

Monk Competition Finalists Meet President Obama

White House visit for three young keyboardists

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President Obama meets Monk Competition finalists (l. to r.) Emmet Cohen, Joshua White and Kris Bowers

The three finalists in this year's Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Competition were honored with a meet-and-greet with President Obama yesterday, just hours after wowing Washington, D.C.'s Kennedy Center audience with virtuoso performances.

According to a news article in *Sign On San Diego* by George Varga, also a longtime *JazzTimes* contributor, first place winner Kris Bowers, runner-up Joshua White and third-placer Emmet Cohen received text messages at 1 a.m. Tuesday inviting them to share a photo op with Obama later that morning. The article reported that a Secret Service agent accompanied the three young musicians and jazz legends Wayne Shorter, Jimmy Heath and Herbie Hancock to the meeting. Obama chatted briefly with San Diego's White, Los Angeles' Bowers and Miami's Cohen.

White reported that Obama declared himself a fan of Monk's music.

Official White House Photo by Pete Souza.

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