemoration of the bicentennial of his birth. The second semi-final phase also consisted of a transcription that Llobet himself made of the piece *Fuego Fatuo* from the ballet *El Amor Brujo*, by his musical colleague, the Cadiz composer **Manuel de Falla**. And the second work to be performed was the winning work of the 2022 Llobet Composition Contest, *Tres bagatelas* by the Argentine composer and guitarist **Pablo Guzmán**.

The Final, as usual, began under the leadership and presentation of the actor **Jaume Comas**, who after thanking the institutions and organizations that annually support this event, highlighting our official



sponsor AGBAR and the necessary public support from the Barcelona City Council and the Generalitat of Catalonia. The first part began giving way to the *Quartet Brossa*, a string quartet that accompanied each guitar with one of the two works to choose from. The three finalists in unison decided on the first movement of the *Quintette op. 143* by **Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. The work *Quatour* by **Manuel María Ponce was left uninterpreted, an unfinished work due to the death of the composer, which was resolved and revised by maestro **José Alberto Ubach**. The first intervention was made by the French representative **Émilie Fend**, followed by the Bosnian **Belmin Okanović** and finishing by the Korean **Jehee Lee**.****

Fifteen minutes of pause was the time that the audience took to decide by casting their vote at the polls for the finalist they liked the most. The second part was conducted again by the Quartet Brossa formed by the violinists **Aleix Puig** and **Pere Bartolomé**, the viola **Uixi Amargós** and the cello **Marçal Ayats**, who performed works that recall the revolutionary acts that changed the world, with *Dona Dona*, *A las barricadas* or the *Bella Ciao*. Meanwhile, the members of the Jury made up of the Argentine maestro **Jorge Cardoso**, the harpist **Marta Jarne** and the Chilean guitarist **Alexis Vallejos**, debated the difficult decision of the order of winners of this edition. As part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the fateful coup d'état in Chile, Chilean guitarist **Alexis Vallejos** was invited to the event in an extraordinary intervention. He performed *El llamado de Mistral*, a work by composer **Gerardo Caviedes**, a tribute to the Nobel Prize winner **Gabriela Mistral**. And together with the Brossa Quartet, the world premiere of the work by the Chilean composer **Mauro Godoy** entitled *No será en vano*, a heartfelt tribute to the victims of the military dictatorship in Chile during the years 1973-1990.

Once the music was over, it gave way to the words of the master of ceremonies Comas, who called the members of the jury, the grantors and the protagonists to the stage. Without delay, Comas presented the *Audience Award* and asked someone in the room, as a representative of the public, to announce the winner, which went to the young Korean representative **Jehee Lee**. The *Honorary Award "A lifetime for the Guitar"* was then awarded, presented by the founding director of the Llobet Competition, maestro **Eulogio Dávalos**, whose honor fell to the Argentine concert pianist, composer, researcher and doctor **Jorge Cardoso**, for his



contributions to guitar science that have been fundamental and innovative to date. The great moment of the Jury's deliberation arrived, beginning with the special awards. *CAT award* for the best classified Catalan performer was void. The *Llobet Prize* for the best interpretation of Miquel Llobet's work went again, as in the last edition, to the young Mexican **José Daniel Salceda**, received by the secretary of the contest and composer José Galeote. The Catalan harpist Marta Jarne was in charge of announcing the name of the winners in ascending order. *Third Prize* for the representative of France, **Émilie Fend** and the award was presented by maestro Jorge Cardoso. *Second Prize* for the representative of South Korea, **Jehee Lee**, presented by Mr. **Antoni Villas**, president of the *Consell Comarcal de les Garrigues*, organizing body of the festival paying tribute to maestro **Emili Pujol**, *Garrigues Guitarfest*. And *First Prize* and winner of the twentieth edition of the Llobet Contest went to the representative of Bosnia, **Belmin Okanović**. The director of the *Conservatori Municipal de Música de Barcelona*, **Lito Iglesias**, presented the highest award.

To conclude this current edition, the host of the program announced to the attendees the dates of the next twenty-first edition, which will take place **from November 7 to 10, 2024**.

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