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INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION

for Young Artists

July 24 – 31, 2026



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for Young Artists

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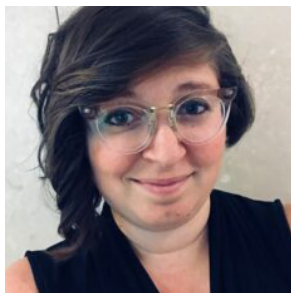
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A NOTE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Welcome to the Cleveland International Piano Competition and Institute (CIPC) for Young Artists! As the host organization of the competition and institute, Piano Cleveland is proud to bring in the world's top industry professionals and musicians in support of this summer's stars—the young artists.

Supporting young artists is not only something we do in this competition; it is an integral part of Piano Cleveland's mission and vision.

From our in-school group piano instruction to our piano and keyboard donation program, we recognize that when we put the keys within reach, ordinary kids can make extraordinary music. Hosting the Cleveland International Piano Competition and Institute for Young Artists is a natural extension of our mission **to build a better world through the transformative power of piano.**

Piano Cleveland's mission is made possible through the dedication of our board of directors, led by Dr. Linda McDonald, as well as the robust network of partnerships we have with the community. Our partnerships with Encore Chamber Music Institute, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History have made this year's competition and institute invaluable for our young artists.

Just as it did in 2023, the CIPC for Young Artists runs concurrently with our Institute for Young Artists—an intensive pre-collegiate program offering exceptional artistic training and mentorship from distinguished faculty and competition jurors. In hosting Institute students, the competition young artists, and the jury in the space of the Cleveland Institute of Music, we've created an environment where musicians from around the world learn from one another, exchange ideas, and build lasting friendships.

The knowledge and friendships these young artists will carry with them from our city back to their homes will shape the piano world. The work Piano Cleveland does this summer—the community concerts, the Institute, the competition—extends beyond Northeast Ohio; it defines the future of classical music and Cleveland's role within it. You, as an audience member, have a front row seat to what's ahead.

I am grateful to lead an organization in a city as vibrant as Cleveland with so many arts and education organizations dedicated to enriching the lives of our community. Thank you for supporting the arts. Thank you for being a Piano Cleveland patron. We hope to see you at many more of our events in the future!

Marissa Glynias Moore, Ph.D.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A NOTE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



Greetings!

I am honored to welcome you to the 2026 Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists. Like many of our audience members, I am consistently awed by the level of programming Piano Cleveland is able to secure and the extraordinary talent we bring to the stage. In particular, the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists transforms our city into the stage where many of us will be introduced to the names who will shape classical piano music for decades to come.

Perhaps the most extraordinary part of Piano Cleveland's programming is its accessibility. Throughout the year, Piano Cleveland hosts the best and most innovative artists during our free Piano Cleveland Live concerts. During the competition, we offer student discounts and host community concerts. We stream the competition rounds for free. Like many of our fellow Cleveland arts organizations, it's a core belief in our organization that the arts are for everyone. We believe in reducing barriers between audiences and art, ensuring our legacy is one of openness.

Piano Cleveland builds a better world by taking pianos out of the concert hall and into the community. And we see the transformative power of piano when audiences experience what would otherwise be considered a luxury or a dream. I am proud to lead Piano Cleveland, and I am humbled to work with my fellow trustees on the Board of Directors. I'm grateful to our esteemed competition jury and guest artists. Thank you to our community partners who share our vision and the Piano Cleveland staff who turn the vision into reality. And thank you for supporting Piano Cleveland and the future of the arts in Cleveland and in the classical piano world.

Linda McDonald, Ph.D.
BOARD CHAIR



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ORCHESTRA SERIES



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October 22-25, 2026

Joplin
Gershwin
Coltrane
Maple Leaf Rag, Sunflower Slow Drag
Overture to Girl Crazy
A Love Supreme
(arranged by David Balakrishnan, CityMusic Commission)
William Grant Still
Gershwin
The Black Man Dances
Rhapsody in Blue (Yaron Kohlberg, piano)

John McLaughlin Williams, *conductor*; Yaron Kohlberg, piano



December 10-13, 2026

Rossini
Vaughan Williams
Mendelssohn
Overture to The Barber of Seville
Tuba Concerto
Yasuhito Sugiyama, *tuba*
Italian Symphony

James Feddeck, *conductor*; Yasuhito Sugiyama, *tuba*



March 18-21, 2027

Dvorak
Mozart
Serenade in d-minor for winds
Gran Partita K. 361

Andrew Grams, *conductor*



America@250

May 13-16, 2027

Hindemith
Jessie Montgomery
Clint Needham
Milhaud
Rachmaninoff
Rachmaninoff
Kammermusik No. 1
LES Characters (CityMusic Commission)
Masumi Per Rostad, *viola*
'Cleveland Places' (CityMusic Commission)
La Creation du Monde
Scherzo
Vocalise

Méliste Brunet, *conductor*; Masumi Per Rostad, *viola*

CHAMBER SERIES

September 27, 2026

Peng-Reidhead-Hawersaat Piano Trio
Trios by Lili Boulanger, Rebecca Clarke, Clara Schuman

November 15, 2026

Amici Quartet
Including Ives Quartet No. 1, Jessie Montgomery Strum

January 17, 2027

Pantheon Ensemble

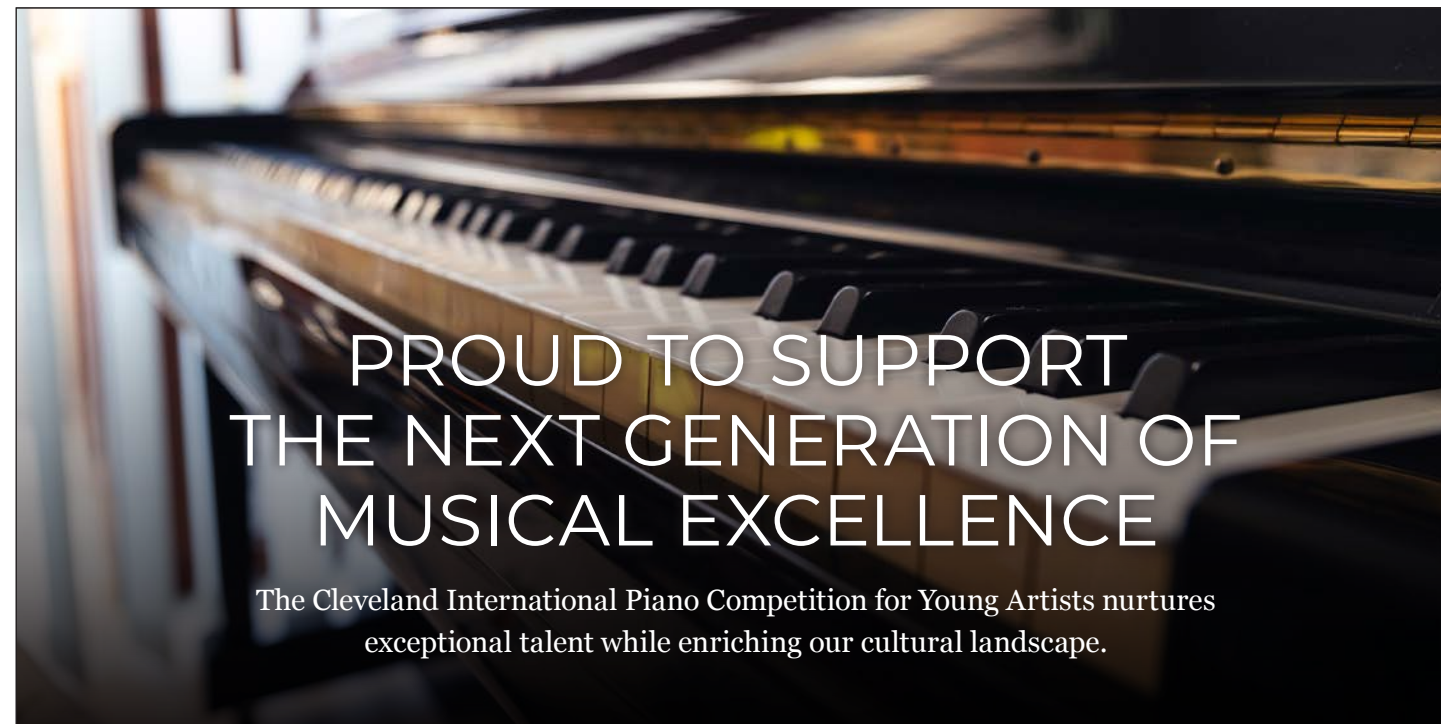
February 21, 2027

Haydn Seven Last Words

April 11, 2027

Benefit Concert: Four Seasons of Vivaldi and Piazzola
Featuring Amy Lee, violin
Cleveland Museum of Art

www.citymusiccleveland.org



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The Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists nurtures exceptional talent while enriching our cultural landscape.

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Schedule of Events

Piano Cleveland Live

Crocker Park

Friday, July 10 | 6:30 PM

Local professional artists take the stage at this favorite Westside hangout spot for a free performance showcasing pianist Marina Kerze and family, a piano trio featuring Dan Overly, and vocalist Natalie Green.



Piano Cleveland Live

Van Aken District

Friday, July 17 | 5:30 PM

Ohio's finest professional musicians perform a free concert at Van Aken District, featuring pianist Halida Dinova and students, a piano trio with Dan Overly, and the piano-vocal duo of Amanda Powell and Joseph Leaman.

Contestant Community Concert

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Tuesday, July 21 | 12:00 PM



Contestant Community Concert

In partnership with the Greater Cleveland Chinese Chamber of Commerce

Gilmour Academy

Tuesday, July 21 | 6:00 PM



Contestant Community Concert

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Wednesday, July 22 | 12:00 PM

Contestant Community Concert

Aurora School of Music

Wednesday, July 22 | 7:00 PM



Contestant Community Concert

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Thursday, July 23 | 12:00 PM

Institute Community Concerts

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Friday, July 24 | 12:00 PM

Tuesday, July 28 - Friday, July 31 | 12:00 PM

Semi-Final Solo Round: Session 1

Mixon Hall

Cleveland Institute of Music

Friday, July 24 | 7:30 PM

The Semi-Finals of the CIPC for Young Artists kick off with solo performances from Rising Star and Junior Division contestants.

Rising Star Division



Ethan Wang
11 | Canada

Junior Division



Eva Wang
15 | Austria



Jueon Lee
14 | South Korea



Yixin Shen
15 | China

Semi-Final Solo Round: Session 2

Mixon Hall

Cleveland Institute of Music

Saturday, July 25 | 2:00 PM

The Semi-Finals of the CIPC for Young Artists continue with solo performances from Rising Star, Junior, and Senior Division contestants.

Rising Star Division



Khloe Wu
11 | Canada

Junior Division

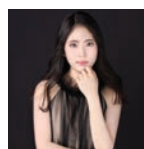


Yusuke Nagayoshi
14 | Japan



Ryan Huang
15 | Canada/United States

Senior Division



Yurim Kim
17 | South Korea



Chenxu Han
17 | China

STREAMING PARTNER



Semi-Final Solo Round: Session 3

Mixon Hall

Cleveland Institute of Music

Sunday, July 26 | 2:00 PM

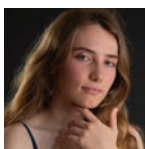
The Semi-Final Solo Round of the CIPC for Young Artists concludes with performances from Rising Star and Senior Division contestants.

Rising Star Division



Wilson Liu
12 | United States

Senior Division



Deva Mira Sperandio
18 | Spain



Guillermo Hernández Barrocal
18 | Spain



Yu Qin Lu
17 | China

Institute Masterclass with Alexander Schimpf

Presented by Dr. Malcolm and Vivian Henoch

Kulas Hall

Cleveland Institute of Music

Monday, July 27 | 2:00 PM

CIPC medalist and juror Alexander Schimpf (First Prize, 2011) gives a public masterclass for students at the Cleveland International Piano Institute.



Schedule of Events

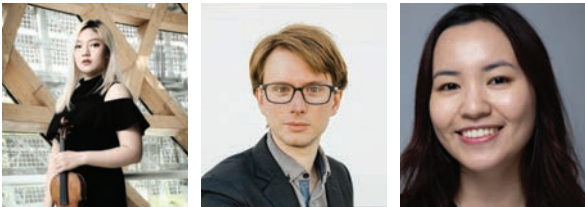
Semi-Final Chamber Round: Session 1

Presented by Jeffrey and Norma Glazer

Mixon Hall
Cleveland Institute of Music

Monday, July 27 | 7:30 PM

A night of spirited musical collaboration with piano duo and chamber music performances from Rising Star and Junior Division CIPC for Young Artists Semi-Finalists.



Semi-Final Chamber Round: Session 2

Presented by Jeffrey and Norma Glazer

Mixon Hall
Cleveland Institute of Music

Tuesday, July 28 | 7:30 PM

A night of spirited musical collaboration with piano duo and chamber music performances from Rising Star and Senior Division CIPC for Young Artists Semi-Finalists. The top prize winner of the Rising Star Division and Junior and Senior Division Finalists will be announced from the stage following the performance.



Final Masterclass Round: Session 1

Presented by Dr. Michael Frank and Pat Snyder†

Kulas Hall
Cleveland Institute of Music

Wednesday, July 29 | 4:00 PM

Junior Division CIPC for Young Artists Finalists will participate in a masterclass with renowned guest artist and CIPC laureate, Jean-Yves Thibaudet.

Final Masterclass Round: Session 2

Presented by Dr. Michael Frank and Pat Snyder†

Kulas Hall
Cleveland Institute of Music

Wednesday, July 29 | 7:30 PM

Presented by Dr. Michael Frank and Pat Snyder†
Senior Division CIPC for Young Artists Finalists will participate in a masterclass with renowned guest artist and CIPC laureate, Jean-Yves Thibaudet.

†Deceased

Jean-Yves Thibaudet in Recital

Presented by Dr. Michael Frank and Pat Snyder†

Gartner Auditorium
Cleveland Museum of Art

Thursday, July 30 | 7:30 PM

Piano luminary and Cleveland competition laureate Jean-Yves Thibaudet presents a recital of the full Debussy Préludes.



Final Concerto Round

Presented by the Walter and Jean Kalberer Foundation

Kulas Hall
Cleveland Institute of Music

Friday, July 31 | 7:30 PM

The CIPC for Young Artists concludes with the six Junior and Senior Division Finalists performing concerto movements with the Canton Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Steven Byess. The First Prize winner of the Rising Star Division will perform at the conclusion of the performance, followed by the announcement of Junior and Senior Division medalists.

Winners Community Concert

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Saturday, August 1 | 12:00 PM



Fantasia
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Fantasia Gala

Landerhaven
Mayfield Heights

Sunday, August 2 | 5:00 PM

An evening of dazzling performances by our newly-minted First Prize medalists of the 2026 Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists, some as young as 10 years old. Includes specialty cocktails, gourmet dinner, and fanciful desserts.

The Path to Victory

A NOTE FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Since 2003, the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists has been synonymous with prestige and innovation. This year's competition retains the competition hallmarks like the Final Concerto Round with the Canton Symphony Orchestra, while reimagining how a competition can impact the life and career of a young artist.

We have been known as one of the top competitions in the piano world for a few reasons. The prize packages offered by Piano Cleveland are among the most generous in the world and include performance engagements and career-development opportunities designed to support their artistic journeys long after the competition concludes. The competition is judged by a distinguished international jury who also serve as faculty for the Cleveland International Piano Institute for Young Artists. These lifelong professionals have extensive experience working with young artists, ensuring thoughtful evaluation and mentorship.

This year we have refined the competition and introduced new challenges to strengthen the contestant experience. I want to briefly focus on two of the most exciting changes.

For the first time, the competition has three age divisions—Rising Star (10-12), Junior (13-15), Senior (16-18)—allowing us to better reflect the different stages of artistic development represented by today's young pianists. The age divisions ensure each artist is challenged, supported, and evaluated within a framework appropriate to their level of growth.

Perhaps the most significant and exciting change to the competition is the addition of the Final Masterclass Round led by Jean-Yves Thibaudet. Our competition masterclass round is unique to the classical piano world. It's something you'll only find in Cleveland. We are especially fortunate to have an artist of Jean-Yves' caliber amongst the many great artists and professionals who make the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists a singular experience in the classical piano world.



I look forward to seeing you all at the competition!

Yaron Kohlberg
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Photo: Gregory Wilson

Selection

311 APPLICANTS

After receiving a record-breaking number of applications from 32 countries and regions, our Preliminary Jury watched more than 75 hours of performances and read every letter of recommendation. After a full week of listening and deliberation, 47 contestants (10 Rising Stars, 18 Juniors, and 19 Seniors) advanced to the First Round.

First Round

47 CONTESTANTS

In spring, each contestant performed a First Round program at one of our three recording locations: Beijing, Cleveland, or Hamburg. The performances were then streamed for our First Round Jury and the public on our website and YouTube channel.

Semi-Final Round

13 CONTESTANTS

This July, thirteen young artists will travel to Cleveland to compete in the two-part Semi-Final Round. All contestants will play a solo recital and chamber music. Junior and Senior Division contestants will collaborate with violinist Jinjoo Cho and cellist Max Geissler from ENCORE Chamber Music Institute, while the Rising Star contestants will perform with 2024 Cleveland International Piano Competition laureate Khanh Nhi Luong. The top prize winner of the Rising Star Division will be announced from the stage following the performance as well as the Finalists for the Junior and Senior Divisions.

Final Round

6 CONTESTANTS

Three Junior and three Senior Division contestants will advance and play in the first-ever Final Masterclass Round, led by guest artist Jean-Yves Thibaudet. Then, on July 31, all the Finalists will perform in the Final Concerto Round with the Canton Symphony Orchestra conducted by Steven Byess. The awards ceremony will take place shortly after the final performance.

Event Sponsors

We are so grateful to the following foundations and corporations for their support of our 2026 Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists.

Young Artists

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JINJOO CHO, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



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Featured Artists



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“Her tone is infinitely sweet...there’s brilliance and attack without histrionics...assertive, declamatory nobility at the start, the richness of her double-stopping, the grandeur at the bigger climaxes...energy proves really infectious and persuasive.”

– Gramophone Magazine

“An undeniable charisma and depth... intense lyricism and heartfelt tenderness sent shivers up the spine.”

– Times Argus

Jinjoo Cho | Violin

Sponsored by Jeffrey and Norma Glazer

Violinist **Jinjoo Cho** is a versatile classical virtuoso of the 21st Century. 1st Prize Winner of the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis in addition to Montréal, Buenos Aires, Schoenfeld, and Stulberg International Competitions, Jinjoo has performed on concert stages worldwide since the age of 11. Today, she continues to captivate audiences at renowned venues and festivals such as Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium, the Aspen Music Festival, the Gilmore Festival, La Jolla Music Society’s Summerfest, the Banff Centre, Festival de Lanaudière, La Seine Musicale, the Kronberg Academy, Schwetzingen Festspiele, Herkulesaal, Teatro Colón, and the Seoul Arts Center.

A charismatic soloist, Jinjoo has appeared with leading orchestras such as The Cleveland Orchestra, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Deutsche Radio Philharmonic, Orquesta Clásica Santa Cecilia de Madrid, Ensemble Appassionato, Seoul Philharmonic, North Carolina, Phoenix, and Charlotte Symphonies, collaborating with renowned conductors such as James Gaffigan, Kent Nagano, JoAnn Falletta, Karina Canellakis, Mathieu Herzog, Peter Oundjian, Michael Stern, Tito Munoz, Michael Francis, Moritz Gnann, Shi-Yeon Sung, Pietari Inkinen, and Clemens Schuldt. Jinjoo has deep love and appreciation for the chamber music repertoire, and cherishes sharing the stage with prominent artists of the globe such as Gary Hoffman, Andreas Ottensamer, Ray Chen, Itamar Golan, Roger Tapping, Jaime Laredo, Sharon Robinson, Vadim Gluzman, and Clive Greensmith. In 2021, Jinjoo formed Trio Seoul with pianist Kyu Yeon Kim and cellist Brannon Cho.

In addition to being an active performer, Jinjoo is a dedicated educator. She is currently an Associate Professor of Violin at the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University. Her previous teaching positions include the Schulich School of Music at McGill University, Cleveland Institute of Music, and Oberlin Conservatory. Jinjoo frequently serves on the jury panels of international competitions such as the Sibelius Competition (Finland, 2025), Indianapolis Competition (USA, 2022), and Schoenfeld Competition (China, 2024), as well as on screening committees for the Isang Yun Competition (Korea, 2024), Premio Paganini (Italy, 2023), and Montréal Competition (Canada, 2019). Her commitment to nurturing young musicians is inspired by her own mentors, Paul Kantor and Jaime Laredo.

Jinjoo’s dedication to music extends beyond performance and teaching. In 2015, she founded the ENCORE Chamber Music Institute in Cleveland, Ohio, a summer festival and seasonal residency series that brings together international artists and talented students for intensive learning and performance experience. Her creative ventures also include commissioning new works from composers Juri Seo and Andrew Rindfleisch, as well as collaborating with artists from other disciplines, such as dancer/choreographer Jinyeob Cha. In 2021, her debut book, *Shine Someday*, became a bestseller on major Korean book platforms.

A distinguished recording artist, Jinjoo has released six albums: *Novella* (SONY), *Toy Store* (Carrier Records), *Saint-Saëns* (Naïve Classique), *La Capricieuse* (SONY Classical), *The Indianapolis Commissions* (Azica), and *Jinjoo Cho* (Analekta). Described as “a delectable curtain-raiser” (*Strad Magazine*) and “finest silk thread of a violin tone” (*Rondo Magazine*), Jinjoo’s discography has garnered critical acclaim worldwide as well as commercial success.



Max Geissler | Cello

Sponsored by Jeffrey and Norma Glazer

Passionate and communicative, **Max Geissler** is a versatile cellist whose broad musical interests span multiple genres and disciplines. From performing in international chamber music series alongside distinguished artists, to premiering works by world-renowned composers with the new music ensemble Latitude 49, to historical performances on baroque cello with gut strings, Max’s artistic range is as diverse as it is dynamic. Currently, Max is the Assistant Professor of Cello at Butler University after previously serving on faculty at East Tennessee State University. Max spends his summers teaching and performing at ENCORE Chamber Music Institute and Kalmia Garden Music Arts Foundation, a non-profit organization Max founded and directs in Durham, CT, just celebrated its 12th season.

Maintaining an active presence as a performer, Max has been presented by prestigious international organizations such as La Jolla ChamberFest, Taipei Music Academy & Festival, Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival, and the Geneva Music Festival. He has shared the stage with celebrated musicians such as Lynn Harrell, Mathieu Herzog, Clive Greensmith, Mihaela Martin, Frans Helmerson, Jon Kimura Parker, Cho-Liang Lin, and Martin Beaver. Eager to expand the scope of the solo cello repertoire, Max enjoys collaborating with and commissioning visionary contemporary composers such as Theo Chandler, Hilary Purrington, Erberk Eryilmaz, Chen Yihan, and Andrew Rindfleisch.

When serving as Co-Artistic Director of Latitude 49, Max premiered works by dozens of composers, bringing to life a diverse range of pieces from inspiring student compositions to collaborations with Juno and Pulitzer Prize-winning composers such as Joan Tower, Juri Seo, Christopher Cerrone, Mark Kilstofte, and Jared Miller. The ensemble continues to perform in major venues each season, including the Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago’s Ear Taxi Festival, Constellation Chicago, Princeton Sound Kitchen, Bowling Green State University’s New Music Festival, and New Music Detroit’s Strange Beautiful Music, and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s The Cube.

With Latitude 49, Max has recorded and released five albums, including publications with New Amsterdam Records. The ensemble’s annual summer festival, Sound Atlas Sound Festival, presented at Contemporary Calgary, has been praised as “one of Calgary’s most exciting festivals to look out for.”

Max is deeply committed to cultivating a studio of young cellists who are engaged collaborators in their communities. In addition to his studio teaching at ETSU, Max regularly teaches at various academies and festivals such as ENCORE Chamber Music Institute’s Summer Academy and the Tennessee Cello Workshop, alongside distinguished colleagues from Northwestern, Rice, Indiana, McGill University, Oberlin, and San Francisco Conservatory. Max is also in high demand for teaching and performing residencies at universities including Oberlin Conservatory, Princeton University, Vanderbilt University, University of North Carolina School of the Arts, University of Tennessee, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, Colorado State University, Baylor University, and SUNY-Fredonia. Max’s students have been accepted into top-tier festivals and degree programs, and have earned prestigious awards in national and international competitions, including the From The Top audition, the YoungArts Competition, the Grand Prize Virtuoso Competition in Bonn, Germany, and the Johansen International Competition.

In 2024, Max received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. During his Master’s and Doctoral studies at Rice, he served as Desmond Hoebig’s teaching assistant and taught the university’s non-major cello studio. Max earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan under the mentorship of Richard Aaron and also participated in the University’s Arts in Paris program, where he took lessons with Michel Strauss from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris.

Featured Artists



Khanh Nhi Luong | Piano

2024 Cleveland International Piano Competition Laureate

Sponsored by Jeffrey and Norma Glazer

Vietnamese pianist **Khanh Nhi Luong** won Third Prize & The Lady Roslyn Lyons Bronze Medal at the Leeds International Piano Competition 2024. In the competition final, she performed Prokofiev Piano Concerto No. 3 with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Domingo Hindoyan. She has also performed this work with Kenneth Kiesler and the Michigan University Symphony Orchestra in the historical concert venue, 3500 seats Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor.

In recent seasons, Khanh Nhi has performed at the Sommerliche Musikstage Hitzacker festival in Germany as part of the Steinway Prizewinner Concert Series as well as solo engagements including Hanoi, Singapore, and London’s Wigmore Hall. An enthusiastic performer of new music, Khanh Nhi co-founded the Lunar New Year Piano Concert Series, showcasing music by Asian composers and advocating for cultural diversity.

Born and raised in a musical family, Khanh Nhi started playing piano at the age of four. In 2014, she was the only candidate chosen to study in Kunstuniversität Graz (Austria) with full scholarship, after a series of auditions which were held by the ASIA-Uninet and OeAD in the South-East Asia region. During her time in Austria, she was engaged in numerous performances throughout Europe, such as Bad Goisern (Austria), Karlsruhe (Germany) and Aarhus (Denmark).

Prior to winning Bronze Medal at the Leeds, Khanh Nhi garnered numerous accolades, including prizes at the Yong Siew Toh Concerto Competition (2017), the Lee University International Piano Competition (2021), the MTNA National Piano Competition (2023), and the Sicily International Piano Competition (2023), which awarded her a five-concert tour across Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom in 2024. Following her participation in the Telekom Beethoven Piano Competition in Bonn, Germany (2023), she was invited for a solo recital at the prestigious Mozarteum University in Salzburg, Austria, in June 2024.

Khanh Nhi obtained her Bachelor’s Degree in Piano Performance with full scholarship at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (Singapore) and Master of Music Degree in Piano Performance and Chamber Music at the University of Michigan-where she continues to pursue her Doctoral of Musical Arts Degree. Her teachers include Lan Huong Ngo, Prof. Otto Niederdorfer, Prof. Thomas Hecht, and Prof. Christopher Harding.



CLEVELAND-ISRAEL
ARTS CONNECTION
a program of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland

Roe Green, Honorary Producer

proudly recognizes past Israeli medalists of the Cleveland International Piano Competition

**Yaron
Kohlberg**
2007
Second Prize



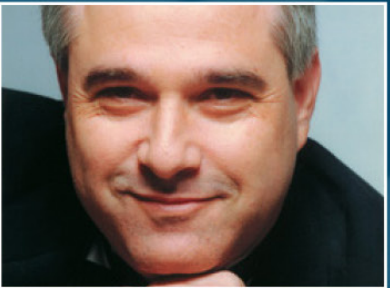
Amir Katz
1993
First Prize



Ran Dank
2007
Fourth Prize



Asaf Zohar
1987
Second Prize



Dror Biran
1997
Fourth Prize



The Cleveland Israel
Arts Connection is
also pleased to support
Ilana Vered, juror,
2026 Competition
for Young Artists



Bravo & Kol Hakavod!



Jewish Federation
OF CLEVELAND
HERE FOR GOOD

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MASTERCLASS ARTIST

JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET

Presented by Dr. Michael Frank and Pat Snyder[†]

Through elegant musicality and an insightful approach to both contemporary and established repertoire, **Jean-Yves Thibaudet** has earned a reputation as one of the world's finest pianists. He is especially known for his diverse interests beyond the classical world; in addition to his many forays into jazz and opera—including works which he transcribed himself for the piano—Thibaudet has forged profound friendships around the globe, leading to fruitful collaborations in film, fashion, and visual art. He is a devoted educator and the first-ever Artist-in-Residence at the Colburn School, which awards several scholarships in his name.

Thibaudet has toured with performances of Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F at the Colorado Symphony, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse, and Los Angeles Philharmonic. He performed another signature piece, Saint-Saëns's Piano Concerto No.5, with the Taiwan Philharmonic, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, Pacific, Kansas City, and San Diego Symphonies, Macao Orchestra, and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. A major contemporary exponent of Khachaturian's Piano Concerto, Thibaudet performed the piece with the National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, and Tonhalle orchestras.

In Seoul, with the KBS Symphony Orchestra, he returns to Scriabin's Prometheus: The Poem of Fire, which he performed last season in a synesthetic presentation with olfactory cues created by Mathilde Laurent of Cartier. He also appears as soloist on Liszt's Piano Concerto No.2, with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Münchner Philharmoniker; Leonard Bernstein's Symphony No.2, Age of Anxiety, with Shanghai Symphony Orchestra; and Ravel's Piano Concerto in G with the New Jersey Symphony and Palm Beach Symphony orchestras. Other season highlights include world premiere performances of two new works: Benjamin Attahir's double-concerto Hanoï Songs, with the Seattle Symphony, and Manu Martin's Cosmic Rhapsody, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; and the return of his program with Michael Feinstein, Two Pianos: Who Could Ask for Anything More? in Rome and San Francisco.

In addition to his orchestral dates, Thibaudet takes part in the Itzhak Perlman and Friends tour across California and a tour of Asia with longtime collaborator Gautier Capuçon. While visiting the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he will play chamber music with members of the orchestra. He also continues his multi-season focus on Debussy's Préludes, performing both books in their entirety at recitals across the United States; last season saw a reissue of his seminal 1996 recording of the Préludes on limited-edition vinyl with design by Vivienne Westwood.



A prolific recording artist, Thibaudet has appeared on more than 70 albums and six film scores; his extensive catalogue has received two Grammy nominations, two ECHO Awards, the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik, the Diapason d'Or, the CHOC du Monde de la Musique, the Edison Prize, and Gramophone awards. Recent recordings include Gershwin Rhapsody, a collection of Gershwin pieces recorded with Michael Feinstein, including four newly-discovered ones; Night After Night, a celebration of James Newton Howard's scores for the films of M. Night Shyamalan; and Carte Blanche, a collection of deeply personal solo piano pieces never before recorded by the pianist. Other highlights include a 2017 recording of Bernstein's Age of Anxiety with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Marin Alsop; recordings of the complete solo piano music of Debussy and Satie; Grammy-nominated recordings of Ravel's complete solo piano works and Saint-Saëns's Piano Concerti Nos.2&5; the jazz albums Reflections on Duke and Conversations With Bill Evans; and Aria-Opera Without Words, which features arias transcribed for solo piano by Thibaudet himself.

Thibaudet has also had an impact on the worlds of fashion, film, and philanthropy. He was soloist on Aaron Zigman's score for Wakefield; this was the first time the composer had allowed a pianist other than himself to perform his film work. He was also soloist in Dario Marianelli's award-winning scores for the films Atonement (which won an Oscar for Best Original Score) and Pride and Prejudice, as well as Alexandre Desplat's soundtracks for Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close and Wes Anderson's The French Dispatch. He had a cameo in Bruce Beresford's film on Alma Mahler, Bride of the Wind, and his playing is showcased throughout. In 2004 he served as president of the prestigious charity auction at the Hospices de Beaune. His concert wardrobe is designed by Dame Vivienne Westwood.

Jean-Yves Thibaudet was born in Lyon, France, where he began his piano studies at age five and made his first public appearance at age seven. At twelve, he entered the Paris Conservatory to study with Aldo Ciccolini and Lucette Descaves, a friend and collaborator of Ravel. At age fifteen, he won the Premier Prix du Conservatoire and, three years later, the Young Concert Artists Auditions in New York City. Among his numerous commendations is the Victoire d'Honneur, a lifetime career achievement award and the highest honour given by France's Victoires de la Musique. In 2010 the Hollywood Bowl honored Thibaudet for his musical achievements by inducting him into its Hall of Fame. Previously a Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, Thibaudet was awarded the title Officier by the French Ministry of Culture in 2012. In 2020, he was named Special Representative for the promotion of French Creative and Cultural Industries in Romania. He is a co-artistic advisor with Gautier Capuçon of the Festival Musique & Vin au Clos Vougeot in Burgundy.

[†]Deceased

Featured Artists

Canton Symphony Orchestra

The **Canton Symphony Orchestra** (CSO), was founded in 1937 and has grown from a community ensemble to a respected metropolitan orchestra with a profound commitment to education and community engagement. From placing instruments in the hands of young students to welcoming audiences into Umstadd Hall in the Zimmermann Symphony Center, the CSO brings people together to share the power of live orchestral music.

The CSO was led by music director Gerhardt Zimmermann for more than four decades until his passing in 2023. The 2026-2027 season will feature the five finalists for the position of music director and the CSO will announce its next music director in the spring of 2027.

The CSO is committed to making its programming affordable and accessible to people of all ages. Discounts are often available, as well as free concerts, programming for children, and performances at locations across the community. **To learn more, visit cantonsymphony.org.**



The Final Concerto Round of the Cleveland International Competition for Young Artists is presented by the Walter and Jean Kalberer Foundation



Steven Byess | Conductor

Steven Byess is a dynamic and passionate conductor, hailed by critics as “masterful and brilliant,” “creating the epitome of instrumental elegance,” and capturing “the full spirit and vitality of the score perfectly.” Recognized for his musical versatility, multi-faceted presence on the podium, and passion for music education, he is devoted to promoting a life-long love and enthusiasm for music and the arts.

Steven is the music director of Orchestra Nova Northwest (Portland, Oregon), the North Mississippi Symphony Orchestra, and the Arkansas Philharmonic Orchestra. He conducted the U.S. premiere of Russian violinist Alexander Markov’s Rock Concerto at Carnegie Hall in New York, and was selected by Walt Disney World Entertainment to conduct the 2000 NFL E*TRADE Super Bowl Halftime show, where he performed for a television audience of 88 million viewers.

As a passionate advocate for the arts, Steven is sought after for his speeches on the arts, music, and education, and has organized collaborations with numerous choruses, chamber music ensembles, and festivals. He wrote and co-directed a PBS presentation, Count On It!, designed to connect music and mathematics for children grades K-3. Since 2013, he has shared this passion with over 90,000 children around the country as a conductor of the Carnegie Hall Weill Music Institute Link Up orchestral education concerts.

A prolific conductor of opera from grand to contemporary, his performances include Puccini’s La Bohème and a critically acclaimed production of Robert Ward’s The Crucible at the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, Israel; Puccini’s Madama Butterfly with Greensboro Opera; Bizet’s Carmen with Emerald City Opera (Colorado); Copland’s The Tender Land, Sullivan’s H.M.S. Pinafore and The Pirates of Penzance, and a collaboration with composer Ricky Ian Gordon on his opera “27” with Intermountain Opera (Montana); and Weill’s Street Scene and Sullivan’s The Pirates of Penzance with the Eastman School of Music Opera Theatre. Steven has been a regular guest conductor at the Pine Mountain Music Festival in Michigan for their productions of Le tragédie de Carmen (Bizet/Brook), a highly acclaimed production of Leonard Bernstein’s Candide, collaborating with the composer’s daughter Jamie Bernstein, and Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte.

Steven is the former associate music director of the Ohio Light Opera where he conducted over 80 productions and 21 commercial recordings, including repertoire ranging from well- to little-known operas and operettas to blockbuster classic American musical theater works.

In addition to conducting over 40 symphonic performances in the 2024-2025 season, Steven has conducted multiple ballet productions of The Nutcracker, Don Quixote, and Giselle, productions of The Hunchback of Notre Dame and Les Misérables, and a memorial program in New York City for the Victor Herbert Renaissance Project celebrating the 100th anniversary of the passing of American composer Victor Herbert.

Previous Winners

2023 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION



First Prize
Saehyun Kim



Second Prize
Yanyan Bao



Third Prize
Ryan Wang

JUNIOR DIVISION



First Prize
Elisey Mysin



Second Prize
Qinyaoyao Ji



Third Prize
Zhonghua Wei

2018 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION



First Prize
Xiaoxuan Li



Second Prize
Shuan Hern Lee



Third Prize
JiWon Yang

JUNIOR DIVISION



First Prize
Eva Gevorgyan



Second Prize
Yunchan Lim



Third Prize
Hao Wei Lin

2015 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION



First Prize
Yuanfan Yang



Second Prize
Jiacheng Xiong



Third Prize
Chaeyoung Park

JUNIOR DIVISION



First Prize
Jae Hong Park



Second Prize
Leonid Nediak



Third Prize
Elliot Wu



Photos: Gregory Wilson

Previous Winners

2012 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION

First Prize
Arianna Körting

Second Prize
Albert Wang

Third Prize
Trenton Takaki

JUNIOR DIVISION

First Prize
Vanessa Meiling Haynes

Second Prize
Jarrett Takaki

Third Prize
Seoyun Baek

2010 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION

First Prize
Iris Jang

Second Prize
Arthur Erlendsson

Third Prize
Arianna Körting

2008 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION

First Prize
Margret Erlendsdottir

Second Prize
Kei Niedra

Third Prize
David Mamedov

2006 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION

First Prize
Yejin Lee

Second Prize
Yihao (Harold) Wu

Third Prize
Katrina Celeste Bobbs

2004 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION

First Prize
Stephanie Yang

Second Prize
Peter Liou

Third Prize
Konrad Binienda

2003 CIPC for Young Artists Winners

SENIOR DIVISION

First Prize
Ji-Yeon Shin

Second Prize
Joyce Oh

Third Prize
Peter Liou

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2026-2027
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Berta RojasGrgic and Kowolski

TY ZhangSlavic Sessions2026 Showcase Concert

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celebrating the
arts that bring
us together.

KeyBank is grateful for the creativity that enriches all our lives, and we're proud to support the arts. Thank you, Piano Cleveland, for making a difference.

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Opens Doors.

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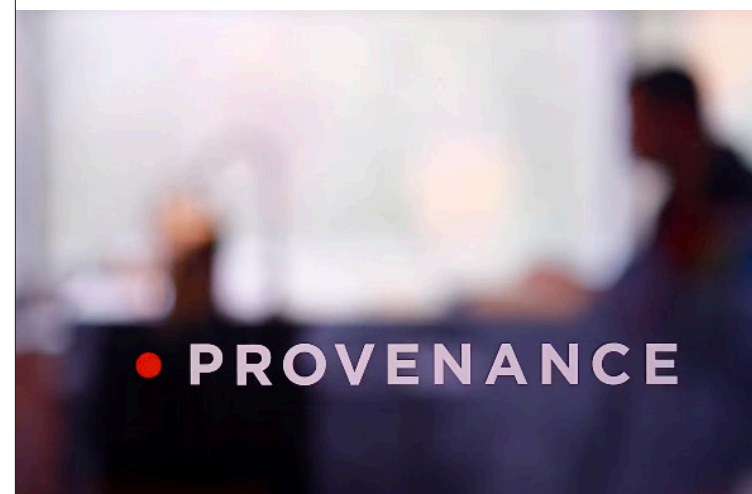
Piano Cleveland gratefully acknowledges
The Roe Green Foundation and Roe Green
for establishing **The Roe Green Travel Fund**.

This fund provides critical travel and
residency support for pianists participating in
Piano Cleveland's core programs and International
Competitions across a three-year artistic cycle.



PIANO CLEVELAND THANKS PROVENANCE

for generously hosting our CIPC for Young Artists Jury Members!



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CLEVELAND
INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION
for Young Artists

PRIZES

MAJOR PRIZES

*All major prizes are generously sponsored
by Martin and Maria Hoke.*

Senior Division | Ages 16-18

First Prize
\$10,000 USD

Second Prize
\$5,000 USD

Third Prize
\$2,500 USD

All Senior Semi-Finalists will receive \$750.

Junior Division | Ages 13-15

First Prize
\$5,000 USD

Second Prize
\$2,500 USD

Third Prize
\$1,500 USD

All Junior Semi-Finalists will receive \$500.

Rising Star Division | Ages 10-12

First Prize
\$2,500 USD

Second Prize
\$1,000 USD

Third Prize
\$1,000 USD



SPECIAL PRIZES

AUDIENCE PRIZES

Presented by Kenneth and Patricia Nilsestuen

Senior Division

\$500 USD

Junior Division

\$500 USD

REPERTOIRE PRIZES

Presented by Deborah L. Neale

Classical Prize

\$500 USD

Romantic Prize

\$500 USD

20th and 21st Century Prize

\$500 USD

PERFORMANCE
OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to monetary prizes, our Junior and Senior prizewinners will have several unique performance opportunities, including:

- Featured solo performances at Orchestra Nova Northwest and the North Mississippi Symphony, invited by conductor Steven Byess
- Full and partial scholarship opportunities at Musicfest Perugia, invited by Peter Hermes and Ilana Vered
- Engagements with Piano Cleveland

Travel funding for the pianists provided
by the **Roe Green Travel Fund.**

Rules and Regulations

The competition will consist of four separate rounds: Preliminary (all applicants); First Round (all selected contestants from all age groups); Semi-Final Round (13 contestants from all age groups, comprising 5 Junior, 5 Senior, and 3 Rising Star contestants); and Final Round (six contestants – three Junior and three Senior contestants).

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- Candidates aged 10-18 on or after August 1, 2026 are eligible to apply.
- All application rules found on the electronic application must be followed for consideration.
- Audition recordings should be made within the past year. The audition program must be submitted as one video, but the video does not need to be recorded in one take. Cuts between pieces are permitted. Edits made to individual pieces are not permitted.
- Contestants will be divided into three age groups: 10-12, 13-15 and 16-18. Contestants will only compete with fellow competitors in their age group. Age groups will be determined by the contestants' age on August 1, 2026.
- There will be a total of forty-six (46) to fifty-six (56) contestants chosen for the First Round. Ten (10) to twelve (12) chosen contestants will be Rising Stars, ages 10-12. Between seventeen (17) and twenty-two (22) contestants will be from the Junior Division, and between seventeen (17) and twenty-two (22) contestants from the Senior Division.
- All selected contestant names will be announced to the public in February 2026.

FIRST ROUND

- First Round Competition performances will be pre-recorded due to differences in time zones. During the recording process, contestants are only allowed to play through their performances once.
- Contestants will not be allowed to edit their First Round performances.
- Contestants will be allowed warm-up time before recording their First Round performances at the recording locations.
- Contestants accepted to participate will have to inform Piano Cleveland whether they plan to attend the First Round recording no later than four days after being notified of their acceptance.
- Candidates must assume financial responsibility for travel and stay for the First Round recording at their selected location.
- Contestants who do not advance to the final round may be invited to participate in the CIPC for Young Artists Institute, subject to application review by Piano Cleveland.
- All First Round performances will be broadcast for free in late March on Piano Cleveland's website and YouTube channel.
- The First Round Jury will watch performances in performance order during the official broadcasts of the CIPC for Young Artists.
- Jurors will submit scores via email to Piano Cleveland's Jury Facilitator within 30 minutes of the final session of each broadcast day. Jurors will meet to deliberate after the conclusion of First Round broadcasts via Zoom.

SEMI-FINAL AND FINAL ROUND

- All Semi-Finalists and Finalists will receive travel assistance for their own travel to Cleveland of \$500 each.
- While participating in the Semi-Final and Final Rounds of the competition, all contestants will be provided with housing, meals, practice facilities, and transportation.
- One parent/guardian must travel with each Rising Star contestant invited to Cleveland; housing and meals will be provided for said parent/guardian. Contestants from the Junior and Senior Divisions must have a parent/guardian sign a waiver allowing them to travel. Parents/Guardians that would like to accompany a Junior or Senior contestant will be provided a reduced rate at a partner hotel; cost for housing and meals are assumed by the parent/guardian.
- Rising Star contestants selected to come to Cleveland will only participate during the Semi-Final Round of the CIPC for Young Artists. The First Prize Winner selected during those performances will be invited to play community concerts and a brief encore on Friday, July 31 during the Final Concerto performances for the Junior and Senior Division.
- Medalists from all three divisions will be required to stay in Cleveland until Tuesday, August 4 to perform at Piano Cleveland's gala on Sunday, August 2 and participate in media opportunities.

PERFORMANCE

- All performances will be subject to program durations expressed in the Repertoire Requirements. Contestants may be subject to penalty for failure to adhere to these guidelines.
- All works are to be performed from memory and in their entirety, with the following exception: scores are permitted for the chamber music performance.
- Repertoire must be different for the First Round and solo Semi-Final Round. Contestants may choose select pieces from their Preliminary Round recordings to perform during the remaining rounds. However, they may not repeat more than one piece from the Preliminary Round per in-person program.
- Contestants may choose any work to present during the Final Masterclass Round (including previously performed repertoire).
- Submitted repertoire is subject to review by competition officials.
- First Round broadcast order and Semi-Final performance order are drawn by Piano Cleveland staff using a neutral randomizer and provided to contestants via email.
- Final Round performance order will be drawn in-person by Chair of Jury after Finalists are announced on Tuesday, July 28.

JURY

- The CIPC for Young Artists has three separate juries: the Preliminary Jury adjudicates the Preliminary Round, the First Round Jury adjudicates the First Round virtually, and the CIPC for Young Artists Jury adjudicates the Semi-Final and Final Rounds in person.
- Jurors from all three groups are provided with criteria to equally evaluate contestants. Appropriate criteria for each round are decided by Piano Cleveland leadership and the Jury Chair.
- Jury members will not make contact with contestants while such contestant is continuing to compete.
- Contestants cannot be current students to any members of the jury. It is preferable that contestants have not had a master class with a member of the jury within the past year.
- Any jury member who has taught a contestant within the last five years, or who will teach a contestant in the immediate future, or has a family relationship with a contestant, must abstain from voting on that contestant. Jury members may also waive their vote for personal or professional reasons. All declarations of abstentions will be made a month before the competition begins and will be maintained throughout the competition.

JURY [CONTINUED]

- All ballots will be written and signed without discussion and submitted to the Jury Facilitator. The Jury Facilitator will input scores directly without discussion.
- Jury members will not discuss their opinions and decisions regarding proceedings, marks, or rankings outside the jury room.
- Prizes will be determined by submitted scores.
- In the event of a tie, another vote will be held for the tied competitors.
- Semi-Finalists from the Junior and Senior Divisions are eligible for special prizes. To select the special prizes, the members of the jury will rank the contestants in order of whom they prefer to be awarded each prize. Should none of the competitors attain a majority of votes, then a further ballot will be held to decide between the competitors with the most votes.
- The decision of the jury is final and not subject to questions, revisions, or appeal.

GENERAL

- The names of the candidates for the first and final rounds will be announced to the public in performance order without regard to rank. After the final round is completed, the names of the finalists will be announced in order of rank.
- All announced prizes will be awarded.
- Prizes may be subject to U.S. income tax laws.
- Piano Cleveland holds the right to broadcast all rounds of the competition, except for the preliminary round.
- Contestants are eligible to request video files of their competition performances. Videos will be provided in Fall 2026. Piano Cleveland retains all ownership of video and audio recorded content of the competition.
- Piano Cleveland reserves the right to disqualify any contestant whose conduct, past or present, which in the good faith and reasonable determination of the Board of Directors of Piano Cleveland, compromises or is likely to compromise the reputation of Piano Cleveland or the Cleveland International Piano Competition.
- If any unexpected situations arise in the execution of these guidelines, the Jury Chairman, the Chair of the Board of Directors, and the Chief Executive Officer will resolve such situations.

CLEVELAND
INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION
for Young Artists

THE JURY

Preliminary Jury



Chu-Fang Huang

United States/China

First Prize

2005 Cleveland International Piano Competition

Recipient of the 2011 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Chinese-American pianist **Chu-Fang Huang** has won enthusiastic responses from audience and critics alike in extensive orchestral and recital appearances throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Right after being named a finalist in the Twelfth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 2005, Ms. Huang won First Prize at the Cleveland International Piano Competition. Besides being its first Chinese winner, Ms. Huang also swept every special prize the competition offered: “Best Performance of Beethoven’s Work”, “Best Performance of Chopin’s work”, and “Audience’s Favorite Award”. In the same year, Ms. Huang won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and was awarded the Paul A. Fish Memorial Prize, the Embassy Series Prize, the Lied Center of Kansas Prize, the Mortimer Levitt Piano Chair of YCA, and the Mortimer Levitt Career Development Award for Women Artists.

Since her Lincoln Center debut at Alice Tully Hall in 2005. Ms. Huang has given recitals at Carnegie Hall in New York, Kennedy Center in Washington DC, Kravis Center in Palm Beach, and major cities throughout the US including Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Fort Worth, Miami, San Francisco, and Cambridge. In Europe, she has been re-engaged three times at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, as well as the Klavier Festival in Germany and the Chopin Festival in Krakow. She has also performed at the Sydney Opera House in Australia, Suntory Hall in Japan, and the Beijing Zhong-Shan Music Hall, Fujian National Auditorium, and Liao-ning Grand Opera House in China.

Ms. Huang began studying piano at the age of seven and received a full scholarship to study at the Shenyang Music Conservatory’s pre-college division at the age of twelve. Upon immigrating to the States at fifteen, Ms. Huang made her U.S. recital debut at the La Jolla Music Society’s Prodigy Series. After earning her Bachelor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Claude Frank and Gary Graffman, she received her Master of Music degree as well as the prestigious Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School, as a pupil of Robert McDonald. Ms. Huang currently resides in New York City when not traveling, and serves as the artistic director of the Ameri-China International Music Foundation – a nonprofit organization devoted to bringing closer the musical cultures of the two great nations. Her dedication has been widely acknowledged by the industry as well as national officials. Ms. Huang was named one of Ten Outstanding Chinese Americans alongside Yao Ming and Wendi Deng, and has been invited to give performances and lectures at both the Embassy of China in Washington and the U.S. Embassy in Beijing.



Myong Joo Lee

United States

Pianist **Myong-Joo Lee** has been praised for her “shapely, expressive, songful performances that conveyed the composer’s emotional world,” and for her ability to “avoid virtuosic emptiness by placing phrases in context, sustaining crystalline sonorities...” (Cleveland Plain Dealer). Her playing has also been lauded for “a freshness and idiomatic rightness... a refinement that never neglected the stylized dance elements” (Arts & Letters, The Star).

A top prizewinner in numerous national and international competitions, Lee earned First Prize at the Pro Piano Artist Series Competition in New York and the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition. She has also been awarded prizes at the Guild International Piano Competition, Johanna Hodge International Piano Competition, the Cleveland International Piano Competition and the Chopin Kosciuszko Foundation Piano Competition, among others.

As a recitalist, Lee has performed in major venues including Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Carnegie Recital Hall, the Frick Collection, Orchestra Hall in Chicago, Cleveland Museum of Art, Flagler Museum in Palm Beach, Seoul Arts Center, and Young-San Art Hall in Korea. Her orchestral engagements include appearances with the Romanian Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, Memphis Chamber Orchestra, and Sewanee Festival Orchestra, with performances broadcast on WQXR (New York) and WCLV (Cleveland).

Lee is in demand internationally as a teacher, adjudicator, and clinician. She has given masterclasses and workshops across the U.S., Asia, and Europe and has been a guest artist at music festivals such as the Art of the Piano at the University of Cincinnati, Jeju International Piano

Festival (Korea), Taiwan International Piano Festival, and Music Fest Perugia (Italy). She frequently serves on juries for prestigious national and international competitions.

Her students, both at the pre-college and collegiate levels, have consistently won top prizes at major competitions including the Cooper International Piano Competition, Hilton Head International Piano Competition, Virginia Waring International Piano Competition, From the Top Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award, Los Angeles Philharmonic Bronislaw Kaper Award, Blount Slawson Young Artist Competition, Mondavi Young Artist Competition, MTNA National Competitions, and the Los Angeles International Liszt Competition.

Lee holds BM and MM degrees from Indiana University and earned her DMA from the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music, where she was Teaching Assistant to the renowned pianist John Perry. Her principal teachers have included Paul Schenly, Michel Block, Zadel Skolovsky, Sergei Babayan and Leonard Hokanson and has also worked with Claude Frank and Richard Goode.

Lee is currently on the piano faculty at California State University, Fullerton, and serves as Founder and Artistic Director of the Vancouver Piano Sessions in British Columbia, Canada. She has also held teaching positions at the University of Puget Sound, USC Thornton School of Music, and the Colburn Music Academy at The Colburn School in Los Angeles.

Preliminary Jury



Spencer Meyer

United States

Fourth Prize

2005 Cleveland International Piano Competition

Lauded for “superb playing” and “poised, alert musicianship” by the Boston Globe, and labeled “definitely a man to watch” by London’s The Independent after his 2012 Wigmore Hall recital debut, American pianist **Spencer Myer** is one of the most respected and sought-after artists on today’s concert stage.

He has been soloist with The Cleveland Orchestra, the Cape Town and Johannesburg Philharmonics, the Indianapolis, New Haven and Phoenix Symphony Orchestras and Beijing’s China National Symphony, collaborating with conductors Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Michael Christie, Robert Franz, Bernhard Gueller, Jahja Ling, Kevin Rhodes, Thomas Wilkins and Victor Yampolsky. His 2005 tour of South Africa included a performance of Beethoven’s five piano concerti with the Chamber Orchestra of South Africa, followed by six subsequent return tours. An in-demand chamber musician, he has appeared with cellists Lynn Harrell, Ralph Kirshbaum and Amit Peled, and enjoys a recurring partnership with the Miami String Quartet at the Kent/Blossom Music Festival. Other artistic partners include clarinetist David Shifrin, soprano Nicole Cabell, and the Jupiter and Pacifica String Quartets.

Spencer Myer’s career was launched with three important prizes: First Prize in the 2004 UNISA International Piano Competition in South Africa, the 2006 Christel DeHaan Classical Fellowship from the American Pianists Association and the Gold Medal from the 2008 New Orleans International Piano Competition. He was a member of Astral Artists’ performance roster from 2003-2010.

A graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory, The Juilliard School and Stony Brook University, he was previously a member of the piano faculty of Boston’s Longy School of Music, and is currently Associate Professor of Piano at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. He has released five CDs on the Steinway & Sons label – Piano Rags of William Bolcom, three discs with cellist Brian Thornton, and most recently the Four Chopin Impromptus.

Spencer Myer is a Steinway Artist.

www.spencermeyer.com



Daria Rabotkina

Russia/United States

Born in Kazan, Russia, into a family of musicians, **Daria Rabotkina** gave her first solo recital at the age of ten. Her education started at the Specialized Music School under the guidance of her parents, and Nora Kazatchkova. Later, it continued in Kazan State Conservatory and Mannes College of Music in New York City under the tutelage of Vladimir Feltsman. In addition, she holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Eastman School of Music where she studied with Natalya Antonova.

Rabotkina joined the piano faculty at the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2024, where she also serves as the Director of Academy Piano Studies. As guest faculty, she has presented masterclasses, private lessons and lectures at the Kazan State Conservatory. Passionate about early piano education, Rabotkina founded the FunKey Piano Project at Texas State in 2018, where she was an Associate Professor of Piano (2016-2024).

Concerto highlights include San Francisco and New World symphonies, Kirov (Mariinsky) Orchestra, Moscow State Symphony, Winnipeg Symphony, Hudson Philharmonic, Charleston Symphony, Harrisburg Symphony, Orquesta Sinfonica de Concepción and Turku Philharmonic Orchestra. Rabotkina has collaborated with Michael Tilson Thomas, Valery Gergiev, Vladimir Feltsman, Julian Kuerti, JoAnn Falletta, Benjamin Shwartz, and Giancarlo Guerrero. As a soloist, she has given recitals at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, Kennedy Center, Weill Recital Hall and Merkin Concert Hall in New York City, Ravinia’s Rising Stars, and Dame Myra Hess in Chicago. Her appearances abroad include China, Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, France, Mexico and Japan.

Winner of the 2007 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, Rabotkina received top prizes at several international competitions and participated in Russia’s White Nights, Finland’s Kuhmo, and Copenhagen’s Summer festivals. In the United States, Rabotkina has appeared at the Rockport Chamber Music, International Keyboard Institute, PianoSummer at New Paltz, and San Francisco International Piano festivals.

Her first three recordings were done with CAG Records as part of the Victor Elmaleh Collection. The debut recording features the Tchaikovsky Grand Sonata and Prokofiev’s Ten Pieces from “Romeo and Juliet.” Her second CD contains Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations and Schubert’s Moments Musicaux. Rabotkina’s third project involved live recording of three concerti. The latest CD (MSR Classics) with humoresques by Dvořák, Reger, Rachmaninov and Schumann was released to critical acclaim in 2018.

Preliminary Jury



Dongni Xie
China/United States

Pianist **Dongni Xie** is a distinguished pianist and prize-winner of numerous international piano competitions, including seven first prizes. Critics have praised her “bold and riveting” (Peninsula) and “bravura performance...mature and relaxed, perfectly in line with its composer’s presumed intention.” (Herald Tribune). She’s held performances at Carnegie Hall, Château de Fontainebleau (France), Dream Forest Arts Center (South Korea), Gijon City Hall (Spain), and the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, as well as a plethora of other venues throughout Europe, Asia, and the United States– being the featured soloist with orchestras such as the Boulder Symphony Orchestra, the Debut Symphony, and the Meadows Symphony Orchestra. Her recent performance with Mansfield Philharmonic was covered by NBC 5.

Xie has appeared as a featured artist at numerous international music festivals, including the Imago Sloveniae (Slovenia), Festival ARTIS (Slovakia), Shanghai Conservatory Music Season (China), the Summer Music Festival (UK) and the Sarasota Music Festival. An avid chamber musician, Xie collaborates frequently with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and The Dallas Opera at their chamber concerts.

Xie is an advocate for new music and has premiered many solo and chamber works in the genre. She is the Artistic Director of the “In Bloom” musiCON Concert Series in New York City and co-founder of Live! Again, a series that blends music with visual arts. She also founded Inóix, a jazz-classical fusion sextet that includes Grammy winning musicians. Xie actively supports music education and charitable causes, performing benefit concerts for orphans, refugees, and local charities, and volunteering with programs like OrchKids and Cliburn in the Classroom.

Born in Changsha, China, Dr. Xie has studied with Chen Jiang, Yong Hi Moon, Norman Krieger, Pamela Mia Paul, and Joaquín Achúcarro. She is frequently invited to give lectures and to serve on competition juries worldwide. In August 2025, she joined the faculty of the SMU Meadows School of the Arts.

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First Round Jury



Beatrice Berrut

Switzerland

Her musical roadmap seeks inspiration from the legacies of European spirituality and mysticism, excavating the broad landscape of the music of composers like Bach and Liszt to create a series of acclaimed recordings that serve as gathering spaces for her listeners to find common ground and shared experience. Her award winning discography and her new collaboration with refined and luxurious French label La Dolce Volta has a strong media presence and has largely contributed to establish her as an artist that counts in the European arts, by having her invited to interview and perform for TV shows such as Deutsche Welle’s news show, TV 5 Monde’s cultural show, France 3’ Victoires de la Musique, RTS, Classic FM or ARTE.

Being convinced that there is only good and bad music, Beatrice is fluent through the composing genres, and has been commissioned to write works for classical music series as well as for electro music festivals and for movies. Her music is rooted in European tradition—with a special hint of Ravel and Scriabin-like colors for their diabolic virtuosity—and mingles with ethereal influences from American minimalism and with the heroic rhetoric of movie music. Her creativity also has led her to remake songs by MUSE and Walt Disney Classics to make them sound like virtuoso piano pieces by romantic composers such as Rachmaninoff, Chopin or Liszt. As Mark Twain is supposed to have said: “they didn’t know it was impossible, so they did it!”

Both an iconoclast and an ardent defender of classical tradition, Beatrice’s strong will to democratize classical music and to overcome boundaries between genres has led her to create her own festival, where traditional classical music concerts meet klezmer, jazz or flamenco. She also enjoys collaborating with eclectic artists such as world champion ice skater Stéphane Lambiel for an upcoming magic-themed show that will explore the initiatory path of a youngster, or with contemporary dance Bonn-based company “Cocoon Dance” for a performance around Beethoven’s Geister Trio at the Bonn Beethoven Fest. She has been chosen by the Geneva Observatory and the European Space Agency to play her own character in a short-movie presenting the GAIA mission, where parallels are drawn between the tasks of a concert pianist and the ones of an astrophysicist.

Beatrice Berrut has been a Bösendorfer artist since 2013. This long and fruitful collaboration between the Viennese company and the Swiss pianist is the hallmark of the slightly different sound of Beatrice’s recordings.



Dorian Leljak

Serbia/Croatia

Dr. Dorian Leljak is Piano Professor at the Royal College of Music in London and at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad. He is the President of the World Piano Teachers Association (WPTA), the World Piano Conference (WPC), the WPTA International Piano Competition (WPTA IPC), Artistic Director of the International Isidor Bajic Piano Competition, Honorary President of the European Piano Teachers Association – EPTA Voyvodina, Executive Director of the Panopticum Musicum/Musica Ricercata Music Schools and Southeast Europe Representative for the ABRSM (London).

Dr. Leljak has won several international piano competitions (Rachmaninov Competition, Novi Sad Piano Competition) and has been awarded numerous prizes, including Yale University Mary Clapp Howell, Irving Gilmore and Parisot Prizes as well as the University of Novi Sad Merit Award. Dorian Leljak has studied with Arbo Valdma and Boris Berman (DMA, Yale University) and enjoys successful career worldwide as a recital pianist, soloist with orchestras and as a chamber musician, establishing collaborations with cellist Istvan Varga and pianists Ninoslav Zivkovic, Tijana Andrejic and Aleksandar Djermanovic. In 2002 he made his debuts in Carnegie Hall and Boston Philharmonia Hall.

Dorian Leljak frequently presents masterclasses and lectures worldwide and adjudicates international piano competitions such as Cleveland International Piano Competition, Top of the World Piano Competition Tromsø, Parnassos Monterey, Young Musicians Enschede, Scriabin Grosseto, Fausto Zadra, Neue Sterne Wernigerode, Carl Filtsch Sibiu, Spanish Composers Las Rozas, Euregio Geilenkirchen, Baltic Gdansk, Monopoli Barletta, Chopin Rome, Concours International de Piano de Lyon, Santa Cecilia Porto, Brescia Classica, amongst others.

First Round Jury



Nikita Mndoyants

Russia/France

First Prize
2016 Cleveland International Piano Competition

Mr. Mndoyants also has become an artist in residence at the Festival International de Musique de Wissembourg (France) since 2012, where he has overseen the performance of his own compositions and performed solo works, chamber music, and concerti.

Since his first concert with the Borodin Quartet in 2004, he has pursued his passion for chamber music with the Brentano, Ébène, Zemlinsky and Szymanowski Quartets. His partners include up-and-coming artists such as pianists Jonathan Fournel, Alexander Ghindin and Vyacheslav Gryaznov, violinists Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Andrej Bielow and Valeriy Sokolov, cellists Lev Sivkov and Evgeny Rummyantsev, and clarinetists Patrick Messina and Staffan Mårtensson.

Nikita Mndoyants is well established as an accomplished composer. His piano and chamber works are made available by publishing houses Composers, Muzyka, and Jurgenson, and have been performed by Alexander Vinnitsky, Alexander Rudin, Daniel Hope, Nicolas Stavy, the Szymanowski and Zemlinsky Quartets, Moscow State Symphony Orchestra, Musica Viva Orchestra and others.

Mr. Mndoyants has released solo and chamber recordings on the Classical Records, Melodiya and Praga Digitals labels. His solo recording on the Steinway & Sons label, featuring works by Beethoven, Prokofiev, and Schumann, was released in June 2017. He recorded his first CD (of a live performance in Helsinki) at age ten.

A recording of ‘Prokofiev’ for the French label Aparté was released in 2024 and has received the five-star review in french Diapason magazine. Nikita Mndoyants is well known on the airwaves of France-Musique Radio as well as Polish Radio.

Nikita Mndoyants received undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Central Music School in Moscow, where he studied piano with Tamara Koloss and the Moscow Tchaikovsky State Conservatory, where he studied composition with Professor Alexander Tchaikovsky and piano with Professor Nikolay Petrov and Professor Alexander Mndoyants.

Nikita Mndoyants is currently living in France.



Niklas Pokki

Finland

Dr. Niklas Pokki (b. 1976) is the founder and artistic director of the Mänttä Music Festival, Finland’s most significant annual piano event, which he has led since 1999. He is Head of the Piano Department at the Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki. Several of his students have won prizes in national and international competitions, including the Finnish-Cuban pianist Anton Mejias, whose debut recording on Deutsche Grammophon was released in spring 2024.

Pokki is also the co-founder and coordinator of the Youth Piano Academy Finland, a national talent education program whose students have, to date, won over 100 prizes in national and international piano competitions. The academy’s most internationally recognized alumnus is conductor Tarmo Peltokoski.

Pokki is an active masterclass teacher and lecturer, and he frequently serves on juries of national and international piano competitions. As a researcher, he has published in the fields of music pedagogy and music psychology.

He has performed as a soloist with orchestras such as the Baden-Baden Philharmonic and the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra. He has premiered works by composers including Jean Sibelius, Erkki Melartin, Kalevi Aho, Osmo-Tapio Rähälä, and Tõnu Kõrvits, and has given broadcasted concerts on Yle, Classic FM, Eesti Klassikaraadio, and SWR1, as well as made studio recordings.

Pokki studied at the Sibelius Academy and at the University of Music Karlsruhe, Germany. His teachers include Matti Raekallio, Teppo Koivisto, Erik T. Tawaststjerna, Carmen Piazzini, and Emanuel Krasovsky.

A portrait of a woman with short, wavy blonde hair and bangs. She has a friendly smile and is looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a dark navy blue blazer over a white t-shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

She participated in chamber music courses in the Netherlands (Queekhoven), England (DarVngton), and in Italy (Siena). For several years she was an accompanist during the summer course of the renowned violinist André Gertler and viola player Erwin Schiffer in Goslar, Germany. She accompanied violin, viola, cello, flute, saxophone, vocals and trumpet repertoire, and gave many concerts with various pianists as a quatre mains duo. She has performed on stage in Belgium, Germany, England, Poland and Portugal.

Some of her alumni are Mengjie Han, Gile Bae and Nikola Meeuwse. She is regularly invited to judge at national and international piano competitions for young piano talent, such as the Steinway Competition, the Princess Christina Competition, the Maria Campina Competition (Portugal), the Concorso Pianistico San Dona di Piave and the Premio Città di Imola (Italy). Since 2008 she organizes yearly the summer course of the Piano foundation Piano!Piano! for pianists aged 12 to 18. Next to teaching she is also the artistic director of this course.

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Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists Jury



Olga Kern | Chair United States

With a vivid onstage presence, dazzling technique, and keen musicianship, pianist **Olga Kern** is widely recognized as one of the great artists of her generation, captivating audiences and critics alike. She was born into a family of musicians and began studying piano at the age of five. At seventeen, she was awarded first prize at the Rachmaninoff International Piano Competition, and in 2001, she launched her U.S. career, winning a historic Gold Medal at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition—the only woman in the last 50 years to do so.

A Steinway Artist and Spirio Steinway piano ambassador, Olga is a laureate of several international competitions. In 2016 she was Jury Chairman of both Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition and the first Olga Kern International Piano Competition, where she also holds the title of Artistic Director. In December 2021, Olga was Jury Chairman of the 1st Chopin Animato International Piano competition in Paris, France. In coming seasons, she will continue to serve on the juries of several high-level competitions. Olga frequently gives masterclasses and since 2017 has served on the piano faculty of the Manhattan School of Music. Also in 2017, Olga received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor (New York City). In 2019, she was appointed the Connie & Marc Jacobson Director of Chamber Music at the Virginia Arts Festival.

Olga has performed with many prominent orchestras, including the St. Louis Symphony, Pacific Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Detroit Symphony, and the National Symphony Orchestra (Washington, D.C.), as well as Czech Philharmonic, Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, Pittsburgh Symphony, São Paulo Symphony Orchestra, Iceland Symphony, Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, Tokyo's NHK Symphony Orchestra, and Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra. She was also a featured soloist on U.S. tours with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra in 2018 and 2022, and during the 2017–2018 season, she served as Artist in Residence at the San Antonio Symphony. Highlights of the 2021–2022 season included performances with the Austin Symphony, Palm Beach Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Santa Rosa Symphony, Greensboro Symphony, Madison Symphony, New Mexico Philharmonic, Concerto Budapest Symphony Orchestra, and Academia Teatro alla Scala. She appeared as a soloist on a U.S. tour with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine and performed recitals in Savannah, Sunriver, Huntsville, Fort Worth, Carmel, and Minneapolis as well as in Portugal, Poland, and Sweden. In the 2022–2023 season, she appeared with the Dallas Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Orquesta Filarmónica de Gran Canaria, Ireland's National Symphony Orchestra, and Colorado Symphony. She performed recitals at the Minnesota Beethoven Festival and the International Piano Festival of Oeiras as well as in Brno and Mariánské Lázně, Czech Republic; Virginia Beach; Chicago; and San Francisco. In the 2023–2024 season, she performed Rachmaninoff's four piano concertos and Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini with the Austin Symphony and with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, appeared with the Czech Philharmonic on a nation-wide telecast, and toured South Africa and Asia.

In 2012, Olga established the Kern Foundation "Aspiration," which supports talented musicians around the world.

Olga's discography includes a Harmonia Mundi recording of the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Christopher Seaman; her Grammy-nominated disc of Rachmaninoff's Corelli Variations and other transcriptions; and Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Warsaw Philharmonic and Antoni Wit. Other notable releases include Chopin's Piano Sonatas Nos. 2 and 3, and SONY's release of the Rachmaninoff Sonata for Cello and Piano with Sol Gabetta. Olga released a new CD in 2022 on the Delos label of Brahms and Shostakovich quintets with the Dalí Quartet.

She is featured in award-winning documentaries about the 2001 Cliburn Competition: The Cliburn: Playing on the Edge, They Came to Play, and Olga's Journey.

Olga's iconic dresses are designed by Alex Teih (New York), and her jewelry is designed by Alex Soldier (New York).

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Shani Diluka France

Born in Monaco of Sri Lankan parents, **Shani Diluka** has been described as an "outstanding performer" (Figaro), endowed with "winged virtuosity" (Classica), "one of the greats of her generation" (Piano Magazine), and "masters the art of music" (Suddeutsche zeitung). She is a graduate of the CNSMD in Paris (with a unanimous 1st Prize and 3rd cycle as a soloist) and of the International Piano Academy of Lake Como, presided by Martha Argerich.

Guest soloist with numerous orchestras—the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Royal Swedish Orchestra, the Kyushu Symphony Orchestra in Japan, the Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, etc.—she collaborates with great conductors such as Gábor Takács-Nagy, Ben Glassberg, Lawrence Foster... A guest of the great concert halls, Shani Diluka has performed in recital at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, at the Sala de Sao Paulo, at the Auditorium de Radio-France, in Tokyo where she opened the Folle Journée, at the closing ceremony of the Verbier Festival, at the Vienna Konzerthaus, at the Salzburg Mozarteum, at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago, at the Roque d'Anthéron, at the Philharmonie de Paris, at the Wigmore Hall...

Her career has been nourished by prestigious collaborations with Natalie Dessay, Michel Portal, or the composers G. Kurtag, W. Rhim, K. Beffa, B. Mantovani, whose Five Pieces in homage to Paul Klee she created, but also with actors such as Sophie Marceau, Gérard Depardieu or Charles Berling. Passionate about chamber music, Shani is also a regular partner of renowned ensembles such as the Ébène, Ysaÿe, Modigliani and Belcea quartets.

Shani Diluka builds a bridge between East and West and represents an innovative vision of music through new projects such as "Cosmos," around Beethoven and India, or "Road 66." She is also passing on the legacy of great masters such as Leon Fleisher, Menahem Pressler, Murray Perahia, Valentin Erben of the Alban Berg Quartet (with whom she recorded the complete Beethoven collection) and Elisabeth Leonskaja, with whom she has been perfecting her skills in recent years.

Her recordings of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Grieg, CPE Bach and Mozart have received numerous awards (Choc de la musique, RTL d'Or, Choix d'Arte, Choix de Mezzo, 4F Telerama, Vogue Japon, 5 Diapasons, Gramophone, Fanfare USA, Diapason, Musikzen, Arena Award Japon...). In 2019, she joined the Warner Classics/Erato label with her album "Cosmos." In 2021, her "Proust album" around La Recherche du Temps perdu and the golden age of French music. In 2023 her album "Pulse" was released (on American minimalist music), and received international critical acclaim. In 2025, her album "Renaissance" was released by Warner Classics/Erato garnering acclaim from around the world.

Recently Shani Diluka has performed notably at the Théâtre du Châtelet, at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, and with the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Orchestre d'Avignon. She was named "Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres" in France and "Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite Culturel" in Monaco.

Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists Jury



Álvaro Teixeira Lopes
Portugal

Álvaro Teixeira Lopes, pianist, Artistic Director of Santa Cecilia International Competition (CISC) and Santa Cecília International Festival, invited Professor at Aveiro University, Director of Curso de Música Silva Monteiro (CMSM). Awarded with several prizes, he developed intense national and international activities as a soloist and chamber musician and has been invited to play in some of the most prestigious festivals internationally.

His students have won several numerous prizes in national and international competitions. Artistic director of several festivals, he has directed numerous Master-Classes in Portugal, France, Brazil, Taiwan, China, Spain and Italy (invited professor of Brecia International Festival and Summer Academy).

Frequently invited to join panels of innumerous piano competitions, such as Rina Sala Gallo, Iturbi, Compositores de España, Isidor Basič, Concours International de Piano (Lyon, Epinal, César Frank), Cleveland Virtualoso, Maestro Arts Taiwan, Porto Piano International Competition, Festival Internacional de Piano do Rio de Janeiro, and many others all over the world.

Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Casa da Música Foundation (Porto, Portugal), assigned by the Ministry of Culture.



Matti Raekallio
Finland

Finnish pianist **Matti Raekallio** can look back at a 50-year career as international concert pianist and a 45-year career as pedagogue in top schools, including the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, the Hochschule in Hanover, Germany, and NYC's Juilliard School, where he taught for 14 years.

He studied first in his home country and then with Maria Curcio in London, England, with Dieter Weber at the Vienna Academy of Music in Austria, and at the Leningrad Conservatory in Russia. He did his Doctorate at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Mr. Raekallio has performed complete cycles of the piano sonatas of Beethoven, Scriabin, and Prokofiev, as well as altogether 62 piano concertos. He has made about 20 CDs, including an acclaimed set of the Prokofiev Sonatas.

Many of his students have made big international careers as pianists, notably Igor Levit, Tony Siqi Yun and Antti Siirala. From Mr. Raekallio's studio have also emerged, along with several first prizewinners in major international competitions, about 30 professors in Europe, Asia and America. He regularly serves as a juror and gives master classes in the USA, Europe and Asia.

In 2022 Mr. Raekallio retired from his faculty positions at Juilliard and at the Sibelius Academy. Currently he lives in Helsinki, doing selective free lance work as teacher, adjudicator, and pianist.

Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists Jury



Alexander Schimpf

Germany

Sponsored by Dr. Malcolm and Vivian Henoch

First Prize

2011 Cleveland International Piano Competition

The musical publications called **Alexander Schimpf** an exceptional pianist early on in his career. In 2020, his long awaited first CD production with orchestra was published by CAVi music, documenting his long-term cooperation with Bayerische Kammerphilharmonie. For this transparent recording of the Mozart Piano Concertos K. 413-415 with a variable string lineup (under concert master Gabriel Adorján), Alexander Schimpf added his own stylistically confident cadenzas, which makes his personal involvement with Mozart audible in a special way.

After success in renowned competitions in Bonn (German Music Competition 2008), Vienna (1st prize International Beethoven Competition 2009) and Cleveland/USA (1st prize Cleveland International Piano Competition 2011), Mr. Schimpf established himself as a sought-after soloist on multiple continents. Despite his meteoric international success, he shows a remarkable calm, stating: “I am in no hurry with these things; they should get to take the time they need.”

His artistic development is founded, just as his interpretations, on the aspiration of a lasting significance. In addition to his involvement with the classical repertoire, Mr. Schimpf regularly takes a stand for modern and contemporary music. Over the past several years he has been responsible for about 30 premiere performances of solo and chamber music works.

Born in Göttingen in 1981, Alexander Schimpf graduated from his studies with Wolfgang Manz and Bernd Glemser. Later on, pianists Cécile Ousset and Janina Fialkowska were important influences. Since 2009, under the labels of GENUIN and Oehms classics, three solo

CDs including works by Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Debussy, Ravel, Scriabin, and others, were published. In 2013, Alexander Schimpf was presented with the “Bavarian State Award for the Advancement of the Arts” in Munich.

Invitations to piano recitals and solo performances with orchestras led him to perform in numerous German cities (among them Gasteig München, Konzerthaus Berlin, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Kölner Philharmonie, NDR Hannover, Beethovenhaus Bonn, Heidelberger Frühling, Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele) as well as Zankel Hall/ Carnegie Hall in New York City, Auditorium du Louvre and Salle Cortot in Paris, Konzerthaus Vienna, the Marinskij Concert Hall in St. Petersburg, and the Auditorio Nacional in Madrid. Radio recordings of his concerts were made for, BR, NDR, SWR, ORF, Radio France, and more.

His extensive tenure in the United States brought him work as a soloist with multiple symphony orchestras, as well as recitals in New York City, Washington D.C., Boston, Chicago, Indianapolis, among others. In addition to performances in most European countries, he performed in Asia (in countries such as Taiwan, Singapore, Vietnam, and the People’s Republic of China) as well as multiple times in South America.

As chamber musician, he collaborated with violinist Christian Tetzlaff, violist Nils Mönkemeyer, cellist Julian Steckel, baritone Thomas E. Bauer and the Armida Quartett, among many others.

In 2016 he was appointed to be professor for piano at the HMTM Hannover (Germany).



Israeli pianist **Ilana Vered** is worldly recognized as one of the leading pianists of her generation. From a young age Vered attended the Paris Conservatoire, which awarded her first prize in piano upon her graduation at age 15; among her teachers were Vlado Perlemuter and Jeanne-Marie Darré. She continued her music studies at the Juilliard School under Rosina Lhévinne. In 1961 she won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and the first prize at the Aspen international music festival and played with orchestra conducted by James Levine. The “Rockefeller Foundation Award” sponsored her first tours in Europe.

Vered has performed across the world with orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the London Symphony, the Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic, the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam, the Orchestra de la Suisse Romande, the Japan NHK Symphony Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic, the Israel Philharmonic, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Hougston Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, the Washington National Symphony, the St. Louis Symphony, the Halle Orchestra, the Scottish Orchestra. She has performed as soloist with conductors Leopold Stokowski, Georg Solti, Zubin Mehta, Rostropowitch, Rudolph Kempe, Kirill Kondrashin, Michael Tilson Thomas, Edo de Waart, Uri Segal, Andrew Davis, Leonard Slatkin, Jan Latham Koenig, Sergiu Comissiona, Fistoulari, James Conlon, Jiulius Rudel, Kurt Sanderling, Jean-Claude Casadesus, Hans Vonk, Gaston Poulet, Gary Bertini, Walter Weller, Kazimir Kord, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Gaetan Delogu, Herbert Blomstedt, A. Giovanninetti, A. Lombard, Moshe Atzmon, Kazuyoshi Akiyama, Mariss Jansons, David Shalon, Ligetti, James de Priest, Rainer Miedel, Gibson, Edoardo Mata, Max Rudolf, Hubert Soudan, Hugh Holff, Piero Gamba, David Epstein, Mung-who-Chung, Elgar Howarth, Janos Fust, Yoav Talmi, Louis Lane, Pinchas Steinberg, Jean Dixon, Erich Bergel, Erdos, Gusbauer, Laredo, Neville Marriner, Skrowachewsky, Raymond Leppard, Mendi Rodan, Sir Charles Groves, Lawrence Foster, James Judd, Paolo Ciardi, Avner Itai, Roberto Paternostro Matthias Bamert, Mariss Janson, Julius Rudel, James DePriest, Sergiu Comissiona and Osmo Vanska.

Ilana Vered

United States/Israel

Sponsored with support from the Jewish Federation’s Cleveland Israel Arts Connection.



She has performed as a chamber musician, and soloist, focusing on Frédéric Chopin and Beethoven works. Vered has also taught worldwide master classes and has founded two festivals, the summer-fest Series of Rutgers University and Music Fest Perugia in Perugia, Italy.

She recorded for Decca since 1970s. She made the world premiere complete recording of Moszkowski’s 15 Études de Virtuosité, Op. 72, in 1970. She also recorded the five Beethoven concertos as well as the Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2, Rachmaninoff Paganini Rhapsody, Mozart Concerto No. 21 and 23 and Brahms Concerto No. 2, in addition to many solo recordings.

Vered has been a guest on television and radio, including appearances on The Today Show, Good Morning America, and the Merv Griffin Show, as well as guest performances on Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) Public television stations in the United States and the BBC in the United Kingdom. Vered has made a series of feature-length films entitled “Looking at Music,” which was telecast by the BBC. These films are being distributed as home videos in the U.S. by BMG.

In 2006, Vered founded Music Fest Perugia, which has grown to become an internationally renowned classical music festival. It attracts top, aspiring young classical musicians from around the world.

Today, Music Fest Perugia is the largest classical music festival for young people in Italy. In 2024 hundreds of students from the top conservatories in the world attended the festival, and 120 played with one of their orchestras. Music Fest Perugia is known for its extraordinary faculty, which has included Garry Graffman, Jerome Lowenthal, Ian Jones, John Perry, Peter Frankel, Sergey Babayan, Alexander Korsantia, Arie Vardi, Michal Tal, Jan Jiracek Von Arnim, Natalia Trull, Eva Mei, Jennifer Larmore, Zakhar Bron, Uri Segal, Cristopher Elton, Boris Slutzky, Dan Wen Wei, Xin Xin, etc.

In 2023 Ilana Vered joined the piano section of the Jerusalem Academy of Music. As of late, Ilana Vered has spent her time Zoom teaching, with advanced students from all over the world. Many of her students have won prizes in prestigious international competitions.

In March 2025 she gave a masterclass at Jerusalem Academy, Buchmann – Mehta Academy and other conservatories in Israel.

Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists Jury



Xiaohan Wang
China

Prizewinner of the ARD International Music Competition (Munich), Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (Texas), and the Beethoven International Piano Competition (Bonn), pianist **Xiaohan Wang** has performed all over Asia, Europe, and North America.

Wang has appeared with many of the world's leading festivals, concert halls, and orchestras. He has collaborated with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, Israel Symphony Orchestra Rishon LeZion, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and all the major orchestras in China. He also collaborated with various musicians including Hilary Hahn, Ning Feng, Misha Maisky, Liwei Qin, Teng Li, the Jerusalem Quartet, the Takács Quartet, the Tokyo Quartet, the Juilliard Quartet, and Shanghai Quartet. He has been guest performer at Ravinia Festival, Beethoven Festival, Rubinstein Festival, the Hundred Pianists in the 20th Century Concert Series in Tokyo, and the Concert for the 22nd Anniversary of Sino-ROK Diplomatic Relation in Seoul.

In addition, Wang is also a composer and conductor, having conducted the Israel Symphony Orchestra and others. His composition *The Inspiration of Painting* was selected as the compulsory piece for the 2007 Beethoven International Piano Competition in Bonn.

A Steinway Artist and honorary professor, Wang has been dedicated to training outstanding young musicians, and many of his students have been prizewinners in music competitions both at home and abroad. He is frequently invited to give masterclasses and lectures at The Juilliard School, New England Conservatory, Hannover Hochschule für Musik und Theater, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

He also serves on the jury in many international competitions, including the Sydney Competition, the Isangyun Competition, and Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians. He's also the artistic director of Arthur Rubinstein International Youth Piano Competition, Singapore International Piano Competition, and Tianjin Juilliard Piano Festival. Wang is the head of the piano department at The Tianjin Juilliard School's Pre-College Division and tutor of graduate students at the School, and he is a Distinguished Professor of Piano at the Tianjin Conservatory of Music.

Wang began his musical education at the Beijing Central Conservatory of Music Middle School, where he studied with Jin Aiping, Li Qifang, and Zhou Guangren. He studied with Arie Vardi and Matti Raekallio in Hannover where he received his PhD degree from Hannover Hochschule für Musik und Theater, with a perfect score in academic performance, the first in the university's history.



Amy Yang
United States

A "jaw-dropping pianist who steals the show...with effortless finesse" (Washington Post), pianist **Amy Yang** aspires to affirm and advance connections between the arts and its communities through committed expressions of musical leadership on and off stage.

In the recent past, she soloed with the Curtis Symphony Orchestra under Osmo Vänskä at Marian Anderson Hall at the Kimmel Center; recorded the complete Schumann Sonatas (on fortepiano) with violinist Alexi Kenney; played with saxophonist Valentin Kovalev at Carnegie Recital Hall; toured throughout the U.S. with Merz Trio; gave world premieres of pieces by Steve Mackey and Richard Danielpour; taught as faculty of New York Youth Symphony, Dallas Chamber Music Society, Chamber Music Athens, Norfolk, Borromeo and Olympic Music Festivals; played for patients at Penn Memory Center and the ICUs of UW Hospital; recorded for Curtis Studio's new release—*A Century of New Sounds*—with David Shifrin and Patrick Williams; played solo recitals of Brahms, the Schumanns, Rorem, Ligeti; and appeared on series and festivals such as Spoleto, Chamberfest Cleveland, Texas Music Festival, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Seattle Chamber Music Series, Music Middays, Santa Fe Music Festival, Kingston Chamber Music Festival, Bridgehampton, amongst others. At the Curtis Institute of Music, she serves as the Director of Chamber Music and Piano Studies.

In the height of the pandemic in 2020, she was invited by Anne-Marie McDermott to share a unique summer of 41 concerts with Yefim Bronfman, Paul Neubauer, and the Dover Quartet in a myriad of performances at Bravo! Vail. Additionally, she gave her debut solo recital as well as joined forces with the Jasper String Quartet in piano quintets by Tania Léon and Joan Tower for Philadelphia Chamber Music Society's 35th season. She was also featured in a full episode with Emmy® Award-winning producer Jim Cotter of *Articulate*, aired on PBS in 2021.

Collaborating with trailblazing musicians, Amy toured with Patricia Kopatchinskaya, Tito Muñoz and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, and premiered a large chamber work by Michael Hersch at Cal Performances, Ojai Music Festival and Aldeburgh Festival. She has had the privilege to share stages (and benches) with Richard Goode, Anne-Marie McDermott, Ida and Ani Kavafian, Miriam Fried, Hsin-Yun Huang, Paul Huang, Alexi Kenney, Bomsori Kim, Tessa Lark, Roberto Díaz, Kim Kashkashian, Paul Neubauer, Tara Helen O'Connor, David Shifrin, Joseph Silverstein, Philippe Tondre, Danbi Um, members of Guarneri String Quartet, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Dover Quartet, Aizuri String Quartet, Jasper String Quartet and A Far Cry. In addition to working with Dame Mitsuko Uchida at Marlboro School of Music, she was chosen to participate in her Carnegie Hall Workshop on Mozart's Piano Concerti.

Amy's energetic exploration of contemporary voices has brought forth giving world premieres of music by Caroline Shaw, Richard Danielpour, Avner Dorman, Michael Hersch, Ezra Laderman, Paul Wianko, and commissions from Scott Ordway, Edward Babcock, Alistair Coleman and Hua Yang. Festival experiences include Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia Festival, Prussia Cove, Verbier Academy, Bravo! Vail, Chamber Music Northwest, Chelsea Music Festival, Caramoor, Wigmore Hall, Gardner Museum, Cal Performances, Rockport Music Festival, Music from Angel Fire, Hawaii Concert Society, Coastal Concerts (DE), and Saltbay Chamberfest. She has loved soloing alongside the collective voices of Houston Symphony, Tuscaloosa Symphony, Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, Mansfield Symphony and Orquesta Juvenil Universitaria Eduardo Mata at UNAM.

Her discography includes her solo album *Resonance* (MSR Classics), a world premiere recording of piano music by Ezra Laderman (Albany Records), a world premiere recording of Michael Hersch's *I hope we get a chance to visit soon* (Live from Aldeburgh Festival, New Focus Records), Curtis Studio's *A Century of New Sounds* with David Shifrin and Patrick Williams, and albums with violinists Itamar Zorman (BIS Records), Tessa Lark (First Hand Records), Danbi Um (Avie Records), Carol Jantsch, and José Franch-Ballester (iTinerant Records).

Amy is an alumna of the Curtis Institute of Music, the Juilliard School, and the Yale School of Music, where she received the Parisot Award for Outstanding Pianist and the Alumni Association Prize. Her past teachers include Li Qing, Timothy Hester, Claude Frank, Robert McDonald, and Peter Frankl. Ardent to champion young voices on this pedagogical legacy, her own students have soloed with the Philadelphia Orchestra and entered Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Bard Conservatory, Vanderbilt University Blair School of Music, Eastman School of Music, Peabody Institute, and Indiana University. She has given masterclasses at UCLA, Mannes College of Music, University of Oklahoma, The Suzuki School, and for New York Youth Symphony. She won the 2018 Musical Fund Society prize and the Kosciuszko National Chopin Piano Competition. At Curtis Institute of Music, she previously held the roles of program director and faculty of Curtis Summerfest's Young Artist Summer Program for nine summers.

CLEVELAND
INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION
for Young Artists

THE CONTESTANTS



Wilson Liu | 12
United States

Pianist **WILSON LIU**, from California, was admitted to the Juilliard School Pre-College Division at age seven, where he received the Bachauer Prize with a full scholarship and won the Concerto Competition. He currently studies with Hung-Kuan Chen and Tema Blackstone.

Wilson was nominated into the Artemisia Foundation, where he worked with distinguished pedagogues such as Jerome Lowenthal, Veda Kaplinsky, and Misha Voskressenski, and collaborated with opera star Leah Hawkins.

At age nine, Wilson appeared on PBS's Great Performances: Now Hear This. Representing the youngest generation of artists, he was also invited to perform at Juilliard's annual scholarship benefit, the school's largest celebration event, where he received high acclaim.

A 2025-26 From the Top fellow, Wilson's music and interviews will be featured on NPR broadcasts, podcasts, and social media platforms.

Since beginning his piano studies, Wilson has earned top prizes in numerous competitions, including the Kaufman Music Center International Youth Piano Competition, XIV Chopin International Piano Competition (Hartford, CT), and Chicago International Music Competition. As the youngest contestant, he won both the International Young Artist Concerto Competition (Chicago, 2025) and the Young Artist Concerto Competition (Vancouver, WA, 2025), leading to upcoming performances with Seen Worldwide, NPO, and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in Washington.

Most recently, Wilson won the Nashville International Chopin Piano Competition (2025), receiving the Junior Alexei Sultanov Prize, an honor created especially for him.

Wilson deeply values the joy and growth he experiences in preparing for performances and looks forward to continuing to learn and share music with his fellow pianists.

REPERTOIRE

Rising Star Final Solo Round

J.P. Rameau	Suite in A Minor, RCT 5 VII. Gavotte and et six doubles
W.A. Mozart	Sonata No. 9 in D Major, K. 311 I. Allegro con spirito
F. Chopin	Mazurka in A Minor, Op. 17, No. 4

Rising Star Final Chamber Round

W.A. Mozart	Sonata for Four Hands in C Major, K. 521 I. Allegro
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Ethan Wang | 11
Canada

ETHAN WANG began his piano studies at the age of four and has demonstrated exceptional musical focus and artistry from a very young age. He is currently studying with Nicolas Namoradze, and previously studied under the guidance of Marilyn Engle in Calgary, Canada.

Ethan has received top recognition at both international and national levels. In 2025, he won First Prize at the Nashville International Chopin Piano Competition (Young Musician I Division) and First Prize at the International Piano Competition for Young Pianists in Kronberg, Germany (Age Group III: 9-11). He also earned Second Prize at the 32nd International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition for Children and Youth in Szafarnia, Poland (Age Group I). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ethan was awarded the Absolute First Prize at the 3rd Great Piano Masters Competition (Spain) and received a Gold Prize at the 4th Vienna International Music Competition.

In Canada, Ethan won the Grand Prize in the 7-10 age group at the 2025 Canadian Music Competition (CMC) National Finals and has placed first or second for three consecutive years at the CMC. He also received Second Prize in the Junior Division of the Canadian Chopin Competition, where he was the youngest finalist.

Ethan has performed extensively in solo and orchestral settings. Performance highlights include his orchestral debut with the Rocky Mountain Symphony Orchestra and performing Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor in its entirety with the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra in 2025. He was invited to present a full solo program at the Canmore Arts Centre at age seven and has performed at winners' concerts at Casals Forum Hall (Kronberg, Germany), Koerner Hall (Toronto, Canada), and Bella Concert Hall (Calgary, Canada).

Outside of music, Ethan enjoys reading, solving Rubik's Cubes, 3D design, mathematics, and playing badminton.

REPERTOIRE

Rising Star Final Solo Round

S. Rachmaninoff	Lilacs, Op. 21, No. 5
C. Debussy	Étude No. 6, "Pour les huit doigts"
F. Chopin	Rondo in E-flat Major, Op. 16

Rising Star Final Chamber Round

W.A. Mozart	Sonata for Four Hands in C Major, K. 521 I. Allegro
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NOTE: The Rising Star Final Round is concurrent with the Semi-Final Round of the Junior and Senior division.



Khloe Wu | 11

Canada

KHLOE WU has been playing piano since the age of four and a half and is currently studying with Dr. Michael Berkovsky in Toronto. She has worked with great musicians including JJ Jun Li Bui, Charlotte Hu, Ilya Itin, and Adam Żukiewicz. Khloe entered her first music competition at age five and has become a top prize winner in many national and international competitions.

At age of seven, she competed at the Canadian Music Competition (2022) and won First Place at the National Final Round. Khloe made her concerto debut with Burlington New Millenium Orchestra (2023) and has also worked with Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (2024) and Guelph Symphony Orchestra (2025). Khloe made her first appearance in Europe at the 30th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition for Children and Youth (Poland) and she was recently awarded Second Place at the prestigious Juene Chopin International Piano Competition for Children and Youth (Switzerland, 2025) chaired by renowned pianist Martha Argerich.

Furthermore, Khloe has been admitted to the Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists within The Royal Conservatory of Music Conservatory (Toronto), where she started a new journey in September 2025.

In her free time, Khloe enjoys drawing, singing, snowboarding, and has a special passion for drama.

REPERTOIRE

Rising Star Final Solo Round

J.P. Rameau	La Poule (The Hen) from <i>Suite in G Major</i> , RCT 6
S. Rachmaninoff	Humoresque, Op.10, No. 5
S. Rachmaninoff A. Volodos	Zdes' khorosho, Op. 21, No. 7 ("How Fair is the Spot")
U. Hiromi	The Tom and Jerry Show

Rising Star Final Chamber Round

W.A. Mozart	Sonata for Four Hands in C Major, K. 521 I. Allegro
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NOTE: The Rising Star Final Round is concurrent with the Semi-Final Round of the Junior and Senior division.



Ryan Huang | 15

Canada/United States

RYAN HUANG, 15, is a Young Steinway Artist and a Young Scholar of the Lang Lang International Music Foundation. Celebrated for his artistry and maturity, Ryan recently received a standing ovation for his encore performance at the Toronto Symphony Orchestra’s Gala Celebration concert - Lang Lang’s Emperor.

A laureate of numerous international competitions, Ryan has earned top prizes at the XXII Nutcracker International Television Music Competition (Russia), the Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition for Children and Youth (Poland), the Jeune Chopin Competition (Switzerland), and the Kaufman International Piano Competition (United States), as well as the Steinway Junior Piano Competition and the Canadian Music Competition in Canada.

Since making his Carnegie Hall Stern Auditorium debut at age seven and his solo recital debut at the Shanghai Symphony Hall at age eight, Ryan has performed with prestigious orchestras and ensembles including the Moscow Philharmonic (Russia), Wuhan Philharmonic (China), Vienna Opera Ball Orchestra (Austria), and Newfoundland Symphony (Canada), among others. He has also appeared with orchestras across Italy and Poland. In February 2026, he was featured with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in Roy Thomson Hall.

An alumnus of the Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists, Ryan currently studies in the studio of Dr. Michael Berkovsky and receives additional guidance from Dr. Marilyn Engle. During his formative years he was under the tutelage of Dr. Olga Chichova.

Beyond the concert stage, Ryan is a passionate volunteer who performs regularly for charity and teaches music to primary school students weekly. He remains dedicated to the philosophy that every child deserves the opportunity to explore the beauty of music and musical instruments.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

J. S. Bach / Chaconne in D Minor, BWV 1004

F. Busoni

I. Stravinsky/ Infernal Dance from *The Firebird*

G. Agosti

Semi-Final Chamber Round

F. Mendelssohn Piano Trio No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 66

I. Allegro energico e con fuoco

Final Masterclass Round

C. Debussy Reflects dans l’eau from *Images*, Book I

Final Concerto Round

E. Grieg Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16

I. Allegro molto moderato



Jueon Lee | 14

South Korea

JUEON LEE started to play the piano at age seven. He studied at Yewon School, a prestigious arts middle school in South Korea, which he entered as an excellent scholarship student. His solo debut recital was in the Kumho Prodigy concerts at age 12.

Jueon has earned awards in many competitions. In 2025, he won First Prize at the Steinway Youth Piano Competition Southeast Asia-Pacific Regional Finals in Bangkok. He was invited to the Steinway Festival in Hamburg, Germany and performed in Laeishalle Grand Hall. In 2024, he won prizes at the Ettlingen International Piano Competition in Germany and the Ishikawa International Piano Competition in Japan. He won the Grand Prize at the Henle Piano Competition and First Prize at the Ewha-Kyunghyang Competition. Demonstrating his talent in chamber music, he won Grand Prize at the 2025 Music Journal Competition in Seoul, South Korea.

Jueon Lee has given many recitals and concerts in Korea including at the Seoul Arts Center and Lotte Concert Hall. In 2025, he had a solo recital at Shanghai Conservatory in China, at the invitation of the Shanghai International Piano Conference.

He has participated in master classes with Sir András Schiff, Nelson Goerner, Peter Jablonski and others. He has performed with both the Prime Philharmonic and the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestras.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

W.A. Mozart Fantasia in D Minor, K. 397

M. Ravel Ondine from *Gaspard de la nuit*, M. 55

C.V. Alkan Scherzo Focoso in B Minor, Op. 34

Semi-Final Chamber Round

J. Brahms Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8

I. Allegro con brio – Tranquillo – In tempo ma sempre sostenuto

Final Masterclass Round

M. Ravel Ondine from *Gaspard de la nuit*, M.55

Final Concerto Round

F. Chopin Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11

I. Allegro maestoso



Yusuke Nagayoshi | 14

Japan

Born in Tokyo, **YUSUKE NAGAYOSHI** began his piano studies at the age of four. He is currently honing his craft in the Professional Course at the MPA School of Music, studying under two of Japan’s most distinguished pianists: Yukio Yokoyama (Third Prize winner of the 12th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition) and Ayako Uehara (First Prize winner of the 12th International Tchaikovsky Competition).

At the age of 11, Yusuke won the Gold Prize in Grade F (high school level and under) at the PTNA Piano Competition, Japan’s largest piano competition. He also achieved remarkable success at the Student Music Concours of Japan, the nation’s most prestigious competition for students, securing First Prize in the Tokyo division and Second Prize nationally.

His talent has been further recognized as a laureate in several international competitions, including the International Beethoven Piano Competition Asia, Rachmaninoff International Piano Competition Japan, and The International Chopin Piano Competition in Asia.

Yusuke’s exceptional achievements have led to numerous high-profile performance opportunities such as the Suntory Hall “Open House” where he performed as a soloist with an orchestra in the Main Hall, La Folle Journée TOKYO where he was invited to perform as a featured artist. At 12 years old, he gave a solo recital at the Minato Mirai Piano Festival performing the complete set of Chopin’s 12 Études, Op. 10 - a testament to his extraordinary technical and musical maturity.

In addition to his live performances, he has also completed a recording for a domestic CD label.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

F. Liszt	Transcendental Études, S. 139 No. 1 in C Major, “Preludio” No.10 in F Minor, “Chasse-neige”
F. Chopin	Scherzo No. 4 in E Major, Op. 54

Semi-Final Chamber Round

F. Mendelssohn	Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49 IV. Finale. Allegro assai appassionato
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Final Masterclass Round

C. Debussy	L’isle joyeuse, L. 106
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Final Concerto Round

F. Chopin	Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11 I. Allegro maestoso
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Yixin Shen | 15

China

YIXIN SHEN, is from Shanghai, China, and embarked on her piano journey at the tender age of five. Since 2020, Yixin has been pursuing piano studies with Professor Kuanwen Wang at the Music Middle School Affiliated to Shanghai Conservatory of Music (Elementary Department). In 2023, she was recommended as one of the top students for the Middle School Department, exempt from the entrance examination. Currently she is also furthering her musical development under the tutelage of Logan Skelton.

Yixin has made her mark in several major international piano competitions for young artists. In 2026, she achieved the second prize in the Hilton Head International Piano Competition. In 2025, she participated in the Cooper International Piano Competition and clinched the 4th Prize. The previous year, she was selected among 440 applicants to compete in the 19th Ettlingen International Piano Competition. She has also won numerous competitions, like the First Prize at 2022 Irvine Conservatory International Music Competition (Piano Category C) and the Gold Prize at 2021 St. Petersburg International Music Competition (Junior Class), among others.

Beyond solo performances, Yixin is also a passionate chamber musician, actively engaging in this collaborative art form with remarkable dedication. She leads a piano trio ensemble named MODERN TRIO, which has garnered top prizes in several Chamber Music Competitions. Notable achievements include securing the

First Prize and the Best Contemporary Work Interpretation Award at the 13th SHCMMS International Chamber Music Competition in October 2025, as well as the Gold Prize at the Young Maestro International Competition in March 2025.

Yixin’s talent has also been recognized on prestigious stages, as she was invited to perform at the closing concert of the 2nd Chinese Young Musicians Art Festival in Shenzhen, China, alongside the Shenzhen Bay Orchestra. She has also graced the stages of Carnegie Hall (Weill Recital Hall), Shanghai Symphony Hall, Shanghai Concert Hall, Zhuhai Huafa Grand Theater, and more.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

W.A. Mozart	Sonata No. 15 in F Major K. 533/494 I. Allegro II. Andante
A. Scriabin	Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp Major, Op. 30

Semi-Final Chamber Round

L.V. Beethoven	Piano Trio in D Major, Op. 70, No. 1 (“Ghost”) I. Allegro vivace e con brio
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Final Masterclass Round

A. Scriabin	Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp Major, Op. 30
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Final Concerto Round

E. Grieg	Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16 I. Allegro molto moderato
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Contestants | JUNIOR DIVISION



Eva Wang | 15
Austria

EVA WANG is a 15-year-old pianist born in Vienna in August 2010. She began her piano studies at the age of six and was admitted at age ten to the Programme for Gifted Children at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (mdw), where she studied with Prof. Vladimir Kharin. Eva is currently enrolled in mdw’s Preparatory Programmes, studying with Prof. Christopher Hinterhuber, and also receives artistic guidance from Prof. Wolfgang Manz.

Eva has received numerous national and international competition honors. Her awards include First Prize at the International Piano Competition & Festival MozARTe (Aachen, Germany), First Prize at the International Béla Bartók Piano Competition (Graz, Austria), Second Prize at the International Hans-von-Bülow Competition (Meiningen, Germany), and Prizewinner at the International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition for Children and Youth (Szafarnia, Poland). She has also earned multiple First Prizes at Austria’s Prima la Musica regional and national competitions, Second Prize at the STEINWAY Piano Competition (Hamburg, Germany, 2024), First Prize at the International Jenő Takács Piano Competition for Young Pianists (Burgenland, Austria, 2024), and First Prize at the IMF – International Music Festival & Competition (Paris, France, 2025). Most recently, Eva participated in the live Preliminary Round of the Gina Bachauer Junior/Young Artists International Piano Competition (Hamburg, Germany, 2026).

Eva has given solo recitals in Vienna, Trier, and China, gaining valuable performance experience and leaving a lasting impression on audiences. These appearances have led to regular performance invitations at venues including the Trinkhalle Bad Ischl, Bösendorfer Salon Vienna, MusikTheater an der Wien, Steinway Haus Vienna, and the Altes Rathaus Vienna.

She has also appeared as a soloist with the Lyra Chamber Orchestra, performing works such as Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21 and Grieg’s Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16. In addition, Eva has participated in masterclasses with Anna Malikova, Lilya Zilberstein, Eldar Nebolsin, and Antti Sirala. Alongside her solo activities, she is actively involved in chamber music projects at mdw, collaborating with peers and developing her ensemble skills.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

R. Schumann	Sonata No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 22
D. Shostakovich	Prelude and Fugue in D-flat Major, Op. 87, No. 15

Semi-Final Chamber Round

F. Mendelssohn	Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49 I. Molto allegro agitato
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Final Masterclass Round

M. Ravel	Alborada del Gracioso from <i>Miroirs</i> , M. 43
----------	---

Final Concerto Round

E. Grieg	Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16 I. Allegro molto moderato
----------	--

DOBAMA
THEATRE

26/27 SEASON

DAPHNE’S DIVE

by quiara alegría hudes

SEP 24 –
OCT 18

a moving comedy about finding family at your local bar

A SHERLOCK CAROL

by mark shanahan

DEC 3 –
JAN 3

a holiday adventure filled with comedy and carols

WALDEN

by amy berryman

JAN 28 –
FEB 21

a thoughtful drama meets eco-suspense thriller

MARY JANE

by amy herzog

MAR 11 –
APR 4

a slice-of-life play about a mother’s optimism

NETTA & RU

by lisa langford

APR 22 –
MAY 16

a southern gothic about secrets, murder, and magic

DOBAMA.ORG



Guillermo
Hernández Barrocal | 18

Spain

GUILLERMO HERNÁNDEZ BARROCAL obtained the Professional Studies diploma at the age of just 13. He has studied with Galina Eguiazarova and Martín García García, and is currently studying with Jerome Rose at the Mannes School of Music in New York.

He won First Prize and the Audience Award at the 5th Shigeru Kawai International Piano Competition (Tokyo, 2025); First Prize, among others, at the Jeune Chopin Competition (Lugano, Switzerland), Estepona (Spain), Santa Cecilia (Segovia, Spain), and Pernik (Bulgaria), and has also been a semifinalist at the Nutcracker Competition (Moscow) and the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists (USA).

He has already made his debut at the Auditorio Nacional de Madrid, both with orchestra (2023) and in solo recital (2024). He has performed in nine countries and, among others, with the Castilla y León Symphony Orchestra (OSCYL). In 2023, he was invited by the Chopin Institute to give a recital at the composer's birthplace museum in Poland; he also took part alongside Martha Argerich in a festival in Lausanne (Switzerland) and was a finalist for the Princess of Girona Arts Awards (2025), awarded by the Spanish Crown. He released his first recording in 2021, dedicated to works by Schumann, Liszt, and Chopin.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

R. Schumann	Carnaval, Op. 9
R. Schumann/ F. Liszt	Widmung, S. 566

Semi-Final Chamber Round

J. Brahms	Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8 I. Allegro con brio – Tranquillo – In tempo ma sempre sostenuto
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Final Masterclass Round

J. Brahms	Sonata No. 1 in C Major, Op. 1 IV. Allegro con fuoco - Presto non troppo ed agitato
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Final Concerto Round

R. Schumann	Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 I. Allegro affettuoso
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Chenxu Han | 17

China

CHENXU HAN, born in Qinhuangdao City, Hebei Province, began studying under Professor Wang Chun, a renowned pianist at the Central Conservatory of Music, in 2016. In 2019, he was admitted to the Central Conservatory of Music Affiliated Middle School with outstanding grades. He is a member of the Yangtze Piano National Youth Artist Training Program, and has won the Fan Jianqin Memorial Scholarship from the Central Conservatory of Music multiple times.

Over the years, he has achieved remarkable success in numerous authoritative piano competitions both domestically and internationally. Chenxu won First Prize at several competitions, including the Children's Group B of the 27th Chopin International Piano Competition (Beijing, 2019), the Children's Group B of the 11th Tchaikovsky International Youth Music Competition (2021, China), the Professional Children's Group of the 2nd European China International Music Competition National Finals (2022), the Youth Group of the Singapore International Piano Competition (2023), and the piano professional B group of the China Regional Finals of the Moscow International Music Festival (2024). He won Second Prize at the Professional Children's Group of the Xiamen Piano Open (2021), and in the professional group of the 9th Boya Piano Competition (2023). He won the Elite Award in the Professional Youth Group of the 7th KAWAI Asian Piano Competition (Beijing, 2023). He won Third Prize in the professional group of the Jinjiang International Piano Competition (2023). He was shortlisted for the 4th China Music Little Golden Bell National Piano Exhibition (2024).

Most recently, he won First Prize in the professional youth group of the 6th Xiamen Music Season International Piano Open Finals (2025), in addition to First Prize in the public B group of the China Regional Finals of the Singapore International Youth Piano Competition (2025).

Chenxu has performed in concerts at venues such as the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Beijing Zhongshan Concert Hall, the Concert Hall of the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, the National Library Art Center, the Steinway House in Beijing, the Concert Hall of the Central Conservatory of Music Affiliated Middle School, the Chengdu City Concert Hall, and the Qinhuangdao Sea Concert Hall, and has successfully held solo concerts multiple times, earning unanimous praise.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

W.A. Mozart	Fantasia in C Minor, K. 475
F. Liszt	Mephisto Waltz No. 1, S. 514
S. Prokofiev	Étude in C Minor, Op. 2, No. 3

Semi-Final Chamber Round

J. Brahms	Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8 I. Allegro con brio – Tranquillo – In tempo ma sempre sostenuto
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Final Masterclass Round

F. Liszt	Mephisto Waltz No. 1, S. 514
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Final Concerto Round

L.V. Beethoven	Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Op. 15 I. Allegro con brio
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Her repertoire spans a wide range of works from the Baroque period to contemporary music, with a particular affinity for Romantic and modern piano literature. With a solid technical foundation and thoughtful musicianship, Yurim continues to pursue her artistic development as she prepares for an international performing career.

Yurim Kim | 17

South Korea

YURIM KIM is a South Korean pianist distinguished by her musical maturity, refined technique, and expressive depth. She began studying the piano at an early age and has developed a clear artistic identity through extensive performance experience and rigorous musical training.

Yurim graduated as the top-ranked student from Yewon School, one of Korea’s most prestigious arts middle schools, and was admitted to Seoul Arts High School. During her studies, she has won numerous First Prizes at major national piano competitions, earning recognition as one of the most promising young pianists of her generation in Korea.

She has appeared as a soloist with the Suwon Philharmonic Orchestra and has given recitals at renowned venues including Carnegie Hall in New York. These performance experiences have served as an important foundation for her musical growth and international exposure. She has also participated in masterclasses with distinguished pianists, including Seong-Jin Cho, further expanding her musical perspective and depth of interpretation.

Yurim was selected as a soloist for the Kumho Prodigy Concert Series, one of Korea’s leading programs supporting outstanding young musicians. She is currently participating in the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition and the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists, and was previously a finalist at the Ettlingen International Piano Competition.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

W.A. Mozart	Fantasia in D Minor, K. 397
R. Schumann	Faschingsschwank aus Wien, Op. 26
S. Prokofiev	Suggestion Diabolique, Op. 4, No. 4

Semi-Final Chamber Round

F. Mendelssohn	Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49 I. Molto allegro agitato
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Final Masterclass Round

R. Schumann	Faschingsschwank aus Wien, Op. 26 I. Allegro
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Final Concerto Round

F. Chopin	Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11 I. Allegro maestoso
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Yu Qin Lu | 17

China

YU QIN LU is a Chinese pianist currently studying at the Primary & Middle School at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing under the guidance of Professor Chang Hua. He began studying the piano at the age of five and has since developed a solid and systematic foundation in professional piano training.

Yu Qin has appeared in numerous public concerts and music festivals, performing at venues such as the National Library of China, the Beijing International Conference Center, the Beijing City Library, the Shenzhen Concert Hall, and the Cadillac Shanghai Symphony Hall. In 2024, he appeared as a concerto soloist in a collaborative performance with orchestra at the Cadillac Shanghai Symphony Hall. In 2025, he was invited to perform at the 10th Anniversary Concert of the Fan Jianqin Scholarship at the Bechstein Center Concert Hall.

Yu Qin has received several major competition awards. In 2025, he was awarded the Gold Medal (Piano Group, Under 35) at the Chengdu Golden Lotus Music Competition. He also won First Prize in the Professional Youth Group at the Shanghai Magnolia International Music Festival, First Place in the Professional Youth Group at the Shenzhen Piano Open Competition, and First Prize at the Birmingham International Music Competition (UK).

Artistically, Lu is particularly drawn to the Russian and German-Austrian piano traditions, valuing their emphasis on structural clarity, depth of expression, and tonal richness. He continues to explore these musical ideals in his studies and performances.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

R. Schumann	Kreisleriana, Op. 16
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Semi-Final Chamber Round

F. Mendelssohn	Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49 I. Molto allegro agitato
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Final Masterclass Round

M. Ravel	Alborada del gracioso from <i>Miroirs</i> , M. 43
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Final Concerto Round

L.V. Beethoven	Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Op. 15 I. Allegro con brio
----------------	--

Contestants

SENIOR DIVISION



Deva
Mira Sperandio | 18
Spain

DEVA MIRA SPERANDIO started to play the piano at the age of six, and began her musical studies at the age of eight at the State Conservatory. In 2023, she was awarded a scholarship to attend the prestigious Yehudi Menuhin School in London, where she worked with Dinara Klinton and Ashley Wass. She is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Music at the Royal College of Music under the guidance of Dina Parakhina, supported by the Alida Johnson Award and the ArteMusica Stiftung.

Deva has received several distinguished scholarships, including Morningside Music Bridge, the International Keyboard Institute & Festival, and her ongoing selection as a Lang Lang Young Scholar. She attended the 2023 Cleveland International Piano Institute for Young Artists.

Deva made her stage debut at ten and has since performed across Europe and the United States. Her engagements include appearances at venues in Madrid as the Ateneo and RABASF, Windsor Castle—representing the Lang Lang Foundation in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales—the Cannes Jeunes Talents Festival, in the Nederland for the Chopin Stichting, Frankfurt, Hannover, Andermatt, Cleveland, Boston, and several venues

throughout the UK. She has performed as a soloist with the Málaga Symphony Orchestra and the Caixa Ontinyent Orchestra, playing concertos by Chopin and Beethoven.

Her competition achievements include numerous national and international first prizes. She became the first Spanish pianist to win an award at the Chopin Competition for Children in Szafarnia and has been recognized with top prizes in competitions such as Orléans “Brin d’Herbe,” the London Chopin Competition, the Béla Bartók Competition, and the Junior Intercollegiate Piano Competition.

She has appeared on Spanish National Radio performing live, as well as on RTVE and À Punt radio and TV. Deva has also received guidance from renowned masters including Lang Lang, Dang Thai Son, Stanislav Ioudenitch, Antonio Pompa-Baldi, Vanessa Latache, and Jerome Rose. She has also participates in initiatives such as Musicians for Health and Back to Bach.

REPERTOIRE

Semi-Final Solo Round

D. Scarlatti	Sonata in D Minor K. 517/L. 266
S. Prokofiev	Sonata No. 4 in C Minor, Op. 29
M. de Falla	Serenata Andaluza
I. Albéniz	Triana from <i>Iberia</i> , Book II

Semi-Final Chamber Round

F. Mendelssohn	Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49 I. Molto allegro agitato
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Final Masterclass Round

I. Albéniz	Triana from <i>Iberia</i> , Book II
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Final Concerto Round

L.V. Beethoven	Concerto No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 37 I. Allegro con brio
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& Friends
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J'NAI BRIDGES

NOVEMBER 17

PIANIST JAMES (ZIJIAN) WEI

NOVEMBER 28

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FEBRUARY 9

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MAY 4

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First Round Contestants

RIISING STAR DIVISION

 Winnie
(Weitong) Geng
12
Canada

 Miyabi Haseo
12
Japan

 Lanxi Mao
11
China

 Chenghong Wang
12
China

 Natalie Wang
12
United States

 Yimeng Xu
10
China

 Wenqian Zheng
10
China

JUNIOR DIVISION

 HyeonSeo Cho
14
South Korea

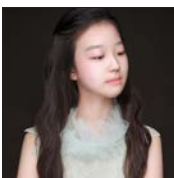
 Jeffrey Dong
15
Australia

 Ken Hu
13
United States

 Junye Huang
14
China

 Haram Jeon
14
South Korea

 Pei-Heng Jiang
15
China

 Dana Kim
15
South Korea

 Yong-En Teng
14
China Taiwan

 Adriana Vasilski
14
Germany

 Tian Xia
14
China

 Haozhe Yang
13
China

 Yuri Yasui
15
Japan

 Zirui Yin
13
China

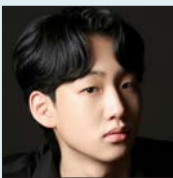
 Wenbo Zheng
13
China

 Xiaotong Zhou
15
China

SENIOR DIVISION | FIRST ROUND

 Kenneth Chen
17
Canada

 JiYuan DengHou
16
China

 Minwoo Hong
18
South Korea

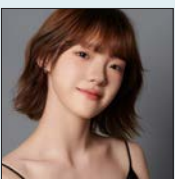
 Evelina Kleczek
17
United States/Poland

 Deni Kokhanovskii
16
Russia

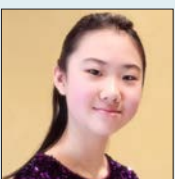
 Jeremy (Zhehao) Li
17
China

 Zongxuan Li
16
China

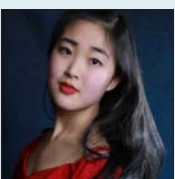
 Ian Lin
17
United States

 YiCai Liu
16
China

 Hiroki Nakayama
16
Japan

 Christina D. Sung
16
United States/South Korea

 Sizhe Wang
17
China

 Yenfei Wang
18
China Taiwan

 Tianlang Xu
17
Canada

CLEVELAND
INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION
for Young Artists

THE INSTITUTE



Photo: Gregory Wilson

Cleveland International Piano Institute

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

*Presented with support from the Walter & Jean Kalberer Foundation
Scholarship support provided by Terry DeBacco*

Presented by Piano Cleveland and hosted at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Cleveland International Piano Institute is an exceptional pre-collegiate experience for pianists ages 13-18 seeking to deepen their artistry. Students will receive exceptional training through one-on-one private lessons, workshops, and masterclasses with high-level faculty, including members of the esteemed jury of the Cleveland International Piano Competitions for Young Artists, as well as select faculty from the Cleveland Institute of Music and invited faculty from around the world.



INSTITUTE COMMUNITY CONCERTS

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Friday, July 24 | 12:00 PM

Tuesday, July 28 – Friday, July 31 | 12:00 PM

Institute Faculty

This year's Institute students will learn directly from the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists Jury, who will serve as faculty.
Learn more about the jury on pages 44-63.

ADDITIONAL FACULTY



Kathryn Brown

Kathryn Brown has performed around the globe as concerto soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. She performed her New York Recital Debut at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and has also appeared in concert at New York's 92nd Street Y. She has been featured on the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series in Chicago, Cleveland's Severance Hall as well as the German Embassy, the Philips Collection, and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. International highlights include concerts at Prague's Rudolfinum Hall, the University of London, and the National Theatre in Ghana, Africa. She has appeared on Columbia Artists' Community Concert Series and performed an extensive tour of Sweden, Africa and Estonia as winner of the United States Information Agency (USIA) Artistic Ambassador Program.



Steven Byess

Learn more about Steven on page 31 of this program.



Daria Rabotkina

Learn more about Daria on page 47 of this program.

Kathryn Brown has also performed extensively as a chamber musician. Pianist and co-founder of the Myriad Chamber Players, (a seventeen-member ensemble comprised of musicians of The Cleveland Orchestra and international soloists), Ms. Brown's chamber music credits also include performances at the Marlboro Music Festival in collaborations with members of the Guarneri String Quartet and Beaux Arts Trio. She has also performed with members of the Lincoln Center Chamber Players, The Verdehr Trio and was featured with Dmitri Ashkenazy on Ravinia's Rising Stars series. Brown also performed at Carnegie Hall with the Cleveland Orchestra as orchestral keyboardist under the baton of Christoph von Dohnanyi. She has been featured on the British Broadcasting Network, the PBS Aristry of... series, Chicago's WFMT Radio, and NPR's Performance Today.

An accomplished singer and recitalist, Kathryn Brown's performance highlights include premieres at Severance Hall with The Cleveland Orchestra, as well as feature roles at the Aspen Music Festival and Tanglewood Music Center.

Kathryn Brown currently serves as Head of Piano Department and Keyboard Division at The Cleveland Institute of Music.

Institute Faculty



Yaron Kohlberg

Artistic Director, Piano Cleveland

Second Prize
2007 Cleveland International Piano Competition

Engage, inspire, connect. These are the pillars guiding world-renowned pianist and Steinway artist **Yaron Kohlberg** every day. Kohlberg ignites audiences through traditional and nontraditional performances, develops creative programming, and supports emerging artists, making him a leader and innovator in the world of classical music.

While those crowds are often found in famous venues (Carnegie Hall, the Kremlin, Beijing's Forbidden City, Kennedy Center, and Mexico City's Bellas Artes are some of the iconic auditoriums he has performed as soloist), Kohlberg reaches beyond the concert-going public to engage new audiences with classical music in atypical places—a street piano in Singapore, a hotel lobby in Marrakech, a community center in Bukhara, Uzbekistan. It is in these unexpected performances where he crosses cultural divides and awakens listeners to new experiences.

Kohlberg often combines storytelling and transcriptions of popular tunes with traditional classical masterpieces, thrilling audiences and critics with his virtuosity and unique quality of sound. NPR raved, "When the music ends, if you're not deeply moved by the depth of Kohlberg's insight, you might want to check your pulse." Audience favorites include Carmen, the theme songs from the Pulp Fiction and Mission Impossible soundtracks, "Hava Nagila" and the children's song "The Most Beautiful Girl in Kindergarten."

Winner of 10 international prizes and the 2007 silver medalist of the Cleveland International Piano Competition, Kohlberg is Artistic Director of Piano Cleveland. Original programming he has co-created includes the upcoming Artist Development Program, an enrichment and professional development program for top-tier young pianists; The Listening Series, an in-person and virtual event that takes audiences from the couch to the concert hall as musicians take a deep dive into their work; and Virtu(al)oso, a global piano competition that raised more than \$75,000 to support pianists during the pandemic. Articles about his creative ideas have been featured in several of the best classical music publications, including Pianist Magazine, Musical America, and The World of Piano Competitions magazine.

Kohlberg and his friend Bishara Haroni comprise the successful Israeli-Palestinian group, Duo Amal. They have performed worldwide, including at Geneva's UN Hall, a remarkable example of the power of music to overcome cultural differences. The Vatican took notice, and invited them to perform for the Pope in 2020, which was postponed due to Covid.

Forging connections through collaboration is a hallmark of Kohlberg's work. He has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras, including the Cleveland Orchestra, the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic and Jerusalem Symphony Orchestras, the Beijing and Chengdu Symphony Orchestras, the Norwegian Radio Orchestra, and the Palermo Teatro Massimo Orchestra in Italy, working with conductors Thomas Sondergard, Jahja Ling, Roman Kofman, En Shao, Steven Byess and Ryan McAdams. He has also collaborated with the Limón Dance company, cellists Toke Møldrup and Nicholas Altstaedt, pianists Yeol Eum Son and Dong Hyek Lim, choreographer and dancer Jin Xing, rock star Shlomi Shaban, composer Alexey Kurbatov and the Ariel String Quartet. He was the artistic director of a cover band concert tour of his beloved alternative rock group, Radiohead.

In addition to his work with Piano Cleveland, performing, and serving on international competition juries, Kohlberg also lectures and conducts masterclasses at leading institutions around the world. He speaks six languages, including Mandarin Chinese, has lived on three continents, and traveled to 85 countries. Immersing himself in other cultures and forging strong relationships with people from all over the world has inspired Kohlberg to dedicate his life to sharing the beauty of his greatest passion, the piano.



Daniel Shapiro

Daniel Shapiro continues to gain recognition as a leading interpreter of Schubert, Beethoven, Mozart, Schumann, and Brahms, and as a teacher and coach at the Cleveland Institute of Music. He has given critically acclaimed performances across the United States, in Brazil, Britain, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Korea, and China, at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and at Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. During the 2020/21 season he performed his third complete cycle of the 32 Beethoven piano sonatas in honor of the composer's 250th birthday; links to these performances can be found on YouTube.com. His DVDs of all of Schubert's major piano sonatas and his CD of Beethoven's "Diabelli" Variations have received enthusiastic reviews.

He has taught at CIM for the past twenty-four years, during which time he has become known as an inspiring teacher who helps students achieve profound understanding and develop vivid interpretations of the great masterworks. His students have won important competitions and obtained teaching posts at prestigious universities and schools of music.

As a chamber musician, Shapiro has had the great fortune of collaborating with some of the world's leading musicians, including Jaime Laredo, Shmuel Ashkenasi, Joseph Silverstein, Cho-Liang Lin, Roberto Diaz, Ronald Leonard, Franklin Cohen and Frank Rosenwein. He has performed regularly with members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony and the Cleveland Orchestra. He has also performed with the Cavani, Mirò, and Linden Quartets, and has released chamber music CDs on the Harmonia Mundi and ASV labels. His Beethoven sonata collaborations with violinist Jaime Laredo can be found on youtube.com.

His musical scope also includes the study of conducting: he has worked with Daniel Lewis, Victor Yampolsky, Fritz Zweig, and Gustav Meier. He made his conducting debut at sixteen at Tanglewood, and conducted Mozart's Don Giovanni with the Akron Lyric Opera.

His musicianship has been enhanced and deepened by extensive collaboration with singers: listening to and working with them has been a source of tremendous inspiration. He studied art song with Gwendolyn Koldofsky and opera with Natalie Limonick, and was an opera and art song coach at UCLA.

A native of southern California, Shapiro began the study of piano at the age of six. His teachers included Leon Fleisher, John Perry, Russell Sherman, Joanna Graudan, and Reginald Stewart. He studied at the University of Southern California and at the Peabody Conservatory, where he received his doctorate.



CLEVELAND
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2026-2027 77th SEASON



September 9, 2026

Joel Link, *violin*
Nathaniel Silberschlag, *horn*
Dawoon Chung, *piano*
Fauré, Glière, Brahms



October 27, 2026

Trio Boccherini
Françaix, Dohnányi, Mozart



November 17, 2026

Lysander Piano Trio
Grieg, Bongani Ndodana-Breen,
Amanda Röntgen-Maier, Dvořák



February 23, 2027

Carion Wind Quintet
Ligeti, Beethoven, Ibert, Liszt,
Eli Tausen á Lava, Shostakovich



March 16, 2027

Pavel Haas Quartet
Haas, Martinů, Janáček, Dvořák



April 13, 2027

Jerusalem String Quartet
Haydn, Prokofiev, Brahms



May 12, 2027

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PURE GOLD"
— SEEN & HEARD INTERNATIONAL

"[The performance
was] **SIMPLY
STUNNING**"
— CLEVELANDCLASSICAL.COM

"It was a quickly paced
DELIGHT"
— COOLCLEVELAND.com

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Piano Cleveland is extremely grateful to the following governmental sources, foundations, and corporations that make our work possible. This list includes gifts and pledges received from January 1, 2025 through June 1, 2026 as outright donations, in-kind gifts, and/or attendance at fundraising events.

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Martha Joseph played a pivotal role in the creation of the Robert Casadesus International Piano Competition, which ultimately became the Cleveland International Piano Competition we know today. Her voice was among several that sought to create an international music event for Cleveland, but hers was the steadiest, the most practical, and the most visionary. Martha’s quiet authority was felt throughout the Casadesus years, through the transition to the Cleveland International Piano Competition, and until her death in 2006. For more than 20 years, she dedicated herself in many ways to ensure the future of a then fledgling organization. Piano Cleveland continues to thrive in large measure due to her vision, commitment, and deeply felt love of classical music.



The Martha Joseph Society honors individual patrons who have made lifetime contributions of \$100,000 or more to Piano Cleveland and the Cleveland International Piano Competition. These generous individuals have had a significant and long-term impact on the stability and growth of the organization. The leadership and altruistic commitment of these patrons helps to ensure that the artistry of young pianists from around the world is heard and enjoyed by our audiences in the Greater Cleveland Community and around the world, and that the friendships and goodwill created through the competition process will last for their lifetimes.

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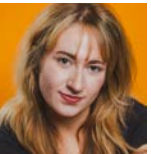
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Congrats Leslie!

After twenty years of dedicated service, we extend our heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to Leslie Dumm on her retirement from Piano Cleveland.

Leslie’s two decades of commitment, care, and steady leadership have left a lasting mark on our organization and on all who have had the pleasure of working alongside her. We are sincerely thankful for the time, energy, and heart she has given over the years, and we wish her all the best in this next chapter.



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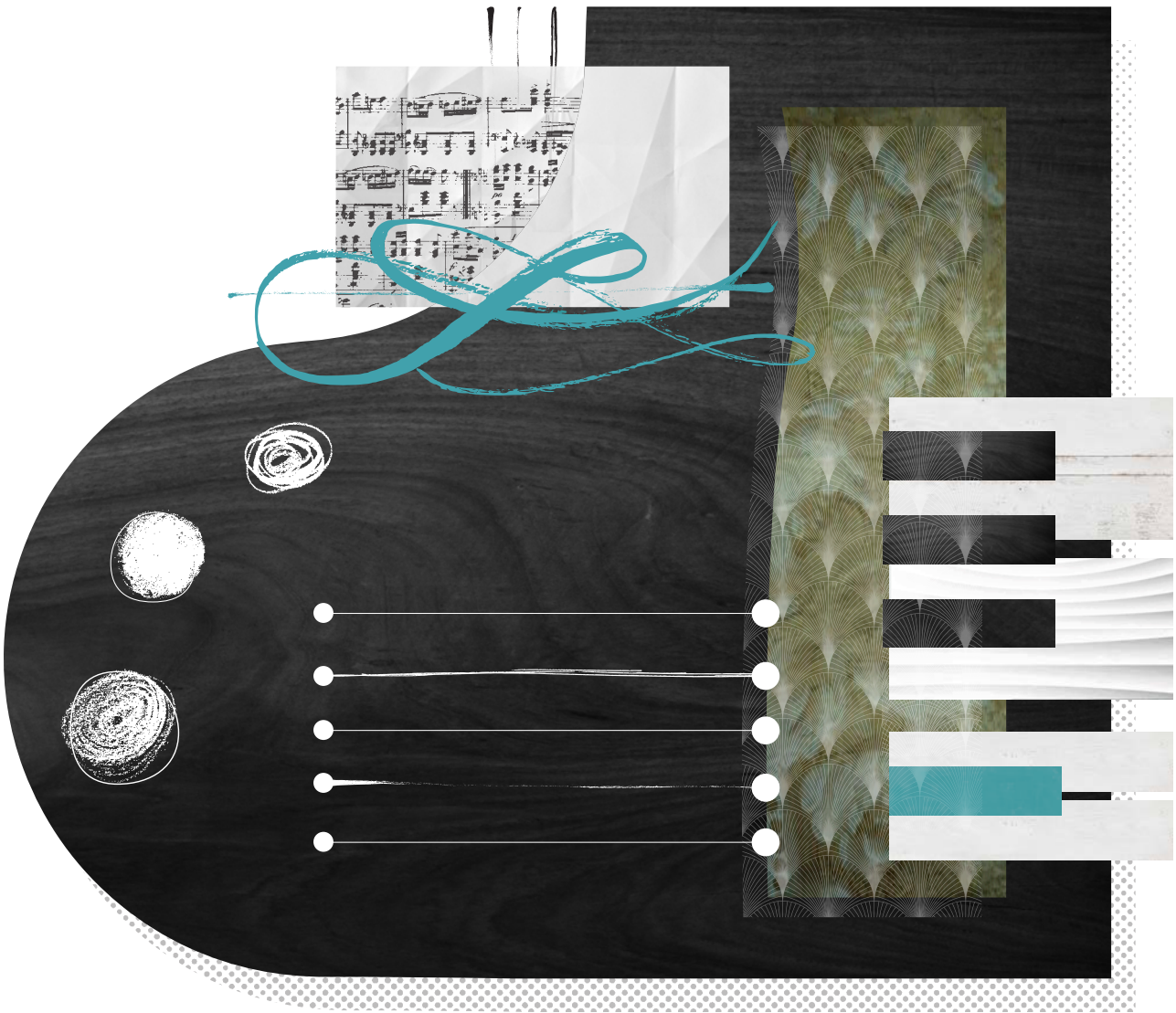
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Piano Cleveland **unites people from all walks of life** through world-class international competitions, inclusive community programming, and fostering a love of piano. Since founding the Robert Casadesus International Piano Competition in 1974, the organization has remained at the forefront of the classical piano world.

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