

THE WORLD OF PIANO COMPETITIONS

2

2021

Alexander
Gadjiev

*Chopin and
the ungraspable*

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MUSIC COMPETITIONS


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SONYA YONCHEVA

BREATHTAKING

The Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, Royal Opera House in London, Palais Garnier and Opéra Bastille in Paris, Teatro alla Scala in Milan... These are, in many respects, breathtaking places. But the decorum, the outfits, the overall reverence, intimidating as they might be, are not reason enough for holding one's breath. These hallowed walls and gilded ceilings enshrine something far greater. A vibration. A longing. The echoes of undying harmonies, and the anticipation of overwhelming emotions. You can feel them all around, even if the only sound you've heard so far is the tuning of the orchestra. Then, as the lights fade, there comes a silence like no other, before the maestro prepares to wave the baton. **Now, you can hold your breath.**

#Perpetual



OYSTER PERPETUAL DAY-DATE 36





W E L C O M E

Dear readers,

It was nearly 10pm on 20 October at the National Philharmonic in Warsaw, when the last of 12 finalists, Canadian Bruce Xiaoyu Liu, finished his e-minor concerto. As is tradition at the Chopin Competition, the audience already broke into applause a few bars before the end. This time, everyone stood. It was a very moving moment, not only because a great performance had finished, but also because despite all the restrictions and cancellations, despite all the border closures and quarantine mandates, and after the horror of overflowing hospitals and ever-growing numbers of deaths, music had won over the pandemic.

The 18th Chopin International Piano Competition was a milestone in many ways. It welcomed close to 200 artists to perform in Warsaw. Its sessions were sold out from the very beginning. It introduced a new, virtual reality technology of video. And it set records with its streaming: millions of people watched the competition from every corner of the world, on several international video platforms.

The Chopin was certainly not the only successful competition this autumn. Only a day after the Warsaw final, the Beethoven Competition in Vienna followed with a spectacular *Musikverein* performance, and many more competitions are yet to begin during the coming months. But the Chopin Competition has shown in a dramatic manner how Covid has changed the music world. People have learned how to live with the pandemic. Restrictions like masks, reduced seating or QR checks are likely to stay with us for a while. But much more importantly, we have learned, once again, to appreciate the immense value of *live* performances, while all along streaming has become more commonplace than ever. We have experienced fabulous projects with artists around the world taking part in virtual events, connecting across borders and continents, raising new interest in classical music, creating new audiences online. But in the end, we have also realised that music is alive, and has to stay live, now more than ever.

As 2022 is about to begin, we look forward to many more competitions, presented digitally with great and innovative ideas to audiences around the world. However, at the same, we'll be back in the concert hall, to experience, to enjoy, to feel music *live*.

FLORIAN RIEM

WFIMC SECRETARY GENERAL



THE WORLD OF PIANO COMPETITIONS

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WORLD FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITIONS

The World Federation of International Music Competitions is dedicated to establishing a global network of internationally recognised organisations that discover the most promising young talents through public competition in the great tradition of classical music and further their careers by presenting them before distinguished juries, general audiences, the media, and the rest of the music community. The WFIMC is a Member of the International Music Council and some 122 of the world's leading music competitions belong to the Federation. A number of important international music organisations are associate members of the WFIMC.

wfimc-fmcim.org



European Union of Music
Competitions for Youth

EUROPEAN UNION OF MUSIC COMPETITIONS FOR YOUTH

EMCY is a network of national and international music competitions for young people across Europe. We believe that music competitions stimulate passionate musicianship. For many, they're a first glimpse of performing in public, playing in ensembles, or of breaking out of orthodox repertoire. They foster a sense of healthy self-assessment, can help conquer nerves, and motivate practise. Young people can be inspired by experiencing fresh interpretations and discovering new works and other European cultures. We do not think of competitions as the end of the learning process: for us, they are the beginning.

www.emcy.org



ALINK-ARGERICH FOUNDATION

An independent and objective Information and Service Centre for Musicians and Competitions, founded by Gustav Alink together with Martha Argerich. AAF supports musicians and competition organisers and gives them assistance and advice. AAF focuses specifically on the International Piano Competitions worldwide. More than 190 international piano competitions and organisations are affiliated with AAF as AAF member competitions. They are all included in the annual AAF catalogue. Gustav Alink and also other AAF staff members frequently visit piano competitions, report on them and are constantly available to provide assistance whenever needed to the organisers, jury members and participants.

www.alink-argerich.org



PIANO STREET

PianoStreet.com operates worldwide from Stockholm in Sweden and was formed from the administrative base of Piano Forum, the world's largest discussion forum on piano playing on the Internet (more than 600 000 postings). The resource is Internet based and provides a sheet music library, all pieces in the digital library are connected to recordings in Naxos Music Library. There also are pedagogical materials. Members can also enjoy e-books, autograph manuscripts, mobile sheet music, the Audio Visual Study Tool (AST), a music dictionary, practice tips, etc. Piano Street has over 200 000 members worldwide.

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Alexander Gadjiev

Chopin and the ungraspable



WOJCIECH GRZEDZINSKI

Alexander Gadjiev lived and breathed Chopin for a whole year, getting to know the composer inside out, and after his first prizes in the competitions in Hamamatsu in 2015 and Sydney in 2021 he was awarded a shared second prize plus the Sonata prize in the recent Chopin Competition in Warsaw. With his moving interpretations he stole the hearts of so many in the audience.

Watching the livestream one could get the impression you were quite relaxed.

Yes, but there were also moments when I realised it could very well become a life-changing event. While these thoughts are not necessary, certainly not in art, they do create tension and expectations. Especially in the third round, for me the most intense, I was able to channel this energy into my state of the moment and it gave me more focus, but as you said, I was trying not to take it too seriously.

It was not your first time in the spotlights of a big competition.

No, and in the Tchaikovsky Competition some years ago, where I was less successful, I did the opposite, I took it as something sacred. That was in Moscow where my father studied and taught for so many years, and I watched all the videos from that hall by Richter and Horowitz, so to be honest, on that stage I was a little overwhelmed. In Warsaw I could handle it, although you cannot really predict how you will react to anything. But I felt comfortable and the acoustics helped, it sounded really good to me. The hall is big, not overproportionate and I could relate to the sound.

You chose the big works from the later period in Chopin's life.

I decided already a long time ago that I really wanted to play the Second Sonata, Polonaise Fantaisie, the fourth Ballade and Barcarolle. All these works are not about sheer virtuosity but show Chopin's mature style and I love to imagine the sound as rather intimate, layered and intertwined. For that the Shigeru Kawai suited me best.

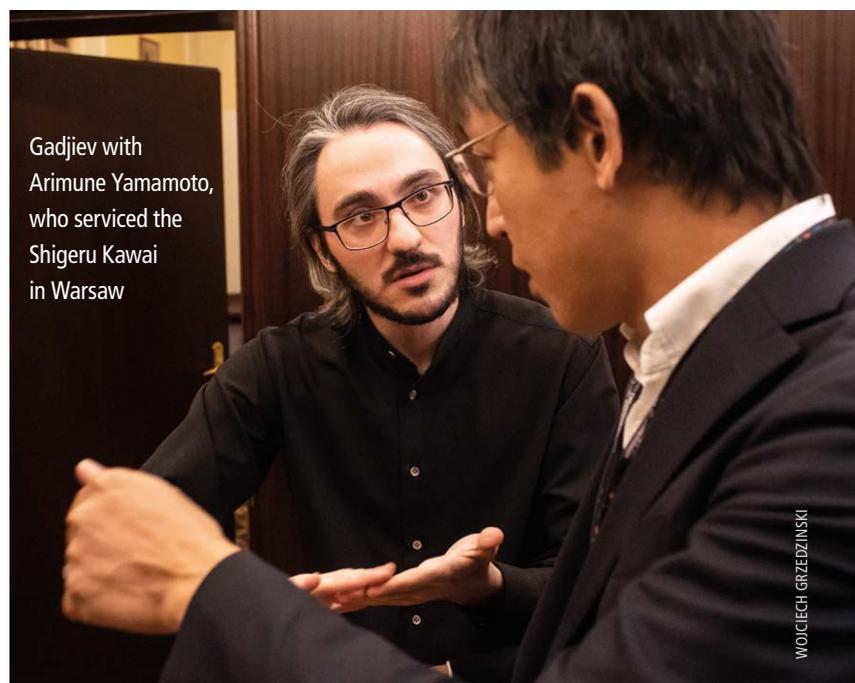
Bruce Lee was absolutely great in Chopin's early, elegant and more articulated works, a wonderful match with his extremely polished style of playing enhanced by the sound of the Fazioli.

Yes absolutely, I did just the opposite. I took the past year trying to come as close as possible to Chopin, not just to the pieces I wanted to play, but listening, reading books, and getting an overall feeling.

Freedom

Like Horowitz when he had to play two pieces by Fauré, he played everything, chamber music, songs.

Yes, that is a great way to approach this, it gives you a lot of freedom. That was my main goal, to find an inner sense of freedom as much as possible. This kept me fascinated: how to express what you think,



Gadjiev with
Arimune Yamamoto,
who serviced the
Shigeru Kawai
in Warsaw

WOJCIECH GRZEDZINSKI

*“Chopin's doubts
should come out
in a performance.”*

because when you feel certain things, you can't really put your finger on them, it is something ungraspable in Chopin. There is something that happens between the notes and sections, between the lines. Like the opening theme of the fourth Ballade. The notes appear and disappear, connected only in a less obvious way. To express this idea, you need a differentiation in the touch, the feel, and somehow you become extremely sensitive to the material of the keys. That's why I also like Kawai, something we don't think about so much, but at the end of the day, pianists press keys, and the physical sensation on the Kawai is very pleasant, it feels less artificial. I still have an old Steinway ivory keys, the touch is utterly different from most modern pianos,



WOJCIECH GRZEDZINSKI

“Chopin went inside himself.”

it is like being in contact with a living thing, as much as we love elephants of course.

Joseph Hofmann said you should have eyes and ears in your fingertips as that is where your imagination is.

Yes, very much. This is so relevant when you are trying things that are really ungraspable, between sensations in a way.

Isn't that characteristic of all great art?

Of course, and you have to find the best partner to express all this. The selection of the piano was not easy, because they were all good. I was actually leaning towards the Steinway, and in the last few minutes I went back to the Kawai and suddenly realised the Kawai is more comfortable for me.

In Chopin you find so many contradictions, he was always struggling to put his emotions into the straitjacket of the notation. His music relates to older canons, very much the classical style and baroque, but he added an extremely personal twist. There is a certain uneasiness, his music is never moving forward in one direction, it doesn't have this Beethovenian drive. And those doubts should come out in a performance.

Even after publication he kept changing details constantly, also in the scores of his pupils.

Yes, that proves to me that his music depends very much on the feeling of the moment. And there is a range of human emotions you will fail to find in his music, and he was not too interested in philosophical ideas or literature. Although he was fond of his Slavic roots, the fables and stories, so popular in his time, he was primarily a musician, someone who feels through music. So I think we should not attach too many ideals to his works. His music is not like Liszt's which thrives on grand ideas, in big well-defined blocks. Chopin by contrast changes the mood constantly with his purely musical elements that have their own life and are very densely intertwined.



WOJCIECH GRZEDZIŃSKI

You love to improvise, how does that relate to this notion about Chopin?

It is difficult to say because his world was much quieter than ours, the pace was much slower. There was much more time to dig into yourself, as we could during the pandemic. In his younger years Chopin developed this consciousness of the instrument, very much connected to his musical imagination. The hand sometimes can suggest a pattern or a harmonic change. It must have been difficult for him to organise these ideas in terms of form; you cannot improvise a whole ballade.

Not like the six evenings of Keith Jarrett.

Laughs. Especially in Chopin's later works, there is an element of thought, organisation, structure. One of my favourite moments in Chopin is the climax in the first movement of the Second Sonata, with all the elements so perfectly balanced.

The beauty perhaps is that, so well organised, it keeps this freshness like an improvisation?

We must not forget how fond he was of Italian opera. Although not improvised it has this simplicity that make you feel it comes from nowhere, these Bellini melodies, and how they flow, it seems it was dictated to the composer.

Bruckner said the opening theme of his seventh symphony came to him in a dream.

There you go! And he is the pinnacle of structure and creation. He is with Beethoven and Liszt in the category of the great philosophical, universal message. Chopin, however, went inside himself.

That's probably why he wrote almost without exception for his own instrument.

He stayed close to his own world. And perhaps that makes his music the heart of the piano and of piano playing. It gives you a great command of the keyboard, the legato, cantabile, the way you treat little nuances. I think playing Chopin in all its nuances is much more

difficult than playing Liszt. I know it's a strong statement, and don't get me wrong, I adore Liszt, his Sonata is one of the greatest achievements of the human spirit. But Liszt is about reaching out, having great visions and with Chopin I almost feel you can ruin something in one bar, it's so fragile. A Liszt score looks more objective. It has fewer contradictions and there is more drive in a clear direction.

Let's come back to the ungraspable, the Second Sonata, you won the prize for that interpretation.

You must have noticed at the ceremony I was almost happier for this award than for my second prize, because I really cared about the piece in which he tries to face Beethoven's legacy, there is a resemblance to the Sonata opus 26.

In the Sonata Chopin gave his best in a very condensed form. The level of musical emotion is unheard of and the emotional shifts in a small space are so radical. The second movement is one of his most orchestral works with a Totentanz atmosphere, a dance of skeletons with very advanced harmonies and fiery passages. The four movements all appear so different but have a common denominator, and the last movement is one of the most beautiful pieces of the 21st century, it sounds so new.

So that seems the perfect example of the ungraspable?

Oh yes, it has direction, it leans toward a moment, but it always disappears before you reach it, never to show an accent or clear division. You seem reach a certain point and then you say no, I shall go this way. It could go on forever, and then suddenly you have this chord, death has arrived. It's a masterpiece.

Let me ask one almost profane question, am I to suppose this was your last competition?

Yes, it has been a good stimulus but competitions also change mindset subconsciously. You can try to be a Che Guevara all your life, but there are limits.

ERIC SCHOONES



WORLD FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITIONS



WFIMC

All the Dates, all the Winners

Comprehensive information on most of the major competitions on the new WFIMC website.

Launched earlier this year, the new website of the World Federation of International Music Competitions offers a database on competitions for artists, managements, and promoters: from easy-to-read annual schedules, application deadlines, and future dates to information on recent laureates including short biographies, links, photos and videos, and a news section on recent competitions.

The first page takes you directly to upcoming competitions and/or their application deadlines. More listings and calendars by date and discipline are also available in the current WFIMC Yearbook, which can be downloaded on the homepage (the 2022 edition will be released in December 2021).

Find out details about our member competitions along with links, contact information and upcoming dates in the Competition listings section.

Artists This new section features laureates of all recent competitions, along with photos and videos. Booking inquiries can be sent via WFIMC. The section is being progressively updated to also include laureates from past competitions.

News WFIMC Facebook and Instagram provide the fastest updates on competition results, while the new website features reports on all current competition finals. A rundown of all the articles is also provided in the monthly newsletter of the World Federation, which can be subscribed to through the homepage.

Videos The new website features select competition videos as well as podcasts and select livestreams from current finals.

Please check www.wfimc.org

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- Alessandria - Michele Pittaluga International Guitar and Composition Competitions "Premio Citta di Alessandria"
- Alink-Argerich Foundation (AAF)
- Andorra - Andorra International Saxophone Competition
- Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)
- Auckland - Michael Hill International Violin Competition
- Augsburg - International Violin Competition Leopold Mozart
- Bachfest Leipzig
- Bamberg - The Mahler Competition
- Banff - Banff International String Quartet Competition
- Barcelona - Maria Canals International Music Competition
- Belgrade - International Jeunesses Musicales Competition
- Bergen - International Edvard Grieg Piano Competition
- Berlin - International Max Rostal Competition for violin and viola
- Besançon - International Competition for Young Conductors
- Bolzano - Ferruccio Busoni International Piano Competition
- Bonn - International Telekom Beethoven Competition



AGENDA WFIMC Piano Competitions December 2021 – May 2022

29 November – 5 December 2021
MANCHESTER | UK
James Mottram International Piano Competition

2 – 11 December 2021
BONN | GERMANY
International Telekom Beethoven Competition Bonn

5 – 14 February 2022
GRAZ | AUSTRIA
International Competition
"Franz Schubert and Modern Music"
Lied Duo, Piano Trio and Chamber Music

6 – 13 March 2022
EPINAL | FRANCE
Concours International de Piano d'Epinal

15 – 28 March 2022
TAKAMATSU | JAPAN
Takamatsu International Piano Competition

26 March – 7 April 2022
BARCELONA | SPAIN
Maria Canals International Music Competition

3 – 10 April 2022
ORLEANS | FRANCE
Orléans International Piano Competition

21 – 30 April 2022
JAEN | SPAIN
International Piano Competition Prize Jaén

13 – 24 May 2022
DUBLIN | IRELAND
Dublin International Piano Competition

21 May – 26 June 2022
SENDAI | JAPAN
Sendai International Music Competition
Violin, Piano



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Telekom Beethoven Competition Bonn coming up

From December 2, 28 pianists from all over the world will compete in Bonn for a place in the final on December 10 and 11, 2021.



Cunmo Yin, prizewinner of 2019 performing together with the Beethoven Orchester Bonn led by the baton of Dirk Kaftan.

In October, all previous winners of the Telekom Beethoven Competition were guests in Bonn and performed together on stage for the first time at a large gala concert in what the General-Anzeiger Bonn called “a kind of family reunion of exceptional talents”.

Now another member of the family will soon join them: starting December 2, the winner of the 9th Telekom Beethoven Competition will be determined in Bonn. As many as 28 pianists from 13 nations have been invited to Bonn for this event and will compete against each other in four rounds of competition.

“The Telekom Beethoven Competition aims to promote young, professional artists and offer them an international forum, which has been expanded many times over through worldwide livestreaming and is becoming increasingly popular. Among other things, we expect participants to express their own ideas and perceptions

in the interpretation of the works, without alienating the composer’s ideas. Our declared goal is to discover young, excellent pianists and to promote them in the long term through the award and further accompaniment,” says Prof. Pavel Gililov.

The participants can expect a top-class jury with numerous musical personalities: in addition to President Pavel Gililov, Fumiko Eguchi from Japan, Leslie Howard from Australia, Yoheved Kaplinsky from the USA as well as Marian Lapšanský (Slovakia) and Jacques Rouvier (France) have confirmed their participation. The jury is completed by Konstantin Scherbakov (Russia), Yaara Tal (Israel) and Stefan Vladar (Austria).

In addition to numerous concert engagements in Germany and abroad, the prize winners can expect prize money of over 70,000 euros. The competition and its organizer, Deutsche Telekom AG, deliberately want to signal to continue promoting young talent among talented pianists, even in these times marked by the pandemic.

The proximity to one of the largest telecommunications groups in the world is a great advantage in this respect: “We have already fully digitized the entire application process for many years, which makes it easier for applicants to register for the competition from anywhere in the world and at the same time creates transparent and equal conditions for everyone,” explains Prof. Pavel Gililov. While the pianists will be meeting in Bonn from December to compete for a place in the final, the entire competition can also be followed from home. From the Welcome Concert on December 2 to the orchestra finale on December 11, all the auditions can be followed in a specially produced livestream on the competition’s own homepage.

www.telekom-beethoven-competition.de



The jury and all 12 finalists on stage together with the President of Poland at the Award ceremony

DAREK GOLIK

18th Chopin Competition Warsaw

Finally, the long-awaited 18th Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw has taken place! It was originally scheduled for October 2020, but – like so many other competitions – it was postponed due to the corona pandemic.

One year later, October 2021, the situation in the world was somewhat better, but there were still quite some problems in many countries and ongoing uncertainties and complications with international travelling. Several major competitions that had been planned for 2021 were still affected by this and had to be postponed (Cliburn Competition) or were adjusted (Montreal: entirely online; Brussels – Queen Elisabeth Competition: without audience). It was a very tense time for the organisers of the Chopin Competition in Warsaw. Until Summer 2021 it was not certain whether the competition could be held. It was made clear that they would not resort to an online event. Miraculously, the competition could take place, live, with all selected contestants, in the big hall of the *Filharmonia*, with a full audience! (All necessary precautions were taken: health & vaccination certificates and mouth/nose masks were compulsory.)

The Chopin Competition in Warsaw is a world-famous event and the most important competition in the Piano World. It has existed since 1927 and launched the careers of many great artists: Maurizio Pollini, Martha Argerich, Garrick Ohlsson, Krystian Zimerman and many others, not just the first prizewinners. Since 1955, the competition has been held every five years without interruption, except 2020. Each time, in October of the year of the competition, Warsaw becomes a Mecca for thousands of piano lovers. There are four rounds and the entire competition lasts three weeks. Already in Spring, many people try to secure their tickets. And indeed, the Chopin Competition is a magnificent event, not to be missed. All rounds are held in the great hall of the *Filharmonia*, with perfect acoustics and sublime instruments. There is always an impressive jury and the entire organisation is highly professional, including the announcements of each performance, in Polish and perfect

English. The preparation is so careful that also the names of all the foreign participants are pronounced correctly. In addition, it is also clearly announced which instrument is going to be played. The contestants could choose among Fazioli, Shigeru Kawai, Yamaha and two Steinway concert grand pianos. Technicians from each of these piano companies worked day and night to keep their instruments perfectly tuned and in the very best condition. One feels the very special atmosphere at this competition, and – it should definitely be mentioned – the warm and inspirational support by the audience which behaves exemplarily: as quiet as can be during the performances and never an accidental applause between the works or the movements. The contestants can thus fully concentrate and they are rewarded with enthusiasm after their performances.

This 18th edition of the Chopin Competition was exceptional. A record number of 503 pianists from 53 different countries had applied. After an initial video selection, 164 could enter the preliminary round, which was held live in Warsaw, July 2021. After 12 days, the names of 78 pianists were announced who were admitted to the main competition in October. According to the rules, nine additional pianists were also allowed to take part, as they were top prizewinners of specific competitions, designated by the Chopin Institute. Thus, 87 pianists were expected in October to

perform in the first round. And then, quite amazingly in these troubled times, *all 87* pianists arrived and took part! This is truly exceptional. Usually, at almost every other competition, there are several pianists who do not come. In Warsaw, the organisers were also surprised. The schedule of the entire competition was fixed and consequently, it became quite a challenge for the jury to listen with full concentration for 8.5 or 9 hours every day of the first round.

Talking about the jury, there was one change, which disappointed many: Martha Argerich and Nelson Freire could not be present*. Arthur Moreira Lima from Brazil agreed to step in and thus, the organisers succeeded again in having a reputable jury of 17 Chopin experts, 15 of them having been the winner of a top prize or special distinction in Warsaw themselves. It requires a great team (and substantial funding) to organise such a top-class competition and to ensure that everything runs smoothly. For many, the work continued through the night. Each competition day, a beautiful Chopin Courier was distributed containing photos, reports and interviews. The national television covers everything and the competition also attracts much attention from the international media. Truly magnificent was the professional streaming that the Chopin

*: November 1st, Nelson Freire passed away.

The 12 finalists are talking, laughing and being interviewed while still awaiting the final verdict by the jury.

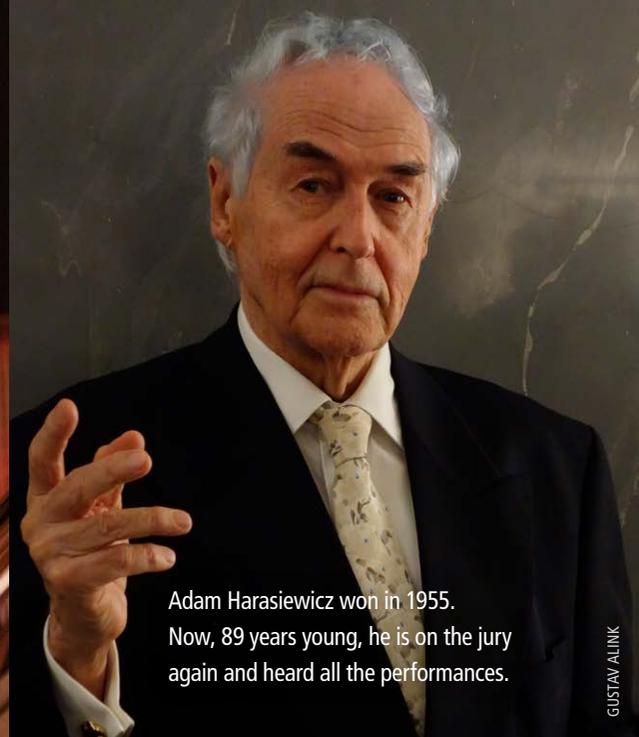


XVIII KONKURSY
CHOPINOWA
WARSAWA
18TH CHOPIN
COMPETITION
WARSAW



Bruce Xiaoyu Liu is the 1st prize winner of the 18th Int'l Chopin Competition Warsaw.

WOJCIECH GRZEDZINSKI



Adam Harasiewicz won in 1955. Now, 89 years young, he is on the jury again and heard all the performances.

GUSTAV ALINK

Institute had arranged: each performance could be watched live on the internet in very high quality, and all rounds (including the preliminaries) can still be reviewed on the competition's YouTube channel. An excellent overview with all the links can be found on the competition website:

<https://chopin2020.pl/en/multimedia/competition-transmission>

It was said that there have already been millions of views! During the breaks, a "Chopin Talk" was aired with many special guests such as Seong-Jin Cho, Tony Yike Yang, Eric Lu and Ingolf Wunder.

We can go on writing in superlatives about this competition. The field of participants was also exceptional. Among the participants were top prizewinners of other major competitions from around the world (Brussels, Tel Aviv, Cleveland, Sydney, Hamamatsu, Sendai, Montreal, Santander, Dublin, ...) Interestingly, there were 13 pianists who had already participated in Warsaw before, with good success! Nikolay Khozyainov had been finalist in 2010, Szymon Nehring, Aimi Kobayashi and Georgijs Osokins in 2015, Leonora Armellini had been semi-finalist in 2010. They all played excellently. Many agreed that this year, the level of performances was the highest ever. The jury acknowledged this by admitting more participants each time to the next round than planned: 45 instead of 40, 23 instead of 20, and 12 finalists instead of 10. This generosity also gave them more work.

The programme book (more than 250 pages) was very informative and gave many details about the participants. It thus became clear that 20 of them are studying with one of the jury members. This was allowed. These jury members may not vote on their own

students. However, it may cause uncomfortable feelings, not only for themselves, but also with the other jury members and the other contestants. Very positive is the fact that the competition publishes all the votes. This was also done in 2010 and 2015.

There were several Polish contestants, who had extra pressure to succeed. Apart from Szymon Nehring, the expectations were high about Piotr Alexewicz and Kamil Pacholec. Joanna Goranko and Aleksandra Swigut played well but did not pass. Pacholec and Jakub Kuszlik were admitted to the final round, in which Kuszlik remained the most stable. He was awarded with the 4th prize, ex aequo with Aimi Kobayashi. Japan was very strongly represented this year.

Fierce competition also came from three very young piano talents. Hao Rao (China), J J Jun Li Bui (Canada) and Eva Gevorgyan (Russia) are only 17, but already masters at the piano and all three reached the finals! A different personality is Kyohei Sorita (27), who is a versatile musician and already well-known in Japan. His interpretation of Chopin's concerto (Op. 11) in the finals was very special. He won the 2nd prize, together with Alexander Gadjiev (Slovenia/Italy).

It was a great joy to hear the pure musicality of Martín García from Spain and the freshness in his performance. He received 3rd prize and the prize for the best concerto in the finals. Bruce Xiaoyu Liu (24, Canada), however, stood out. He performed with imagination and breath-taking virtuosity. As an example, one should listen again to his dazzling interpretation of Chopin's Variations (Op. 2) in the semi-finals. The jury decided that Bruce was the clear winner of this 18th Chopin Competition!

GUSTAV ALINK



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10th International Franz Liszt Piano Competition Weimar – Bayreuth

The 10th International Franz Liszt Piano Competition Weimar – Bayreuth culminated in an acclaimed final concert in the Weimarahalle in the city of Weimar on November 6. Accompanied by the Staatskapelle Weimar under the direction of Dominik Beykirch, the 21 year-old Japanese pianist Shota Kaya won the 2nd prize worth 8,000 euros (a 1st prize was not awarded). The 3rd prize, worth 5,000 euros, was awarded twice: to 21 year-old Hungarian Valentin Magyar and 18 year-old Dane Rune Leicht Lund.



Shota Kaya



Rune Leicht Lund, Shota Kaya, and Valentin Magyar (from left to right)

The 10th International Franz Liszt Piano Competition Weimar – Bayreuth has been organized since October 27 by the University of Music Franz Liszt Weimar in cooperation with the city of Bayreuth. The competition was largely financed by the Free State of Thuringia and the City of Bayreuth. Valuable support was provided by the New Liszt Foundation, the piano manufacturer Steingraeber & Söhne Bayreuth and the Staatskapelle Weimar.

In addition to the 2nd prize, Shota Kaya also won the Audience Award, donated by Ulrich Bergmann, and the Special Prize for the best interpretation of a work by Saint-Saens, donated by the Ming Cheng Institute. The 3rd prize winner Valentin Magyar was awarded the Special Prize for the late work by Franz Liszt, donated by Gilbert Höning. Rune Leicht Lund, who also won the 3rd prize, also won the Special Prize for the best interpretation of a classical sonata, donated by the piano manufacturer Steingraeber & Söhne, as well as the Special Prize for the best interpretation of the Sonata in B minor by Franz Liszt, donated by Gilbert Höning.

The Special Prize for a particularly talented participant (prize winners excluded), donated by the New Liszt Foundation, went to the only 16 year-old competition participant Oscar Paz (USA). Additionally, the 20 year-old Russian Iliia Papoian won a scholarship for the

most talented Eastern European participant (prize winners excluded) for a semester at the University of Music Franz Liszt Weimar, donated by Dr. Rainer Braunschweig.

A total of 37 participants were nominated for this year's competition after a preliminary selection. While the first round was held in the Wagner Hall of the Bayreuth Music School, the participants moved to the Fürstenhaus of the University of Music in Weimar for the second and third rounds. In the final concert, in the Weimarahalle on November 6, Franz Liszt's *Totentanz* for piano and orchestra was performed twice (Shota Kaya and Valentin Magyar) and his Concerto No. 1 in E-flat major was performed once (Rune Leicht Lund).

In addition to jury chair Gerlinde Otto, the jury members included Rolf-Dieter Arens (Germany), Dana Borsan (Romania), Wolfgang Döberlein (Germany, 1st round), Carsten Dürer (Germany), Gábor Farkas (Hungary, from 2nd round), Pasquale Iannone (Italy), Eugene Skovorodnikov (Canada), Natalia Trull (Russia) and Zhu Xiao-Mei (China/France).

www.hfm-weimar.de/liszt



FAZIOLI'S 40th ANNIVERSARY

SUCCESS IN WARSAW

In the anniversary year on the occasion of the founding of his company 40 years ago, Paolo Fazioli received the most beautiful gift that a piano maker could wish for: at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw, three winners chose his instrument – Bruce (Xiaoyu) Liu from Canada (1st prize), Martín García García from Spain (3rd prize) and Leonora Armellini from Italy (5th prize). We spoke to Ortwin Moreau, who serviced the Fazioli in Warsaw.

„I didn't sleep more than four or five hours a night in those 30 days.“

First of all, congratulations on your success!

Thank you very much. I'm also very happy for Fazioli, because the Chopin Competition is also a bit like a competition for piano manufacturers. I like that idea, and if the pianists could change the instrument during the competition, it would have been even more exciting. But nobody has done that yet. I worked part-time in the factory in Sacile until before Corona. I did the final intonation on every Fazioli before Paolo Fazioli himself came to check it twice a day. So, in a way, I've seen about 120 Fazioli's in a year. That was good preparation for the competition.

Such a big competition must be very exhausting for the technicians.

I didn't sleep more than four or five hours a night in those 30 days. Tuning always took place on the stage in the acoustics itself, so I worked with the colleagues of Steinway, Yamaha and Shigeru Kawai in alternating shifts from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m., from 1 a.m. to 4 a.m. and from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m. During the day we adjusted the tuning a little. It was very difficult. After the announcement of the prizes, which ended around 3 a.m., I received a text message that I should work on the grand piano in the theatre for the gala concert from 6 to 9 a.m. There all winners played on the Fazioli. That was a very nice moment for Fazioli, but I didn't really sleep that night [laughs]. I was Fazioli's only technician, the other brands had teams of four or six people, but they didn't take turns. Luca Fazioli stayed with me all the time, also during the night. That was wonderful moral support.

You must know the piano better than the pianists?

It's very exciting for them. They had 15 minutes to choose a piano and they only played it again in the actual first round and not at all between the rounds, but Fazioli had made Fazioli instruments available in the rehearsal rooms and there is only a 45-minute rehearsal with the orchestra before the final. Just enough to play through the concerto once. Bruce Liu knew the Fazioli from the competition in Tel Aviv. At first he hesitated between the Steinway and Fazioli, but then he was determined to try our piano, just like Leonora Armellini, who had previously played Shigeru Kawai in Warsaw. In the end, both were very happy with their choice.



The instrument in Warsaw was not the famous Mago Merlino that Ciccolini once signed?

No, that is an incredibly beautiful instrument, with a rich and warm sound. But it never leaves the Fazioli concert hall in Sacile. The Fazioli in Warsaw is more versatile, perhaps more suitable for such a competition. For the finale, I adjusted the intonation a little so that the piano could be heard better over the orchestra. It was risky because there was little time that evening, but it worked, and that made the piano even more expressive. The hall in Warsaw has nice acoustics, but on stage it sounds very spacious and the contact with the instrument is not ideal. I heard all the participants in the hall from the place where the jury is seated. And I noticed that in the live stream, despite the very high quality, many colours disappear.

The repertoire in the competition is all Chopin, is that an advantage preparing the piano?

Yes, you have that in the back of your mind. I wanted to keep the sound transparent. And you can refine the sound more and more with time – the instruments grow. It is also nice that you get to know the pianists better and better and you can therefore adjust the sound optimally to their needs. It's a very exciting process.

ERIC SCHOONES



Plácido Domingo once wrote a book titled *My first 40 Years*, which could also be the title for *Fazioli Grand Pianos – From the Dream to the Sound*, a book that was published on the occasion of Fazioli's 40th anniversary. The Benjamin in the company of a handful of top brands, Fazioli now stands on par with those illustrious pianos, a great achievement in itself.

From the dream to the sound

From the dream to the sound also defines the path that Paolo Fazioli took as a musician and engineer. In a detailed interview he talks about his life and the special construction of the Fazioli. With many testimonials from prominent pianists, the book also reads like a who-is-who in the piano world. Herbie Hancock, fan of Fazioli since 1987, wrote the preface under the heading *Fazioli has it all*, and artists like Richard Goode, Lazar Berman, Martha Argerich, Nikita Magaloff, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Alfred Brendel, Murray Perahia, Annie Fischer, Beatrice Rana, Roberto Prosseda or Boris Giltburg testify about the brand.

Angela Hewitt commented: "The best piano should always and primarily exist in one's own imagination. You can't create anything interesting without this inner image. With Fazioli pianos, I can reproduce any sound I can imagine on the keyboard, and that's wonderful."

Mission

On the last page, Paolo Fazioli states he is grateful to meet so many composers, instrumentalists, conductors and all-round artists and to establish beautiful and valuable friendships with them. All of this in the service of his mission: to build instruments that allow the pianists to fully express their musical ideas. Or as Herbie Hancock puts it in the preface: "Fazioli grand pianos enable one to celebrate the freedom and creativity of the human mind and soul, often with the simple sound of just one note. Every single sound and nuance of tone can express thousands of different words and tell complex or simple stories. A Fazioli has all the richness of sound that I need."

ERIC SCHOONES



FROM THE DREAM TO THE SOUND

written by Sandro Cappelletto and published by Rizzoli,
190 pages, 33 × 24 cm, ISBN 978-88-918319-3-4



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Franz Liszt International Piano Competition



Olga Kern hands the 1st prize over to Kevin Chen. On the left, director Szabolcs Szamosi.

ANDREA FELVÉGI

Liszt Competition Budapest

The Franz Liszt Competition in Budapest has a long and rich history dating back to 1933, when Annie Fischer won the first prize. At that time, Ernő Dohnányi was chairman of the jury, which included amongst others Alfredo Casella, Emil von Sauer, Wilhelm Backhaus and Alfred Cortot (only for the finals). A very special event indeed. No less than 71 pianists from all over the world had applied. Moura Lympany was one of them, while Louis (Lajos) Kentner reached the finals and received 3rd prize. The 2nd World War interrupted everything. In 1948, the piano competition was organised again, dedicated to Béla Bartók. From 1956, the Liszt Competition has been regularly held every five years. Great pianists have taken part and among the prizewinners are names such as Paul Badura-Skoda, Lev Vlasenko, Lazar Berman, David Wilde, Dino Ciani, to mention just a few. More recently, Muza Rubackyte, Károly Mocsári, Igor Kamenz, Vadim Kholodenko and Alexander Ullman received awards in Budapest. During the years in between, other music competitions were organised by the Franz Liszt Academy. The 2021 competition happened to be the 50th international music competition in Budapest.

This year, real Liszt lovers even had the chance to consider preparing for *three* Liszt Competitions! In September, there was the historical one in Budapest. At the end of October, another Liszt Competition was held in Weimar/Bayreuth, with practically the same age limits. Next, the Utrecht Liszt Competition in the Netherlands, which was postponed from 2020, rescheduled its (live) auditions for January, 2022. For Budapest, 70 aspiring pianists applied, and indeed, a dozen of them were also listed for Weimar, and five applied for all three competitions.

There are several good reasons for pianists to come to Budapest. Of course, there is the wonderful history and tradition of Hungarian music. In addition, the Franz Liszt Academy is truly magnificent: it has a great concert hall, which has been beautifully renovated. To perform in this hall or to be in the audience is an unforgettable experience and a real treat! The Liszt Competition was also attractive because of the jury, which was announced to include Tamás Vásáry who is a great musician, now at the very respectable age of 88, Cyprien Katsaris, well-known for his virtuosic performances, Olga Kern, winner of the Cliburn Competition, who dazzled audiences around the world with her concerts, Pavel Gililov, who also has a great reputation and experience, and Boaz Sharon from the USA. It was a great pity that Vásáry could not come. Naturally, there were more Hungarian musicians on the jury: Gábor Farkas, János Balázs and János Mácsai, while Olli Mustonen from Finland chaired the jury. János Balázs played the opening concert and Olga Kern appeared in concert with orchestra. In response to the enthusiastic cheers she gave four encores!

After the preselection 32 pianists were admitted. For various reasons, ten of them were unable to come, so that in the end 22 took part. The first two rounds of the competition were held at the Solti chamber music hall, while the semi-finals and finals were held in the big concert hall of the Academy.

It was very interesting that four different grand pianos were available on stage: Bösendorfer, Fazioli, Steinway and Yamaha. Before the competition started, contestants had two days to try out and choose the instrument they preferred. The sessions in the first round were scheduled in such a way that the performances of the candidates who had chosen the same instrument were grouped together. This was a very practical approach, as this significantly reduced the number of times the instruments had to be moved. Usually, it is considered bad luck for the contestant who is the very first to go on stage, (early) in the morning ... In Budapest, two participants had chosen the Fazioli piano and they had to start. Martín García García from Spain was number one. In July, he had won the Cleveland Competition, but in Budapest he did not pass. However, one month later, he had much success again by winning

3rd prize in the Chopin Competition. A majority of the participants in Budapest selected the Steinway. At the end of the first round, Mihály Boros played the Bösendorfer.

The repertoire in this competition was all Liszt and – in the 2nd round – a transcription by György Cziffra, to honour this famous Hungarian pianist who was born 100 years ago. The monumental Liszt Sonata was compulsory for all six semi-finalists. For the finals, two works for piano and orchestra had to be prepared by all contestants. At the end of the 2nd round, the jury communicated to the six remaining pianists which concerto would have to be performed in the finals. Liszt's Totentanz was also selected, but with the elimination of two pianists before the finals, it was not going to be played. The youngest of all participants, Kevin Chen (17, from Canada) won the 1st prize: 30,000 Euros and an impressive list of international engagements. He is clearly a great talent with impressive pianistic facility. At the prizewinners' concert, Tamta Magradze (4th prize), who had selected Yamaha for the competition, gave a beautifully profound interpretation of Händel/Liszt's Sarabande and Chaconne.

GUSTAV ALINK

All performances can still be heard on:

www.youtube.com/c/FilharmoniaMagyarország/videos



Tamta Magradze performing at the prizewinners' concert.

ANDREA FELVÉGI



The four finalists together with the jury.



Balancing act

The triennial Concours Géza Anda – one of the most prestigious and demanding competitions – was created in memory of Géza Anda by his widow Hortense Anda-Bührle. The year 2021 marks the centenary of Géza Anda's birth and the 15th Concours Géza Anda. This centenary year 36 candidates from all over the world competed in four rounds and after an exciting final round the jury, chaired by Gerhard Oppitz, awarded Anton Gerzenberg with the first prize, Julian Trevelyan with the second and Marek Kozák with the third.

We spoke with Anton Gerzenberg.

Why did you choose the Géza Anda competition?

I am from Hamburg and I remember it was a major event in my city when Varvara Nepomnyashchaya won the competition. At the time, she was studying with Evgeni Koroliov at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater. That always stayed with me, the idea of this demanding competition, and that was surely one of the factors that made me go there. Also, as a youngster, I often listened to recordings by Clara Haskil and she recorded the Mozart double concerto together with Géza Anda. That was the first time I heard Anda and I immediately loved his playing, his Schumann, the Bartók Concerti and of course Mozart. Although we tend to play a little differently nowadays, his playing is so beautiful and appropriate. And now I have had the privilege to practice on his own piano! A piano always reflects the artistic ideals of the musicians, and I felt his piano was leading me to his approach, his sound. That was fascinating.

When did you decide to participate?

During corona and it was actually my mother's idea, because I have a wide repertoire. I like to have different things at my fingertips, so it seemed right for me. And it's a hard competition: for the second round alone you need to prepare three different programs, and you are told only a day or two hours in advance what to play. But I very much liked the program with the Bartók Sonata, Ravel Valses nobles et sentimentales, Brahms Paganini-Variations and a transcription by Rachmaninoff.

The last five years you didn't participate in competitions.

No, I am studying now with Pierre-Laurant Aimard, who doesn't like competitions, and he wanted me to focus on my pianism, on refining musically and technically, so I put the competitions on the backburner

a little bit. But as a way to have a career, I think they are necessary. It is not the only way, but I didn't want to cut out this possibility. Playing for a teacher and in concert, you always present yourself, but in a competition this feeling is even heightened. On the other hand, now there are more and more competitions, it seems to make less sense to go to competitions.

The Géza Anda Competition helps you with management.

Yes, that is fantastic! I will have concerts with an orchestra, I will play at the 100th birthday gala for Géza Anda in Budapest, and next year I will have more recitals. I am very happy about all those chances.

As we speak now, we are all watching the Chopin Competition.

Everyone has his own connection to Chopin and for me he is also very special, so it was always a dream for me to participate; perhaps I will do it next time.

You have a piano duo with your brother.

Yes, we had a five-year break from concerts and we started again not so long ago. In fact, it began with a competition. He was doing Jugend musiziert but for a prize-winners concert his partner was ill, so I stepped in. I learn fast and it really worked very well, so we continued; we won a prize at the same competition together. We played many concerts and we had a great time. I never had a rivalry with my brother: we were in different age categories and we have different paths anyway. My brother is also a writer and a poet, and song accompaniment is very important to him as a pianist, with the marriage of poetry and music. I also adore vocal music, but I am more into opera. I learned the Norma paraphrase by Liszt recently and as a big Wagnerian, I was delighted to play the Scene of the Norns from

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Götterdämmerung for a singer. My brother doesn't like Wagner, so we never played the Reger transcriptions. I am happy balancing my schedule with recitals, chamber music and concerts with orchestra.

You also enjoy playing contemporary music and you are one of the founders of the New Music ensemble ÉRMA in Cologne.

Yes, we started in 2019 and played a few concerts in close collaboration with Unsuk Chin. And now, hopefully after corona, we can try to move forward. We are 11 musicians and a conductor. I also do a lot of new music in my lessons with Aimard, which I think is necessary for an artist. I hope to bring some premières in the future, for we must never forget in that in past centuries musicians mostly played contemporary music.

You don't compose yourself?

I wouldn't dare, I don't have the patience, it takes too long for me. But I like to play other people's music very much.

And how was it to play without public in the competition.

Well, we were at least in the same room with the jury and for the rounds with Musikkollegium Winterthur and the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich we could have 100 people in the hall. It was very nice to play in front of a live audience after quite some time. I was playing with-



ANDREJ GRILIC

out my glasses, so I didn't really see the audience, but I could feel the electricity in the air. With a public present you go to different heights, which is not possible when you play alone.

ERIC SCHOONES

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Géza Anda 1921–1976

ALL HONOUR TO THE MUSIC

This year we commemorate the 100th birthday of Géza Anda. He remains one of the greatest pianists of the twentieth century. We asked Dénes Várjon, first-prize winner of the Géza Anda Competition in 1991, about the artistic significance of Géza Anda.

I was eight years old when he died and I never attended a concert by him, but there were many people around me who cherished memories of him. Annie Fischer, just like Anda a student of Dohnányi, I have heard very often. She belongs to the golden age of Hungarian piano playing, and Géza Anda is a central figure in the Dohnányi school. He received the best of Hungarian culture, including from teachers such as Zoltán Kodály and Leo Weiner. My teacher György Kurtág talked a lot about Weiner, and Anda also had great respect for him, just as so many Hungarian musicians had studied with Weiner. Anda really was the representative of a living tradition. In addition, Anda also came together with the most important figures in European culture: Furtwängler, Haskil, Boulez, and Karajan for example. He was a versatile musician and much more than just a pianist. Being very interested in many art forms, he really saw music as part of life and culture. I always feel that when I hear his recordings. Thanks to his complex personality, he was an inexhaustible musician with tremendous passion and power, but at the same time he was very disciplined. He had everything under control, and you can feel his intelligence and his spiritual access to the structure, not in a dry, academic way, but very transparently in balance with the emotion.

He was a pioneer in his rendering of the works of Béla Bartók.

Today Bartók is a classic like Beethoven, and his piano concertos



Anda in 1966 together with his wife, Hortense Anda

are recognized masterpieces. But in Anda's time Bartók was perceived as difficult and modern, the great richness and depth of his music not generally recognized. Not even the third concert, which is so popular and accessible today. Regardless, Anda played the concerts, and even played all three of them in one evening, which is really an incredible tour de force that few pianists are capable of performing. Anda was also the first to perform and record all Mozart concerts, conducting from the piano. Many Mozart concerts were not played back then.

I knew his widow Hortense Anda-Bührle very well. I have often been to his house in Zurich with this fantastic library and his collection of paintings. It was an experience in itself to be in his studio. I was also often a guest with my wife in his chalet in the mountains. We could practice there and take a look at his scores. The entire piano repertoire, but also many operas and songs. Everything was just as it was in his day, with a signed photo of Ernst von Dohnányi on the wall and the numbers of Furtwängler and Clara Haskil in his telephone directory. There you could feel how he lived and what was important to him, everything always with an incredible amount of taste. Even if you didn't know him, it would still have been as if you were his guest. His spirit was still there.

This text is part of an article, previously published in PIANIST, 2017 No. 3.



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Sa Chen

Opening to the future

What was your impression of the competition?

I didn't hear the first round but I got a good idea of all the pianists. They all did great, according to their individual standards; I think they gave their best and I was very happy to see the eight winners being so different.

Of course the question remains do we choose a great artist or a great Chopin player? How Chopin should be played is a long discussion, but we cannot say no to great individual recreations. I was also on the jury of the Busoni Competition and in Leeds, and I think it's very useful to be able to judge from your own experience as a former participant. I could almost recall how I walked on to the stage, even after so many years. I could also imagine what the pianists hear on stage – I remember the hall has a long echo. It's also interesting how to select your piano to suit your individual touch. We have seen interesting things from the different brands.

On the livestream the sound is very different.

Indeed, so I don't listen to the livestream during the competition. In the hall you feel the temperament and the energy – it's very different – so I think there should be separate prizes, one for online and one for in the hall.

You hear the same works played many times, isn't that difficult?

It depends, with Andante spianato and Polonaise it can be difficult and tiring, but with the Sonatas, Barcarolle or Polonaise Fantasia it never is. Even after a few seconds you can have an impression, as the sound is a reflection of the inner world of the pianist. Especially in the second round with more substantial works like the Sonatas, some candidates gradually got into their best playing. That is only human. And yes, the jury has to eliminate, which is not so easy. Sometimes there is a lack of musical understanding or the pianist just needs more time to mature. Still, when something is very valuable and not really perfect one should not let them go without some recognition. Also, when a 16 year-old is absolutely stunning, and the personality is there already, I think they deserve an opening to the future. For me the competition in all was a very rich and emotional experience.

ERIC SCHOONES

Sa Chen embarked on an international career in 1996 when she won fourth prize, as the youngest contestant, in the Leeds International Piano Competition. She was also awarded the Best Polonaise Performance and fourth prize at the 2000 International Chopin Competition, and subsequently the bronze medal at the Van Cliburn Competition in 2005. In all it was a "necessary and fruitful experience." Recently, her album of Chopin Nocturnes was released by Decca and she was on the jury of the Chopin Competition.

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ANNE-LAURE LECHAT

Jiyeong Mun, first prize in 2014

The 76th Geneva International Music Competition will be offering piano and composition and will take place during the autumn 2022. Applications will be opening very soon!

Geneva International Music Competition

The international music world has been and still is deeply affected by the Covid-19 crisis of 2020–2021. Young artists are faced with an increasingly competitive market, which is directly impacting their career plans. It is important now more than ever for young musicians to distinguish themselves through a strong artistic project. Talent alone is not enough to launch an international career: the public and the market are looking for outstanding personalities. Today's artists must be capable of stirring their listener on multiple levels, they must be awe-inspiring virtuosos. Both audiences and concert organizers are on the lookout for strong and rich personalities, young artists who dazzle us with their talent, musicians who make us dream, interpreters who make us feel enriched and more alive. Outstanding artists!

The Geneva Competition's mission is to discover, promote and support talented young artists. To better complete this mission, we have added an extra stage to our semi-final rounds. In addition to the musical programme, candidates will have to defend an artistic project, which we will then help them to realize once they are laureates.

True to its history and its unrivalled record of laureates, which include more than 800 names, the Geneva Competition seeks complete artists, cultivated interpreters, inspiring virtuosos, and creators of emotion. The members of the jury will be Florent Boffard (France), Josu de Solaun (Spain/USA), Momo Kodama (Japan), Marianna

Shirinyan (Armenia/Denmark), Gilles Vonsattel (Switzerland/USA) and Janina Fialkowska, Chair (Canada).

The Geneva Competition offers an ambitious career development programme, providing precious support and advice to help boost laureates' careers. In addition to the official prizes, laureates benefit from two years of management from the concert agency Pro-Musica Genève. This is the key to a series of performances, allowing them to take their first steps in Swiss and international concert venues. Each year, one winner is given the opportunity to record a CD with orchestra. Distributed by the label La Dolce Volta, these recordings are an excellent means of promotion for young artists at the beginning of their career.

During the two years following their prize, laureates are offered an international concert tour. A great way to promote the Geneva Competition abroad and a unique opportunity for prize-winners to establish an international reputation.

Each year, the Geneva Competition offers a Prizewinners Workshop. For one week, participants can take part in a series of workshops comprising different subjects, such as performance, health, career management, image and social media.

Application deadline: 15 March, 2022

CONCERT HALL

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It was built between 1891 and 1894 by the architect John Camoletti and financed by the British consul, Daniel Fitzgerald Pakenham Barton, who dedicated it to Queen Victoria and gifted it to the City of Geneva. With its fine art facade, Victoria Hall is a true work of art.

ANNE-LAURE LECHAT



Dmitry Shishkin, first Prize ex aequo 2018 playing Victoria Hall



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Wind Quintet
Oboe
Trumpet
Piano
Percussion
Viola
Clarinet
Flute
Violoncello
Bassoon
Trombone
Harp
French Horn
Piano Duo
String Quartet
Violin
Double Bass
Organ
Guitar

ARD International Music Competition



JeungBeum Sohn
1st prize piano 2017



Aoi Trio
1st prize piano trio 2018



Geister Duo
1st prize piano duo 2021

September 3 to 11, 2022
Piano solo
First prize 10,000 €

September 1 to 9, 2023
Piano trio
First prize 18,000 €



The Grand Finale in Vietnam

Kayserburg International Youth Piano Competition

For 2021, there were eight countries from the Overseas Group that successfully concluded their regional finals, including Singapore, China Hong Kong, Philippines, USA, Australia, Ecuador, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Altogether there were over 2000 contestants participating in this year's regional auditions.

There were over 600 contestants from Singapore who participated in the various rounds organized by Cristofori Music Pte. Ltd, one of the largest Pearl River Piano Group authorized dealers in the world. Cristofori has been an authorized Pearl River dealer for over 40 years and has grown to become the largest music school in South-east Asia, with over 150,000 students.

Greenery Music Limited was the authorized organizer for the China Hong Kong regional finals. The preliminary rounds were successfully conducted at One Stage Academy of Music & Arts, a subsidiary of Greenery Music. All 30 semi-finalists competed fiercely to qualify for the grand finals on September 12.

In the Philippines, organized by Sounds Kradle Inc., and despite various challenges under the pandemic restrictions, contestants were asked to perform live at a designated studio by appointment and without an audience.

Entered for the first time, contestants from Chicago Illinois, Tacoma Washington, and Irvine California responded with great entries.

The US regional auditions were jointly organized by Skelley Piano, Grand Piano Haus, and Opus 119 The School of Music.

In Australia, there were entries from Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. Despite Sydney being under strict lock-down mandates, contestants were provided with appointed professional piano studios throughout the city thanks to The Piano Fantasy, official host to the

Sydney regional auditions. In Melbourne, there were over 200 participants due to the innovative management of Australian Music World and the support of the local piano teachers association. Almacenes Juan Eljuri Cia. Ltda, in Ecuador, opened their showroom to contestants from all walks of life during the pandemic period and came through with great results!

PT Citra Intirama from Jakarta promoted piano education and the art of live performance throughout Indonesia; their coverage of the Kayserburg International Youth Piano Competition for Indonesia included Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, and Medan. Ted Saigon from Ho Chi Min City in Vietnam started full preparation for the competition in advance of the date; "Kayserburg Piano Got Talent" was launched in December 2020 to begin the official auditions for Vietnam, which was successfully concluded ten months later in October 2021. The exciting programming culminated in full participation from major Vietnamese conservatories and music schools.

In just a few years, the overseas auditions for the Kayserburg International Youth Competition has gained tremendous following, paving ways for further development of deserving young talents. And with the partnership of Pearl River Piano Group regional dealers, it continues to gain momentum to support piano education throughout the world.

INTERNATIONAL
SCHUBERT
COMPETITION DORTMUND



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LAUREATES OF THE XIV. PIANO COMPETITION 2021



TAKASHI YASUNAMI

1st Prize - Prize of the Werner Richard -
Dr. Carl Dörken Stiftung & CD Production



LUKAS STERNATH

2nd Prize - Prize of the Kulturstiftung
Dortmund & Audience Award - Prize of the
Lions Club Dortmund-Rothe Erde



JONAS STARK

3rd Prize

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NEXT COMPETITION

IV. LiedDuo Competition 2023
Dortmund, September 24 - October 01, 2023



Ziricote. Kayserburg KA212T, 212 cm (7')
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copper-wound bass strings, Renner hammers, Renner
action, Dehonit pin block, slow fallboard, ebony sharps,
Strunz solid tapered soundboard and Laukhuff keyboard

The Kayserburg Étoile Collection

of Exotic Woods

Pearl River Piano Group has long known that piano building is an art form unto itself but turning a piano into a work of art takes the highest level of veneer craftsmanship. Named for the French word for star, the Kayserburg Étoile Collection brings forward the ultimate expression of turning rare wood's natural lustre, colour, and patterns that change with every angle into heavenly beauty.

Of the more than 90,000 species of hardwoods in the world, only about 100 are used in the fancy veneer industry. For the Kayserburg Étoile Collection only the most impactful have been selected; whether it's East Indian Rosewood, which is considered one of the most beautiful lumbers in the world that is found in many Asian antiques, or Ziricote, an exotic wood native to Central America that ranges from reddish-brown to dark brown with unusual streaks of pale-yellow sapwood.

Introduced last October in Shanghai at Music China 2020, the Kayserburg Étoile Collection exotic veneers include Sapele Mahogany, a luxurious wood from western and central African trees that reach heights up to 180 feet, and Golden Silk Phoebe that has been

historically used for boat building, architectural woodworking, furniture, and sculptural carving. The collection also features Tiger Striped Sandalwood, Straight Line Ebony, Green Apple, and Rose Gold Sandalwood.

Pearl River believes that with its meticulous craftsmanship and unrivalled playability a piano from the Kayserburg Étoile Collection is destined to become the centre of the universe in any setting. Established in 1956, Pearl River Piano Group has become the largest, and best-selling, piano manufacturer in the world, combining traditional craftsmanship with advanced CNC digital technology to produce over 150,000 pianos annually by more than 4,000 workers. Pearl River recently transitioned to the world's largest new, state-of-the-art factory dedicated to building the best possible pianos. Within its 1.2 million square feet, the company has total control over every step of the manufacturing process.

Kayserburg's vertical and upright pianos are entirely handmade by the factory's most experienced artisans, closely supervised and trained by Swiss master piano designer Stephan Mohler. With every component selected for its precision and quality, with craftsmanship that reflects the very best in European manufacturing techniques, and with innovative designs, Kayserburg pianos represent the new standard in outstanding acoustic definition and performance.



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**INTERNATIONAL TELEKOM
BEETHOVEN
COMPETITION BONN**
2 – 11 DEC 2021



Concert technician Ulrich Gerhartz in the spotlight

The Concert Technician – Backbone of a Piano Competition

“The Elves of Cologne”, a German tale, reports about little house gnomes who would do all the work of the citizens during the night, so that the inhabitants of Cologne would just rely on them and have an easy day. The elves were unseen, highly efficient – and never given any gratitude. Many piano technicians know only too well how that feels, especially at piano competitions ...

In the concert business, the piano technicians are key persons. At competitions in particular. If a jury member becomes sick, the competition can easily go on. Only the algorithm for voting has to be adjusted. However, if the piano technician is ill, the whole competition is in danger! “Appassionata” on an untuned instrument? “La Campanella” with a sluggish repetition? Unimaginable! No doubt, the instrument on stage must be in perfect condition. For the pianists it is essential, for the jury and organizers self-evident, for the audience business as usual. But who is really aware how the perfection on stage is achieved? When pianists, jury and audience go practicing, dining or resting, the concert technician’s work begins. It is then that the piano must be prepared for the next performances. This work is mostly done in solitude – unseen. At numerous piano competitions several brands are involved. So, the time for piano service has to be divided between the teams. In the night shifts, for example, time slots at the beginning or at the end are preferable. During the other hours one can either relax or sleep. The shifts in the middle are just awful: it means sleeping for just 2 hours, getting to the hall at midnight and intensely working on the piano for 2 or 3 hours, going back to the hotel and sleeping for another 3 hours – until the new day starts. Because fairness is important, the teams change shifts night by night. Thus everyone is treated equally well or equally badly depending on your perspective. By the time the first participant rests his fingers on the keys, the technicians’ biorhythms have already been disrupted ...

More than anyone else, the concert technicians are the backbones of piano competitions, rolling the red carpets out for the participants. They have to be healthy, attentive, fast, patient, efficient, friendly, empathetic, always in a good mood and never tired, being excellent crafts(wo)men and sensitive psychologists. Every day – and every night! They are certainly the hardest working people at competitions.

How much they deserve to be acknowledged, cherished and lauded! In his book “Show me your hands” pianist Alexandre Tharaud dedicated a whole (and excellent) chapter to them. However, out of sight, out of mind – in most final speeches the technicians are not even mentioned. Just forgotten and taken for granted. Invisible workers, like the Elves of Cologne ...

Yet thankfully this is not everywhere, for there are good examples as well. To name a few: in the brochures of the Concours Géza Anda or the Tchaikovsky Competition, the technicians are mentioned. Better than printed names are the faces, of course! The Chopin Competition 2021 creates a whole film about the concert technicians’ work. At the prize awarding ceremony of The Leeds 2021, concert technician Ulrich Gerhartz was asked onto the stage, side by side with the jury and the prizewinners, and put in the limelight and applauded there. It is well deserved and so right what happened in Leeds. Wouldn’t it be right for each and every piano technician anywhere?

GERRIT GLANER



The American pianist Garrick Ohlsson needs no introduction. Winner of the 8th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw in 1970, Ohlsson belongs to the very top flight of pianists in the world today.

Garrick Ohlsson

Working with a millipede

If today there are hundreds of piano competitions worldwide, the number was far more limited in 1970, and the very important ones could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Today's internationalisation, the increasing number of competitors and the big competitions' tremendous outreach out has completely changed the cultural scene.

“Back in 1970 you could easily distinguish between pianists and which country they came from based on playing styles and typical musical and technical manners. Now it's virtually impossible”, says Ohlsson. He sees a fundamental difference these days compared to the past when the student was regarded as a “possession” by the teacher, and he sees both musical and interpretational benefits from students seeking and receiving instruction from more than one teacher. Therefore we see a loosening of the clear-cut definition of the so-called “national schools of piano playing”.

In Warsaw in 1970, Garrick Ohlsson belonged to a very strong Juilliard-trained generation of young pianists including Ax, Fialkowska and Swann. “I believe that we were actually the first poly-

glots of piano playing, not cast in any kind of nationally representative way or fashion but rather standing as results of the American history of immigration and multiplicity”, says Ohlsson, himself of Italian/Swedish descent.

Ohlsson won his first major competition in 1966 in Bolzano (the Busoni) when he was still a student in the pre-college division at Juilliard. This win became an important indicator of strength and purpose, and later he won the Montreal Competition in 1968 and subsequently, the Chopin in 1970. His Warsaw win led to coverage in every major newspaper in the world, and his career and recordings engagements took off. It's hard to believe that such an outcome would have been possible without consistent training and Ohlsson's renowned teachers – Sasha Gorodnitzky, Rosina Lhevinne, Claudio Arrau and Olga Barbini.

Now 73, Garrick Ohlsson has in recent years served as professor at the San Francisco Conservatory, where he teaches a few Master students who are already autonomous. Master instruction is a delicate matter. How do you teach a talent who already has a highly

developed personality and integrity? “Teaching talent is like working with a millipede where you don’t really know which leg is doing what and why. In order not to obstruct, careful and non-dogmatic instruction is crucial. In a way, I can only provide tools”, says Ohlsson.

Being experienced at giving masterclasses internationally and also as a private tutor, Ohlsson is also open to digital solutions – which has resulted, for example, in high-end video productions for the highly regarded platform tonebase.co. “We have all learned as we’ve been going along but I have been amazed by what we really can do in terms of details and nuances. Sound production, dynamics and not least pedal work are aspects, though, which clearly suffer in my Zoom technology experience. However, reaching talents who live in geographically remote places is a plus that should not be forgotten.”

“An artist never puts in his bio all the competitions he didn’t win, but everyone has them”, Ohlsson says and laughs. For those who want to compete and have the proficiency to do so, Ohlsson recommends smaller local competitions so that the student can concentrate on the work and repertoire. “There’s nothing better than a goal and this is actually about the learning experience. If you go with the right emotional and mental approach it can only be bene-

ficial regardless of whether you win a prize or not. You learn from the juries, by listening to others, what’s good to do and what’s not good to do. Students need to form opinions; these help you grow and be more objective about yourself.”

So, how can we judge a digital performance compared to a live one? An online presentation could even be favourable for a contestant who is not able to project the sound to a full hall. Should we give out two kinds of prizes, live and online? Do pianists receive training for a digital performance reality? “This is a very difficult question as digital solutions arose spontaneously out of the pandemic necessity. Recording in any medium is something the performer learns about step by step and through experience. The online reality has made us more interactive in a way. It opens doors and doesn’t close them. I also believe that we have moved away from the old conception that competitions are anti-social, not least through what good a piano competition can do for a city or a whole country, for that matter. Just by watching the amazing international outreach of the recent Chopin Competition, it’s clear that the old and new have to meet. In spite of technology, old-fashioned values are still very universal: playing well and being a good musician.”

PATRIK JOVELL



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Internationaler Schimmel Klavierwettbewerb

After an intensive pre-selection process, 24 young pianists from ten nations qualified for the finals of the first International Schimmel Piano Competition from September 17th to 19th, 2021 in Braunschweig.

The five-person jury consisted of Prof. Wolfgang Zill (jury chairman), Prof. Markus Becker, Prof. Yuka Imamine, Prof. Tim Ovens and Prof. Milana Chernyavska. After the impressive competition appearances of the participants, it was not easy for them to decide who would move into the final round. In addition to the pianistic and artistic performance, the submitted concept of the presented program also had to be evaluated, which had to follow a theme freely chosen by the participants.

Seven pianists convinced the jury the most with their concept and performance. They were allowed to compete again on the day of the final with a concert lasting almost 50 minutes. In the end, the winners were certain: The first prize (a CD production including publication and digital distribution or production of a music video) went to Raimu Satoh (Japan); the second prize (€ 2,000) went to Nicole Rudi (Germany) and the third prize (€ 1,000) and the audience award (€ 500) in the final winners' concert went to Daria

Parkhomenko (Russia). Thanks to the great popularity of the competition and the new competition concept, Wilhelm Schimmel Pianofortefabrik GmbH plans to hold this competition on a regular basis.

Information on this will be published before the next start of the competition via the universities, social media and the specially designed competition homepage www.schimmel-klavierwettbewerb.de. Schimmel is a German premium manufacturer of grand and upright pianos with headquarters in Braunschweig. Since 1885, the traditional company has been producing high-quality pianoforte instruments, the quality of which has a high international reputation. Schimmel instruments are the most awarded and most played grand pianos and upright pianos from German production.

www.schimmel-piano.de



From left to right: Prof. Wolfgang Zill, Prof. Markus Becker, Daria Parkhomenko, Nicole Rudi, Raimu Satoh, Prof. Tim Ovens, Zhaoming Liang, Lothar Kiesche

Piano Competitions give us an amazing opportunity to experience more than just the excellence of pianists and composers. For this we need state-of-the-art instruments that deliver the intentions of both the creator of music as well as the artist. Just like in our previous edition we asked young pianists about their piano of choice.

Pianists and Piano Brands – Mutual Love, Admiration and Fascination

Roman Rofalski — Schimmel

When playing a recital, the first and most important necessity is having a musical interface at hand which I feel comfortable with. I don't want an instrument I have to fight or think about all the time. I want to be free to focus on expressing myself while on stage. Therefore, solid, good-working mechanics are essential. The touch should be firm, but not too heavy, quickly responsive in all registers and offering control on all dynamic levels.

At the same time, I want an instrument that inspires, even surprises me sonically. Especially when playing my own composition and while improvising, I want a grand piano that triggers new ideas in every concert. So, different concepts of a grand piano sound are refreshing to me, taking me to new areas of exploration.

For my solo record "the Kapustin project" (Sony Classical), the choice of musical material I wanted to record was pretty diverse: starting with pieces by Nikolai Kapustin, and other contemporaries like Frederic Rzewski and Bernhard Lang, I also recorded my own compositions and free improvisations that even used prepared piano techniques.

The Schimmel K280 was the way to go: enough power for the virtuoso and very demanding Kapustin works as well as a clear, well-defined, assertive sound, that never becomes harsh, to make my own pieces glow. The Schimmel Grand made it easy to produce rich textures and shimmering, nicely-moving overtones in complex harmonies. That's what I was looking for: a nice palette of possibilities, brightness without harshness, paired with a powerful bass made it lots of fun recording on the K280.



Martin Sturfält — Blüthner

When selecting a piano for a performance, aside from the sound, the feel of the action is probably the most important consideration to me – it is all about an equilibrium of resistance versus speed, softness versus edge, heavy versus light. I find all these qualities tend to be intrinsically linked to the acoustic of the room too, so it's all wonderfully complex and part of the artistic challenge.

In fact, speaking of challenge, I don't mind if the instrument has a slightly "untamed" quality to it, something which makes me fight a little bit extra. All within reason, obviously!

My association with Blüthner goes back to 2002 when I won the Nordic Piano Competition, the first prize of which was a model 6 Blüthner piano, which I still own and work on every day. Blüthner pianos really offer something quite different from what I perceive to be the main trend among piano makers: the tone is very pure, singing but not generally all that forceful. Despite this, because of the remarkable clarity of the instrument it can be very present indeed and offers a whole range of very individual colours. Once again, as per above, this really forces you to listen very carefully and frankly adjust your pianistic approach a little, sometimes even your interpretation of a given work. I imagine this may seem quite unsettling to some, but to me it has always been a most inspirational challenge. As I am lucky enough to own a Blüthner myself, I can



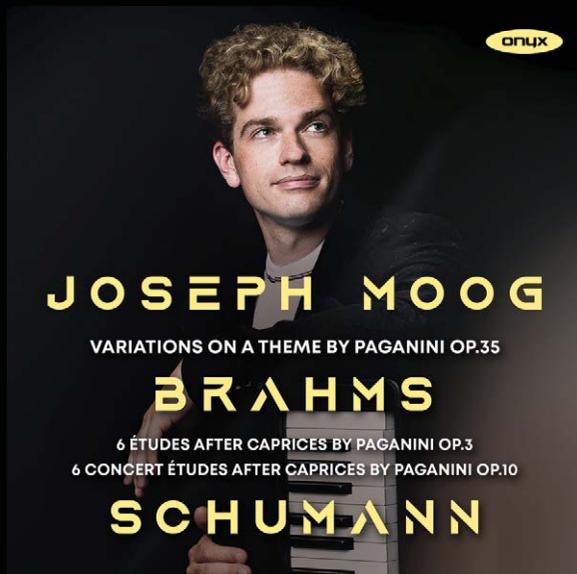
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also testify to the most remarkable build quality in every aspect of the instrument and how much flexibility the instrument offers depending on regulation – truly a unique and most refreshing voice in the world of pianos.

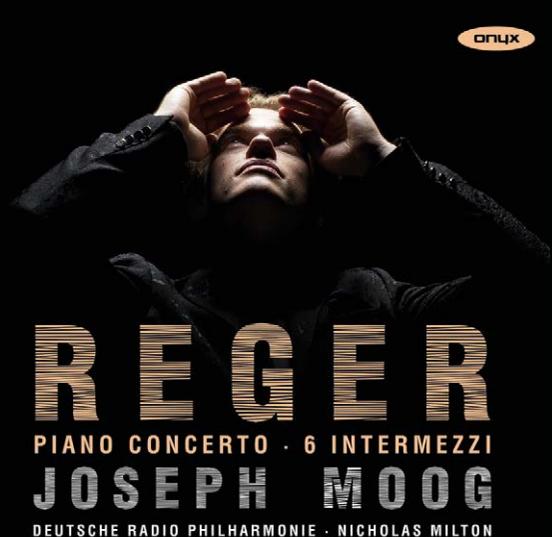
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From 4–12 September, 2021, the 17th International MozARTE Competition & Festival was held in Aachen (Germany). For several reasons this was an exceptional event.

The competition has been held every year since 2005.

MozART in Aachen

Precisely this is already exceptional. As we all know, due to the awful corona pandemic, many international music competitions could not take place. In 2020, more than 160 international piano competitions were cancelled or postponed. Several competitions were held online. It was extremely difficult to organise a live event amidst all the restrictions and there were uncertainties as to whether jury members and participants would be able to travel at all. We all hoped that this would only be temporary and that “normal” life would return. However, the situation lingered on and also in 2021 most competitions were still affected by this and many of them had to be postponed again. Moreover, at only 25 km from Aachen, the region had been flooded by water (which affected the Euregio Piano Award in Geilenkirchen). In view of all this, it is indeed highly remarkable that the MozARTE Competition could keep its annual pace and could take place as a live event, both in 2020 and in 2021!

The MozARTE Competition has an interesting history. The first two years, it was held in Vaals (the Netherlands), but then moved to Aachen. It always attracted a steady number of participants. This year, 43 pianists applied for the main competition. Although there were still uncertainties and complications with international travelling, only 11 could not come. The jury consisted of no less than 10 pianists from nine different countries. The competition is held at the *Hochschule für Musik und Tanz Köln-Aachen*, which has a convenient concert hall. The corona rules had to be observed (in Germany, the “3G” rules) and the total number of visitors (who had to register) was also limited. In spite of all this, everything was held in great spirit and a wonderful atmosphere. All musicians were perhaps doubly motivated to perform, after the lockdowns and the compulsory long break in their professional and musical lives.

Artistic Director Andreas Frölich is a versatile musician and very active as a pianist (solo as well as in chamber music), teacher and

organiser. He has also made many recordings. He founded the MozARTE Competition and managed it together with Ilja Scheps, assisted by several students. During those nine days in September there was much more: not only a competition, but a real festival. On the first day, the Sinfonieorchester Aachen played together with Andreas Frölich at the Theatre Aachen, and almost every evening during the competition, most of the jury members gave concerts that were all live streamed on the competition’s YouTube channel. The links can be found on the Facebook page of the competition. The competition itself is open for pianists up to 32 years of age and consists of three rounds. Usually, a piano concerto by Mozart has to be performed with orchestra in the finals (in 2019 with a string quartet), but this time, due to the ongoing restrictions, the concession was made in the rules that the final round consisted of an additional solo recital. Two typical aspects of music competitions,



Jury member Albert Mamriev performs Wagner/Liszt and Alkan.



The entire jury on stage during one of the breaks.

GUSTAV ALINK

which are often discussed, are fairness and transparency. It is a good sign that the MozARTE Competition does not allow students of jury members to take part in the competition and that the votes by the jury are published. This is done with care: at the end of each round the results are posted, but the jury's votes for those who passed to the next round, are not shown.

The repertoire in each round is entirely free, provided that the contestant includes some work(s) by Mozart in the final round. Quite a few had prepared Schumann for the 2nd round, but also less well-known compositions were presented, such as Shostakovich' Sonata nr. 1, Rautavaara, a Bartók Etude, Chaminade and Kapustin. Impressive was the performance of the youngest contestant in the main competition: Daisuke Yagi (17) from Japan. His Schumann Toccata and Liebesleid by Kreisler/Rachmaninov were excellent and he became one of the five finalists. He maintained a high level of

playing and was asked to play Saint-Saëns/Liszt's Danse Macabre (one of his pieces in the finals) again in the prizewinners' concert. However, the jury did not award the first prize this year (which happened only once before in the history of this competition) and Daisuke shared the 2nd prize with Nohyoung Kim from Korea. Edwin Szwajkowski from Poland received the 3rd prize. After this, the Festival still continued. Since last year, a separate competition for junior pianists has been added. This junior competition has two age categories: young pianists aged between 10 and 13 (category A) and category B: between 14 and 18. Daisuke Yagi had applied not only for the main competition, but also for Junior Category B. He played the same pieces by Mozart and Saint-Saëns/Liszt, which now brought him the first prize, though tied again, with Oscar Paz Suaznabar (15) from the USA.

GUSTAV ALINK



The three prizewinners of the professional competition:
Daisuke Yagi,
Nohyoung Kim and
Edwin Szwajkowski



Andreas Frölich,
founder and Artistic Director
of the MozARTE Competition
and Festival.

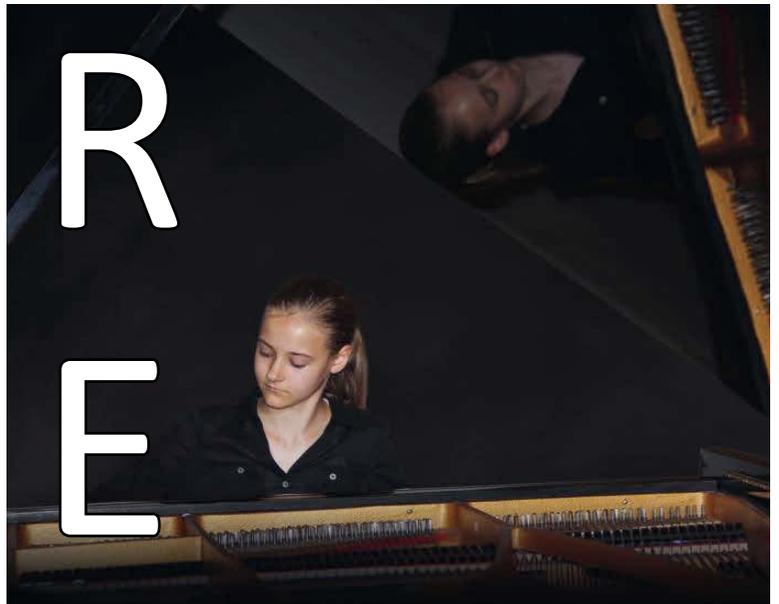
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BY GROTRIAN - STEINWEG

The fifth edition of Memorijal Jurica Murai (Tribute to Jurica Murai) and Murai Grand Prix, an International Piano Competition organized by the prominent Varaždin School of Music, will be held in May 2022 in the Great Concert Hall of the beautiful Erdödy Palace in Varaždin, Croatia.



Memorijal Jurica Murai & Murai Grand Prix

Named after academic Jurica Murai, one of the most eminent Croatian pianists, International Piano Competition “Memorijal Jurica Murai and Murai Grand Prix” has been organized since 2015 and is now being held biannually. The competition is divided into two parts: the Memorijal Jurica Murai is intended for pianists up to 19 years of age, who compete in six categories and the Murai Grand Prix is a two-stage competition designed for pianists aged 17 to 32. Numerous awards and recognitions were given to Jurica Murai for his versatile and valuable reproductive activities that testify about his reputation and significance, and it is considered a huge honour by the organisation that the competition is named after such a great artist. He possessed subtle musicality, poetics, an amazing tone palette, a perfect taste in music, as well as evident great general knowledge. With this cultural heritage in mind, the aim is to develop artistic talent of pupils and young professional musicians, to promote international cultural cooperation, to inspire pianists and educate audiences, to stimulate interest in the piano and music in general, but also to provide a platform to showcase and develop outstanding pianists from around the world. Varaždin School of Music has always been the bearer of art education and cultural life in north-west Croatia. Proud of its rich

tradition as well as of its students and professors, the decision to organize a competition came from the intention to foster a more engaging and effective learning. With the quality of the organization, selection of distinguished international jury members as well as encouraging awards, professionalism and friendly atmosphere, the Competition became attractive to numerous competitors around the world and has gained a great reputation. As Davor Matačić, principal of Varaždin School of Music and artistic director of the competition points out “our competition aims to serve as an intermediary between those young virtuosos and the world’s great musical venues. It is our belief that this competitive try-out will encourage young pianists and that the participation in our competition will allow them to make that next step in their career. We believe that the participation in the competition will be the best way to kickstart their journey into professional piano career.” The jury’s members for the 5th edition of Memorijal Jurica Murai and Murai Grand Prix include eminent artist, distinguished pedagogues and experts who will select those who will contribute to the shape of the musical world over the coming decades. The competition will take place next Spring from May 9th to 15th, 2022.



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International Brahms Piano Competition



Thomas Neubauer (Blüthner) with the winners Jonas Aumiller, Yi-Ting Tsai, Teppei Kuroda, Matvey Shumkov and the artistic director Prof. Jacob Leuschner (from left to right).

The third international Brahms piano competition in Detmold had a brilliant winner: Jonas Aumiller delighted the large audience in the Detmold concert hall and the jury with the first piano concerto by Brahms, accompanied by the Northwest German Philharmonic under Florian Ludwig, at the live streamed finale. The 23-year-old German has already won a number of other competitions and is currently studying with Sergey Babayan in the USA.

He proved to be an outstanding musical talent over the four rounds of the competition. “Structural intelligence, outstanding sound control and deep emotionality are combined in his playing,” says the artistic director of the competition, Prof. Jacob Leuschner. “Such a winner is a credit to the Brahms Competition”. In addition to the prize money of 5,000 euros and a CD production by the Erich Thienhaus Institute, Aumiller can look forward to many attractive award-winners’ concerts, for example in the historic ancestral hall of Corvey Castle in the “Stars of Tomorrow” series, at the Böblinger Pianist Festival and the Bagno Concert Gallery in Steinfurt.

The other prizewinners also proved that the level of the competition, which was again considerably higher this year, was registered for 70 pianists from 20 countries, 30 of whom were invited to Detmold. This time, all finalists had chosen Brahms’ 1st piano concerto. The 2nd prize (3,000 euros) and the special prize from the University Foundation (1,000 euros) for the best interpretation of a work of Classical Modernism went to the 20-year-old Russian Matvey Shumkov, who is studying at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. He proved to be an extremely lyrical talent with a sensitive sense of sound and a tendency towards dreamy, introverted music-making. The third prize (2,000 euros) went to the Japanese Teppei Kuroda, who is currently studying in Detmold, with a very serious, sometimes angular, pianistically impeccable interpretation of the

concert. In view of the fact that another excellent participant only missed the finals by a hair’s breadth, the jury took the generous step of awarding a special jury prize of 600 euros from its own resources, which the Taiwanese Yi-Ting Tsai will receive. These three other award winners can also expect interesting follow-up concerts, for example Shumkov will give a piano recital on the historic Blüthner grand piano in the ballroom of Moritzburg Castle in Detmold’s twin town Zeitz and, like Jonas Aumiller, will perform in the Thürmer-Saal in Bochum. Yi-Ting Tsai has been asked to give a piano recital by the Koltun Concert Directorate, while Teppei Kuroda can be heard in two concert series for which the Julius Blüthner Pianofortefabrik is responsible. Once again, together with the Alfred Reinhold Foundation, it was a cooperation partner of the Detmold University of Music and the main sponsor of the competition.

The international jury also agreed in their assessment of the excellent overall quality of the competition, which has now finally found its place in the canon of important international piano competitions. This year the jury consisted of Young-Lan Han (Seoul), Catherine Vickers (Essen), Ivan Klánský (Prague), Einar Steen-Nøkleberg (Oslo), Jacob Leuschner (Detmold) and, in the final, the conductor Florian Ludwig (Detmold) and Henri Sigfridsson (Essen). The next Brahms piano competition in Detmold will take place in September 2024.

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From left to right:
The three winners of this year's International Schubert Competition Dortmund Lukas Sternath, Takashi Yasunami and Jonas Stark in front of the Maiwald wing and the impressive backdrop of the compressors in the machine hall of the industrial monument Hansa coking plant in Dortmund.

International Schubert Competition

Magnet for top artists

The winners of this year's International Schubert Competition in the piano category have been determined: after a week of excitement, exertion and full concentration for the young music talents, the members of the jury selected the three best from a number of excellent pianists. As many as 36 pianists applied to participate.

The jury consisted of Arnulf von Arnim, Ingeborg Danz, Ian Fountain, Gabriel Kwok, Ewa Kupiec, Antti Siirala, Tamás Ungár, Elisso Virssaladze and Idith Zvi. The first prize went to the Japanese Takashi Yasunami (29 years old), the second to Lukas Sternath (20 years old) from Vienna, who is currently studying at the University of Music, Drama and Media in Hanover, and the third to the 23 year-old Jonas Stark, who is also currently studying at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media. The award ceremony against the backdrop of the imposing compressors in the machine hall of the Dortmund industrial monument, the Hansa coking plant, marked the grand finale of the Dortmund Schubert Week. Bärbel Bergerhoff-Wodopia, member of the board of the RAG-Stiftung, said: "The International Schubert Competition is a highlight of the local cultural landscape and the best proof that the Ruhr area has developed into a magnet for top artists. For over 200 years there has been a close relationship between coal mining and music in the area. Making music together offered a contrast to

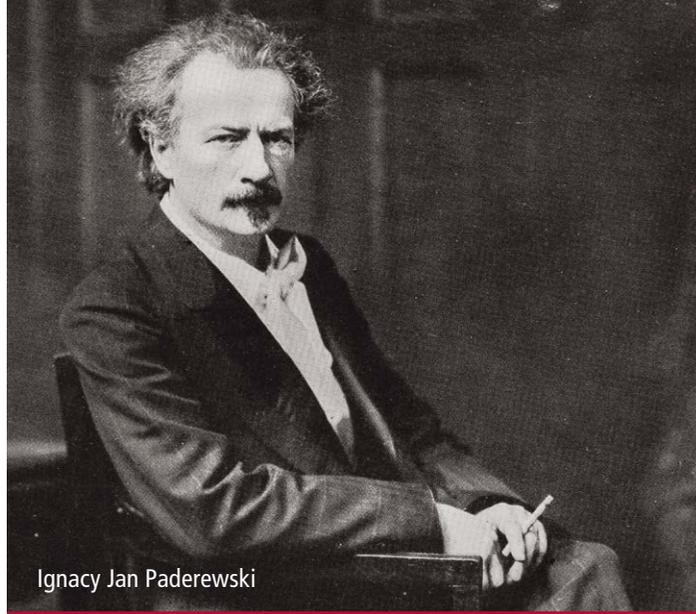
the once hard and dangerous work underground and strengthened the cohesion of the miners. That is why we are happy to support the project as the main sponsor."

The RAG-Stiftung was once again the main sponsor of the International Schubert Competition this year and made it possible through its generous support. At the end of the winners' concert, during which the three finalists gave their best once again in front of the enthusiastic audience, the coveted audience award, endowed with 2,000 euros, was voted on and it went to Lukas Sternath, who knew how to inspire the audience in a special way. This award was donated by the Lions Club Dortmund-Rothe Erde and was represented by Dr. Gerd Bollermann, former district president. The tension and excitement could still be clearly seen in the participating pianists, but also their joy at the great award, which is of great importance for their musical careers.

www.schubert-wettbewerb.de

CHOPIN COMPETITION





International Paderewski Piano Competition

Ignacy Jan Paderewski, whose personality and heritage has left an indelible mark on the identity of Bydgoszcz and its inhabitants. It is inconceivable to imagine the city without the Music Association, the Pomeranian Philharmonic Hall and the Piano Competition bearing the maestro's name.

The 12th International Paderewski Piano Competition in Bydgoszcz will be held from the 6th till the 20th of November, 2022, and will be organized by the Paderewski Music Association in Bydgoszcz, which will also celebrate its centenary in 2022. Katarzyna Popowa-Zydrón is the President of the Association.

The first edition of this competition was staged in 1961 and since 1998 the event has been held every three years. The event aims to commemorate Paderewski, an outstanding pianist, composer, and politician, and to promote young pianists and Polish culture worldwide. The winning participants will share a total of 62 000 Euros in prizes, not to mention awards in the form of concerts and recitals in various prestigious music institutions. The competition is opened to pianists of all nationalities aged between 16 and 32. The jury of the 12th International Paderewski Piano Competition will be chaired by Piotr Paleczny, the Artistic Director. The jurors will include Rafał Blechacz, Dang Thai Son, Martin Engström, Stanislav Ioudenitch, Krzysztof Jablónski, Vanessa Latache, Nikita Mndoyants and Noriko Ogawa. Rafał Blechacz is also the Ambassador of the Competition.

The Competition will be held under the Honorary Patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda.

The Competition has been a member of Alink-Argerich Foundation since 2004 as well as the World Federation of International

Music Competitions in Geneva since 2010. Outstanding laureates of the Competition include Yulianna Avdeeva, Eduard Kunz, Zheeyoung Moon, Dinara Klinton, Hyuk Lee, Jakub Kuszlik and Kamil Pacholec, testifying to the high-ranking status of the event. Following tried and trusted procedures, preliminary auditions are to be held in eight cities worldwide. It is an opportunity for young pianists launching their careers to take part in auditions in their home countries without incurring traveling expenses. It also seems a perfect solution in case of imposition of new pandemic restrictions. All the preliminary auditions are to be recorded and adjudicated by Professor Piotr Paleczny.

The 12th Competition will consist of four stages: in the first round participants perform free repertoire and in the second they play Paderewski's compositions. In the semi-finals, in the recital part, pianists perform a contemporary piece by the composer Hanna Kulenta and perform Mozart's concerto with Capella Bydgosciensis. In the finals, participants perform a selected piano concerto with the Symphonic Orchestra of the Pomeranian Philharmonic. Auditions are open to the public. Participants have at their disposal instruments manufactured by Yamaha, Steinway, Kawai and Fazioli.

All the stages are to be broadcast online:
www.paderewskicompetition.pl

Jury and participants at the last competition in 2019.





ROBERT SCHUMANN
COMPETITION
FOR YOUNG PIANISTS



INTERNATIONAL
ROBERT SCHUMANN COMPETITION
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FOR YOUNG PIANISTS

Next competition in March 2023



The Paderewski Music Association

June 2022 will be a special time for the Paderewski Music Association as this significant cultural association will be celebrating its centenary. This is a momentous anniversary since it is closely linked to regaining independence after 123 years of partitions.

The establishment of the Association at this eventful time, the time when Polish authorities made their presence in the city, which had been predominantly German for a few generations, is a living proof that culture and music in particular had its part in raising Polish patriotic feelings. It also refers to the existing cultural substrate, in which music has always played a significant role. Even at the time when Poland lost its independence, Bydgoszcz was visited by opera companies from Germany and European artists. At that time, the idea of forging the cultural brand of the city of music, proved the right solution that facilitated and secured Bydgoszcz presence among the future Polish metropolises.

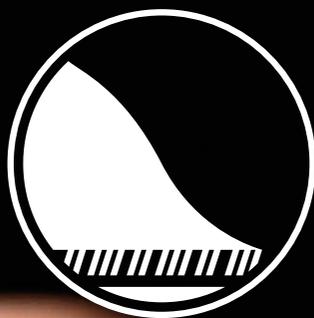
The city and the Paderewski Association are preparing for the commemoration of the Association's centenary. A special concert will be held at the Pomeranian Philharmonic. Additionally, the organizers have invited the elite managing the most significant international piano competitions to celebrate the anniversary. They will meet in Bydgoszcz during the 62nd General Assembly of World Federation of International Music Competitions in Geneva. It is not by accident that Bydgoszcz has been selected as a meeting place of 120 directors. The Paderewski Music Association declared its accession to the General Assembly eight years ago already. It strived to simultaneously combine two noteworthy events on the international music scene. We were honoured to officially invite the members of the Federation to Bydgoszcz during the last

year General Assembly held in Reggio Emilia in Italy, the city that strikes a chord with us; not only being a partner city of Bydgoszcz, but also the city that has its lasting place in the history of Poland being the birthplace of the Polish National anthem.

The General Assembly, an important event for the operations of this exclusive organization, will provide a platform both for sharing experiences, discussing problems arising over the last two years due to the pandemic and presenting Bydgoszcz, which has held an unquestioned position as the city of music in the cultural landscape of Poland. The city has become a vibrant cultural centre, with such excellent music institutions as the Philharmonic Hall and the Opera, music schools, including an outstanding Music Academy, prestigious competitions and international music environment consisting of renown teachers and students from all the continents.

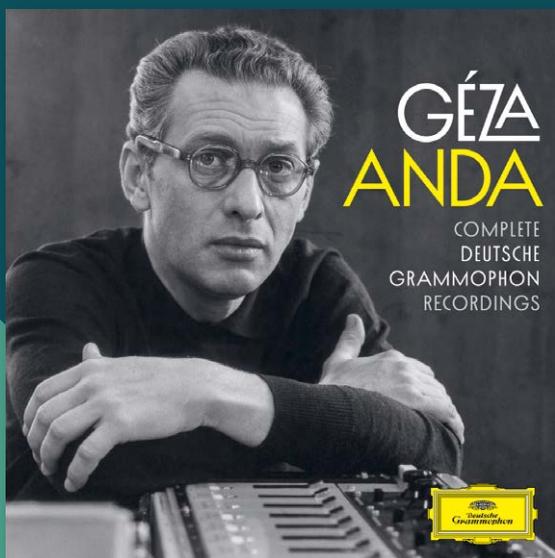
This fact was officially confirmed by the UNESCO secretary's office a few months ago with the official entry into the list of music creative cities. This is yet another fact confirming the city's musical background along with the centenary of the Music Association and a historic General Assembly of the World Federation of Music Competitions in Geneva. The hosts of the Assembly have prepared a short sightseeing tour that will familiarize guests with most interesting stories from the history of the city and the region.

AGATA SZPADZINSKA



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The International Keyboard Odyssey & Festival, U.S.A. (IKOF) is an eight-day summer piano competition and festival featuring over a dozen guest artists and pianists in daily masterclasses and presentations, mini-recitals, special discussion panels, the live Semi-final and Final Rounds of the Olympic-styled Odyssey Competition, and six nights of riveting concerts by internationally renowned pianists, including Van Cliburn winners.

IKOF is designed for pianists of all ages and nationalities, teachers, and the general public who love the piano and its repertoire. The Preliminary Round of IKOF is judged online; the Semi-final and Final Rounds of IKOF take place live in Fort Collins, Colorado on the campus of Colorado State University, and are free and open to the public. Fort Collins is located approximately one hour North of Denver, and within a one-hour's drive of the colourful Rocky Mountain National Park. The competition is open to Solo Pianists in four age levels: Level A (13 and below); Level B (14-18); Level C (19-23); Level D 24-35); and Concerto (Piano with Orchestra) in two age levels: Single Movement (18 and below) and Complete Concerto (All Ages). Winners of the Solo Division receive Gold, Silver, and Bronze Medals, cash prizes, and other awards. Winners of the Concerto Division are also invited to perform as soloists with the Boulder Symphony in Boulder, Colorado.

IKOF will celebrate its 11th season from Saturday, July 30 to Saturday, August 6, 2022 and will once again stage the Odyssey competition for some of the most talented young pianists from the U.S. and abroad, along with an impressive list of festival guest artists,

jurists, and pedagogues for the educational aspect of the festival, and an incredible series of evening concerts by world-renowned pianists. Artists for 2022 include the new 2022 Van Cliburn Gold Medallist; the exquisite Russian pianist, Zlata Chochieva; Tetiana Shafran, Gold Medallist in the 2019 Olga Kern International Piano Competition; Eva Gevorgyan, brilliant young Silver Medallist in the 2019 Van Cliburn International Junior Competition; Valery Kuleshov, Van Cliburn Silver Medallist; Ju-eun Lee (South Korea) and Kemal Gekic, the flamboyant, daring, and provocative Croatian pianist, and others.

Dr. Janet Landreth, Professor Emerita at Colorado State University and Founder/Executive Director of the International Keyboard Odyssey & Festival, U.S.A., coined and trademarked the term "Odyssey" to describe her vision for an international piano competition and festival headquartered and produced every summer in Fort Collins, Colorado. The word "Odyssey" comes from *Odyssey*, a journey, and signifies "A Journey to the Performance of a Lifetime." IKOF brings people together from all parts of the world, bridging cultural differences through the universal language of music. It is a multi-generational, multi-ethnic, multi-national piano performance event where throughout the weeklong event, competitors, performers, judges and community audience members gather to celebrate their mutual love for classical piano regardless of their country of origin, nationality, religion, gender or political perspective.

www.odyssey.com

PIANO FESTIVAL & COMPETITION

Odyssey 2022

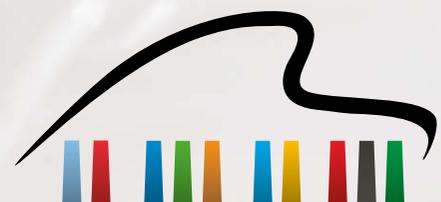
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JOCHEN MÜLLER

COMPETITION PROFILE

Prizewinners of the XI Darmstadt International Chopin Piano Competition 2017:
 From left to right:
 Piotr Pawlak (1st prize and ex-aequo improvisation prize, Polen), Yeon-Min Park (3rd prize and chamber music prize, Korea), Michal Szymanowski (4th prize and mazurka prize, Polen), Misora Ozaki (6th prize, Japan) Katarzyna Golofit (2nd prize, Polen), Xin Luo (Finalist, China), Angelo-Thomas Curuti (ex-aequo improvisation prize, Rumänien), Nagino Maruyama (5th prize, Japan).

XII Darmstadt International Chopin Piano Competition

Since 1983 the *Chopin-Gesellschaft in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e. V.* has been organizing Chopin piano competitions in Darmstadt, which take place every three to four years and have in the meantime acquired the status of a high-ranking international event.

Through these competitions the Chopin-Gesellschaft wishes to honour Chopin and his music, to further young talent and to never cease searching for ways leading to the best interpretation of Chopin's music. For almost four decades now, the competition has served as a steppingstone for a number of budding pianists to a successful career. Since 2009 (with 130 applicants from 30 countries) the Chopin Piano Competition in Darmstadt has been regarded by experts as being the most prestigious Chopin Competition after Warsaw:

"... as an international competition specializing in the works of Chopin there are few, if any, other competitions in the world which could be considered more important, except of course the Warsaw Competition itself..." (Kevin Kenner, the 1990 winner of the prestigious Chopin Competition in Warsaw)

"The Chopin International Piano Competition in Darmstadt takes a special place in the Music World. It is the most significant one next to the famous competition in Warsaw." (Gustav Alink)

The competition consists of three rounds. The repertoire in 2022 comprises études, mazurkas, waltzes and nocturnes in the first

round, followed by longer works in the second round but with the notable omission of sonatas op. 35 and 58. The guiding principle in the compilation of the repertoire was to include examples of works from different genres and periods of Chopin's life, while placing strong emphasis on his early works. For the first time, the final round will feature a string quintet rather than a full orchestra and will include some of Chopin's lesser-known works for piano and orchestra. Introduced in 2017 and to be repeated in 2022 will be the opportunity for improvisation on a given theme at the end of the first round with a special prize for the winner, but no penalty for weak attempts.

More than € 30,000 and concert opportunities await the six prize-winners, who will be selected by an international jury headed by Kevin Kenner. Applications will be accepted from April 1st. Application deadline is June 1st, 2022.

All further details in German and English about the competition are available here: www.chopin-gesellschaft.de



The Chris Maene Straight- Strung Concert Grand Piano

In the late 19th century, Steinway & Sons successfully brought to fruition the concept of the modern cross-strung grand piano. Ever since then, this construction concept has been imitated by all piano builders. It has resulted in a standardization of piano building and a uniformity of piano sound. As a reaction to this, the second half of the 20th century witnessed an intense quest for performance practices using historical instruments that bring back the greater sound diversity and transparency of older times.



As part of this movement, the Chris Maene Factory soon began specializing in building harpsichords and pianofortes, based on Chris Maene's renowned and unique collection of more than 300 historical instruments. This gradually led to the desire to build his own grand piano with different sonorous properties, aiming to offer a valid artistic alternative to existing concert grands. To accomplish this, Chris Maene went back to the original basic principle of straight, parallel stringing, where the bass strings are not crossed over the other strings but run parallel to them.

In 2013 Daniel Barenboim commissioned Chris Maene to build "the perfect parallel-strung concert piano". He wanted to reconcile the unique characteristic sonorous richness of the historical piano with the volume, clarity, power and playing comfort of the best modern concert pianos. In May, 2015, Daniel Barenboim inaugurated his new straight-strung grand piano with Schubert recitals in Vienna, Paris and London. The sound of the unique instrument was very well received by press, audiences and musicians alike.

By now the Chris Maene Straight-Strung Grand Piano is played all over the world by the best international concert pianists, and the Chris Maene Factory is building a full range of straight-strung



grand pianos. The Chris Maene Straight-Strung Concert Grand Piano is regularly used for concerts and recordings by artists such as Martin Helmchen, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Emanuel Ax, Eric Le Sage, Hannes Minnaar, Liebrecht Vanbeckevoort, Jan Michiels, Julien Libeer, Jef Neve and Bram De Looze.

Maene has a full model range, reaching from CM//228 and CM//250 to the full CM//284. In December, 2021, the newest model will be introduced: the Chris Maene Straight-Strung Parlor Grand CM//200.

In 2017, after the success of the Barenboim concert grand, Chris Maene decided to produce a line of straight-strung concert grands, offering to modern pianists a new and true alternative for the cross-strung grand pianos.

Maene in Utrecht

Rob Hilberink, CEO of Liszt Utrecht, was intrigued by the concept and visited the Piano's Maene headquarters in Ruiselede near Bruges, where he was introduced to the particular sound world of the Chris Maene instruments. Convinced by the artistic and technical qualities, he decided to invite the Chris Maene Straight-Strung Concert Grand as one of the competition brands for the participants of the 2017 competition. At that time, 2 out of 12 candidates chose the instrument for the entire competition.

Encouraged by the positive response of many renowned pianists, using those instruments for recordings and concerts worldwide, Chris Maene applied again for the 2020 Liszt/Beethoven competition but we all know what the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic had on global concert life, hence the competition had to be cancelled.

In 2022, Liszt Utrecht will have an innovative format as a competition, presenting itself as a true piano festival with different recitals involving both song accompaniment and chamber music. Now all candidates will have to play different piano brands assigned to the various rounds. The Chris Maene Straight-Strung Concert Grand has been invited to be the dedicated brand for the chamber music recitals and will be played in works by Schubert and Liszt. The



Selecting the pianos on stage in Utrecht

remarkable transparency and extremely colourful sound are the main assets of the instrument, being very well suited to bringing a perfectly balanced chamber music performance in the competition.

Prior to the 2022 competition, an academy will be organized for the selected candidates by the end of June 2022. During this academy, these candidates will be visiting the Chris Maene Atelier and they will have the opportunity to discover in depth the unique sound of the Chris Maene Straight-Strung Concert Grand.

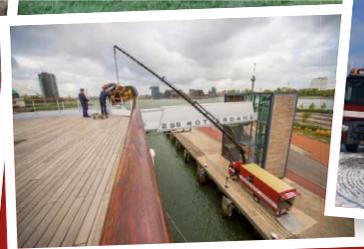
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Next
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Sunah Kim, a prize winner in 2021, with the Asasello Quartett (Rostislav Kozhevnikov and Barbara Streil, violin, Justyna Sliwa, viola and Teemu Myöhänen, cello).



SUSANNE DIESNER

Schumann Competition 2021

The third Robert Schumann Competition for Young Pianists once again took place in Düsseldorf this year. The competition was planned for the end of February this year in the Robert Schumann University with the final concert in the Robert Schumann Hall, Kunstpalast.

Despite Corona, almost 70 participants from all over the world have registered; of these, a jury admitted 44 participants from 28 countries to the competition. Due to the corona pandemic, the competition could not be carried out live in the originally planned form. Instead, the first two rounds were played online.

The competition management proceeded very carefully in order to guarantee real competitive conditions. All 44 participants, wherever they were in the world, were contacted and informed about the recording technology, the acoustic conditions, the type of video recordings and the electronic transmission, and provided advice on this. The recordings themselves were also checked to ensure that all competitors electronically recorded and transmitted comparable live performances. The jury listened to, viewed and rated the video recordings of the first round on December 19 and 20, 2020, and the recordings of the second round on February 25 and 26 of this year. A total of ten participants from three age

groups were admitted to the final round. Fortunately, the final round took place live on October 2nd in the Robert-Schumann-Saal, Kunstpalast. Eight finalists were able to take part in the concert, one participant from China and one participant from Russia were unfortunately unable to enter the country, but they sent a video recording that could be played in excellent quality in the Robert Schumann Hall. Due to corona, no orchestra was able to make music on stage, but instead the participants played chamber music with the Asasello Quartet. The program included works by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann and Brahms. The final concert was a great success: it was of a high level and enjoyed an enthusiastic audience. After this success under difficult conditions, it almost goes without saying that the competition will continue. The plan is to start March 2023 live at the Robert Schumann University with a final concert in the Robert Schumann Hall, this time with a full orchestra.

PIANIST

is a unique three-monthly magazine, published in seven countries in two special editions with different contents: one in German for Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Luxemburg and Liechtenstein and one in Dutch for the Netherlands and Belgium. The magazine is also distributed in controlled circulation in Eastern Europe with other European countries planned for the future.

Each issue includes interviews with leading pianists and rising talent, news, features, analysis, reviews and comment. We also publish in-depth articles on piano recordings and repertoire, piano brands, retailers, master classes on piano technique and interpretation, reports from festivals, competitions, and so on.

Our German edition was launched five years ago at the request of the Ruhr Piano Festival, and we maintain a close cooperation with the festival.

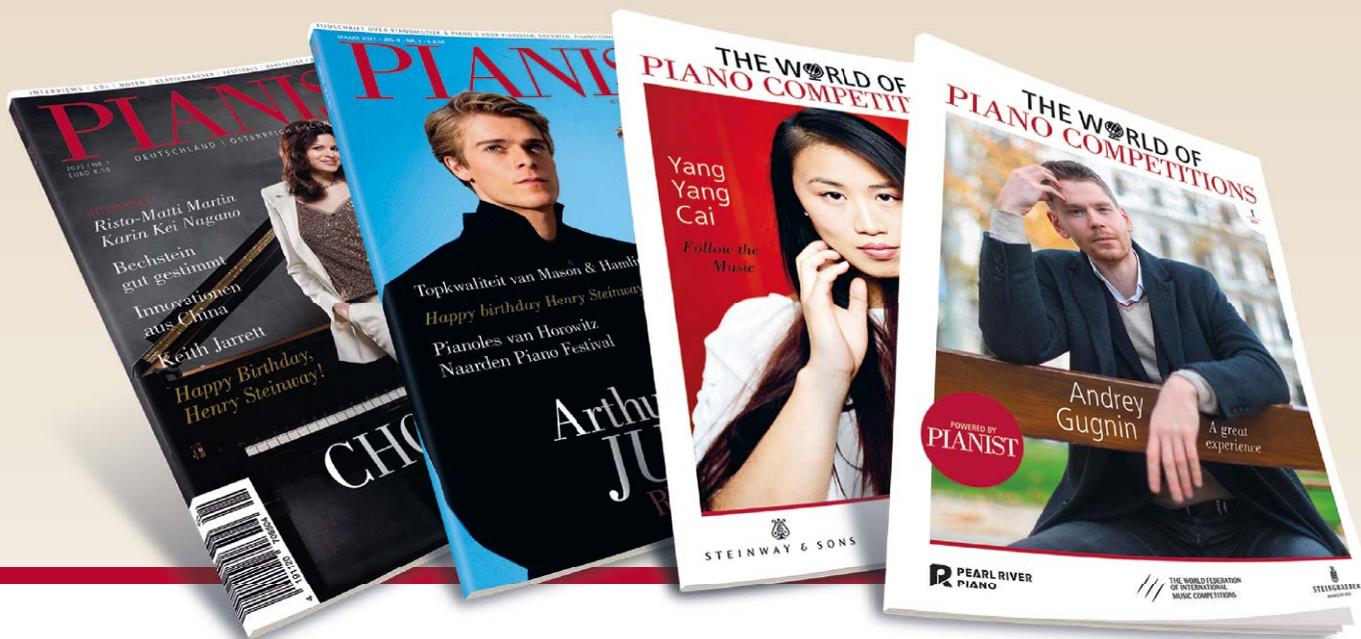
Upcoming edition of The World of Piano Competitions is published: September 2021
For all inquiries please contact: h.bruger@pianist-magazin.de

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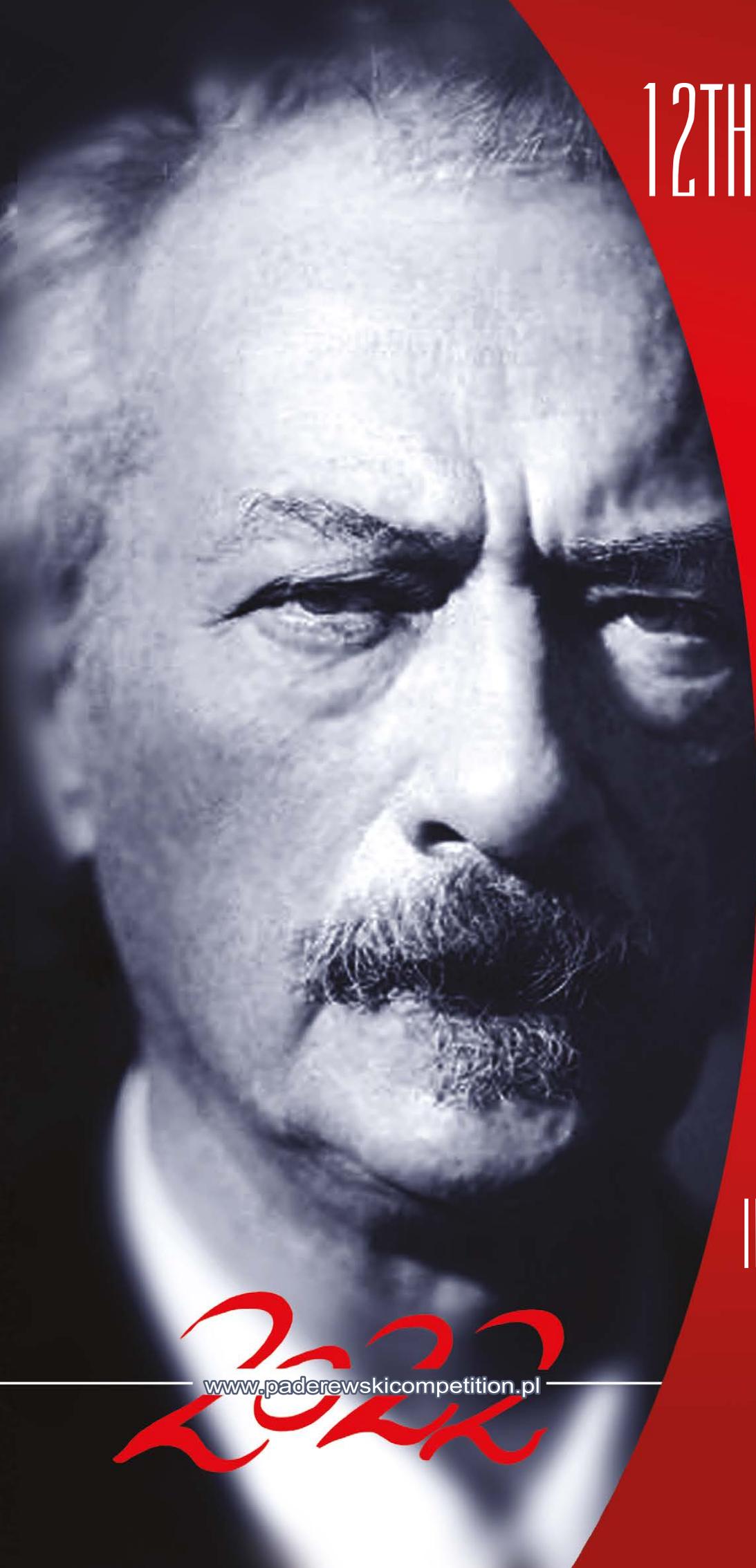


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COMPETITION

BYDGOSZCZ, POLAND
6-20.11.2022

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