

2023

Annual Report



PIANO
CLEVELAND

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



Dear Friends,

Maybe you remember the first time your fingers touched the piano keys: the feeling of joy that creating a melody inspired, or the feeling of awe that you could make music. Now, imagine that you harnessed that spark – even if you were only a young child – and chose to follow that path with a determined focus. With hours of practicing sandwiched between school and homework, each dedicated young artist has embraced their extraordinary talent, earning their place in the next generation of classical pianists.

This year, we focused on these brilliant young stars, presenting innovative programming that helped them grow as musicians and thrive as artists. Our partnerships with the **Cleveland Institute of Music** and the **Lang Lang International Music Foundation** created unparalleled opportunities for these young students to learn and develop their craft, while building relationships with fellow pianists that will last a lifetime.

Our commitment to youth begins here at home. We are providing free piano instruction within the **Cleveland Metropolitan School District** through our PianoLab program, reaching young students who are filled with enthusiasm to learn piano but otherwise do not have access to the instrument. Paired with our Piano

and Keyboard Donation Program and our expanding education projects within Cleveland schools, we are committed to ensuring that every student in Cleveland can experience the joy of piano.

In the following pages, you will see the power of your support in allowing us to create these transformational piano experiences for youth both here and abroad. As we look towards our **50th Anniversary Season** next year, we hope you will join us in celebrating the evolution of these young stars – and of our organization – through the 2024 Cleveland International Piano Competition and beyond.



Yaron Kohlberg
President



Marissa Glynias Moore, Ph.D.
Executive Director

2023 Goals



**PROVIDE
CAREER-DEFINING
EXPERIENCES**
for rising stars of the piano world



**FOSTER
THE LOVE
OF PIANO**
for local Cleveland youth



**CREATE
CONNECTIONS**
between young pianists
and Cleveland audiences



CLEVELAND
INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION
AND INSTITUTE



for Young Artists

Presented by   CLEVELAND
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC | In partnership with 



”

“Saehyun Kim

dazzled audiences and judges alike, winning First Prize for his sparkling technique, lyrical playing, and commanding stage appearance. Only 16 years old, Kim will certainly be a young pianist to watch over the next few years, as his career expands to match his extraordinary musical gifts.”

- Janet Landreth, Juror

Winner's Spotlight

SAEHYUN KIM (16), SOUTH KOREA



Growing up in South Korea, **Sae Hyun Kim** noticed a lot of “uniformity” around him.

“We all have to have a similar style of hair or similar style of outfits, similar style in taste of food or movies or anything. There’s always something that you have to follow.”

But as an artist, Sae Hyun yearned to share his musical individuality, something he found easier to do once he came to study at an arts high school in the United States.

“Here it’s a lot more diverse - it’s more about finding your own path in life, and I found that intriguing.”

There was another thing Sae Hyun found challenging about living in South Korea: the competitive atmosphere that kept him from engaging fully in his art. “I don’t think competitiveness and music go together.”

Strange words from a competition winner? Maybe, but Sae Hyun would disagree. For him, competitions are opportunities for him to **share his unique artistry** with engaged audiences around the world.

For Sae Hyun, nowhere was this experience more palpable than during this summer’s Cleveland International Piano Competition

for Young Artists, especially having the opportunity to collaborate with musicians of the highest caliber during his Final Round performances here in Cleveland.

“I think [Dane Johansen and Jessica Lee of The Cleveland Orchestra] are the best people I’ve ever played with. Whatever I did on the piano, they immediately reacted to it – like when I made sudden tempo changes or color changes. They’re very sensitive and I think we worked well as a team.”

While all of his performance experiences at the CIPC for Young Artists were “a dream come true” for Sae Hyun, it’s his big First Prize win that will make a significant impact in his career trajectory. In the next year, he will make his Northern Mississippi Symphony Orchestra debut in April, plus concerts in Paris and as a featured Guest Artist at the 2024 International Keyboard Odyssey® & Festival.

While new engagements mean new repertoire, this is a welcome challenge for Sae Hyun, one of today’s most exciting young pianists.

“I’m planning on building my repertoire and trying to find something new in myself. The most important thing is that I trust my relationship with music and believe in what I do.”

Conversation with Mike Tellin of ClevelandClassical.com and email correspondence

CLEVELAND
INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION
AND INSTITUTE



for Young Artists



213

applications



32

of the world’s best
young pianists



11

countries
represented



\$30,000

in prizes
awarded

Winner's Spotlight

ELISEY MYSIN (13), RUSSIA



Not every kid goes viral at five years old due to their astounding talent, but **Elisey Mysin** is not just any kid.

Showing an interest in his family's "big old black piano" even as a baby, Elisey began formal piano instruction at only four years old.

The next year, the world got its first glimpse of Elisey's musical prowess, as he was featured on a Russian competition show that gathered multi-million views on television and social networks globally.

In 2021, one of Elisey's performances again went viral via international music magazine Classic FM, who named him a "classical prodigy with a musical maturity beyond his years."

Now, at the age of 13, Elisey has over 300,000 subscribers to his YouTube channel, surpassing even Lang Lang in his reach.

While Elisey is still barely a teenager, he recognizes the immense pressure that comes with internet stardom: "When my music videos became more popular, I felt an even bigger responsibility for my performances and the emotions that I projected from the stage to the audience."

So where does his experience at the Cleveland International Piano

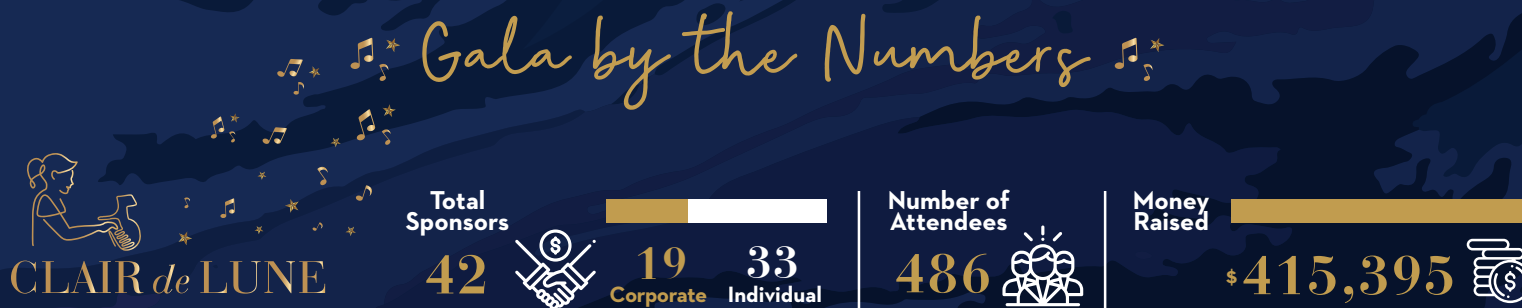
Competition for Young Artists rank amongst all of these accolades? "The Cleveland competition is one of the most important things in my life."

Elisey was thrilled to see himself on the list of participants, since "the best young pianists from all over the world were there." And the CIPC for YA was the perfect opportunity for Elisey to showcase his artistry, especially in the concerto round where he shared his "mastery of the instrument, the interaction with the orchestra and, of course, the message itself, that conveys the feelings and emotions in the music that the composer wrote."

But while Elisey's musicality has been heard across the world, he himself had never traveled to the United States before. To get to Cleveland, he had to travel for 48 hours across four flights. "The journey was the longest in my life."

Elisey praised his host family Laura and Erol Beytas for helping him get acclimated - alongside the "beautiful sound and special soulful energy" of the Steinway pianos he practiced and performed on - and is grateful to his family, teachers, and friends for the career he has built so far.

"People are willing to listen and understand the beauty of music and find something special in it. And I'm very happy about that."



Presented by Cleveland Clinic's Sydell and Arnold Miller Family Heart, Vascular and Thoracic Institute in honor of Dr. Gösta and Ninna Pettersson



”

“Elisey Mysin,
tiny in stature but musically
mighty...coaxed dark,
expressive timbres and subtle
details from the Steinway,
making him a young pianist
to watch.”

- *ClevelandClassical.com*



The Institute

This summer, Piano Cleveland partnered with the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Lang Lang International Music Foundation (LLIMF), two organizations who are leading the education of young pianists. Together, we presented the first edition of the **Cleveland International Piano Institute for Young Artists**. This innovative, ten-day intensive gave pianists ages 11-18 a first-hand look at conservatory training, combining top-level faculty, CIM's state-of-the-art facilities, and workshops that gave participants a unique insight into the career of a professional musician. The Institute welcomed nine promising young scholars from LLIMF along with twenty brilliant young artists from around the world for an unforgettable musical and cultural experience.



“Thank you for your wonderful work! My daughter feels that the Institute experience **has changed her life** and she is confident now that music should be her path.”

- Institute Parent



PianoPals gave local piano students exclusive access to Institute events where they observed world-class artists in masterclasses and recitals. They also connected with fellow piano lovers their age from all over the world through social gatherings and a pen pal program with Institute students.

Many of our **PianoPals** went on to serve on the Junior Jury where they put their newly acquired skills to the test, giving them a taste of what it takes to judge an international piano competition.

“Participating in the Junior Jury and Piano Pals program was a source of inspiration, propelling me to strive for perfection in my own playing.

Collaborating with globally acclaimed professional pianists, while listening attentively to the remarkable skills of young virtuosos, has encouraged me to improve and refine my own pianistic technique and artistic expression.”

- Evan Dan

Cleveland's Young Creatives

Connecting with today's local students in meaningful musical ways is a crucial part of our mission. We presented a variety of programs to seven Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) schools this year, which included week-long residencies of our Keys to Read program, and revivals of our highly interactive Musical Stories programs.

For the second year in a row, we partnered with Cleveland School of the Arts and the Cleveland Museum of Art to present **Alex and the Monsters**, a musical collaboration for dance, art, and music students.

Three student-only performances were attended by over **1200 students from 12 CMSD schools**, and the public performance had 350 people in attendance.



PianoLab

Launched in January 2023, the **PianoLab** program offers after-school group keyboard instruction using a state-of-the-art keyboard lab for children enrolled at Paul L. Dunbar Elementary, a CMSD school on Cleveland's near west side. Since its launch, **over 40 students** have begun weekly introductory piano lessons with CIM Doctoral student, Soo Ji Lee.

Since interest in the program has grown tremendously, plans for additional PianoLabs in CMSD schools are in the works!

What is your favorite part of this program?

"My favorite part of this program is learning new notes also learning new songs."

What do you hope to learn from this program?

"How to play piano very good."

The Audience Journey



15 concerts and events



1,966 in-person attendees



517,686 viewers worldwide



**Piano Cleveland
Social Club members
chat with Gabriela
Montero**

**Audiences “drink in”
some honky-tonk at
Phunkenship Brewery**



**A round of
applause for our
Listening Series**





“Two tickets to the Finals, please!”



Selfie time with 2018 CIPC for YA Winner, Eva Gevorgyan



Leszek Barwinski-Brown (Lang Lang International Music Foundation) celebrates at our Clair de Lune gala



”

“Outstanding! Excellent! Great opportunity for the whole community to hear fantastic music.”

Thanks to you,
we funded:

\$100

New digital keyboard for a
Cleveland-area student

\$200

Duo performance at a senior
living facility

\$300

Opportunity for local students to
work with an exceptional visiting
artist in a masterclass

\$500

Gift of a donated piano to a student
or community space

\$1,000

Hospitality costs of a visiting
international artist

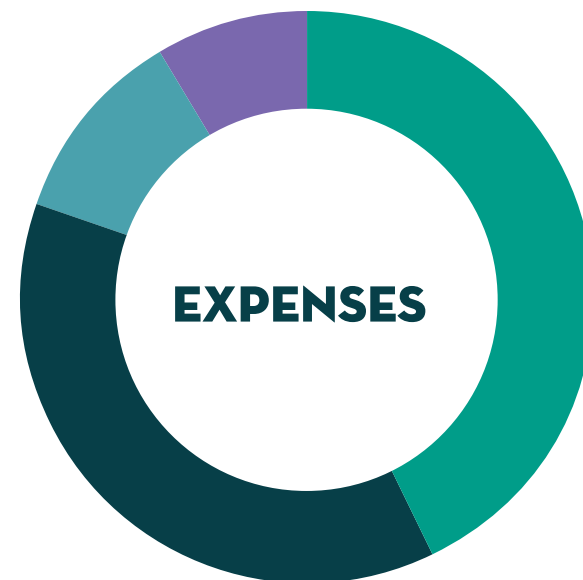
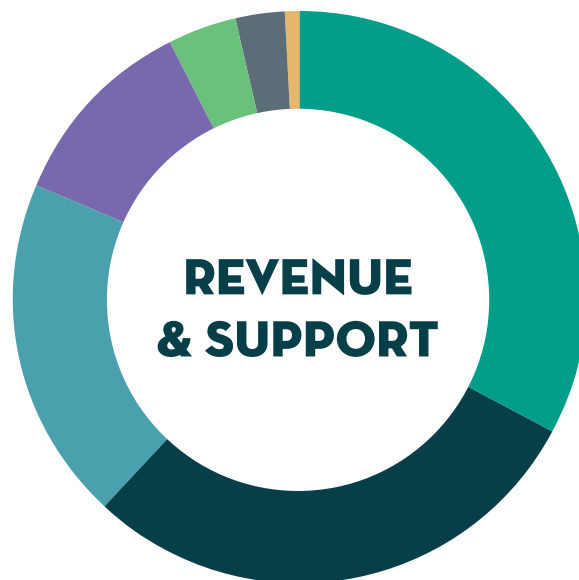
\$2,500

A CIPC Winner's performance in a
leading international venue

\$3,500

Semester of free piano instruction
for CMSD students

Our Financials

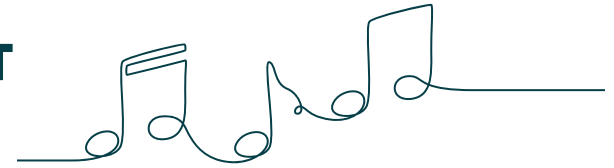


Individual Giving	\$463,269
Clair de Lune Gala	\$412,345
Foundation and Government Support	\$272,920
Earned Income	\$156,884
Sponsorship	\$54,030
Endowment	\$39,460
In-Kind and Other	\$8,841

2023 Programming	\$590,545
General and Administrative	\$517,430
Promotional	\$153,103
Office	\$115,027

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Gifts given from October 15, 2022 to November 1, 2023



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CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL **PIANO** COMPETITION 2024



It's our 50th Anniversary!

Every note is major for the incredible international pianists who will come to Cleveland for this star-studded competition. You won't want to miss hearing the next generation of pianists dazzle audiences through solo recitals, chamber collaborations, an intimate salon round and concerti with The Cleveland Orchestra.

**TICKETS ON SALE
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CELEBRATING
50
YEARS



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