



ARIZONA PIANO INSTITUTE

2021
Solo Competition
Concert Series

August 15 | September 12 | October 17



Earlier this year the **Arizona Piano Institute** hosted its first online competition, lead by API Competition Coordinator, Dr. Elias-Axel Pettersson. Attracting many performers from across North America, the performances illuminate the outstanding quality of musicianship happening today. In this three-part concert series we are showcasing the winners of that competition.

The first concert begins with the younger performers in the **Junior Division**, who have discovered the joy of playing the piano and are realizing, at a formative age, the complexities of their art.

The second concert follows with performances in the **Senior Division**, given by young artists who have made the ongoing commitment to refine their skills and musical understandings.

The third and final concert closes with the **Aspiring Professionals**, artists who are totally immersed and are preparing for their future careers.



ARIZONA PIANO INSTITUTE

Our mission at the Arizona Piano Institute is to create enriching solo and collaborative opportunities for young musicians and educators in Arizona by providing piano-focused experiences with world-renowned performing artists and exceptional pedagogues.

Our hope is that through performance and shared musical experiences, young pianists will have the opportunity to grow and keep their passion for music alive.

Among other instructive events, we accomplish this mission by hosting an annual Summer Festival in Phoenix, Arizona. The Festival is a week-long, immersive experience where young pianists are inspired, add to their understanding of the art, and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow musicians who share a love of music and the piano. We also partner with other musical organizations in Arizona to expand the opportunities for young musicians to perform and grow.

There are many ways that you can become more involved with the Arizona Piano Institute. We encourage you to visit our website and become more familiar with our organization.

And now, sit back and enjoy amazing performances by some of the finest young pianists you will hear anywhere. Thank you for joining us in celebrating the winners of the 2021 API Solo Piano Competition.

The Arizona Piano Institute Board of Directors

Snezana Krstic, Founding Director

Steve Harris

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Dr. Elias-Axel Pettersson

Dr. Jessica Yam

Introducing the Judges

FOR THE 2021 SOLO PIANO COMPETITION

In response to the tremendous turnout for the Arizona Piano Institute Solo Piano Competition, the decision was made to conduct two rounds of judging. The esteemed panel of judges selected for both the semi-final and final rounds are all accomplished artists with years of experience in judging competitions.

FINAL ROUND JUDGES



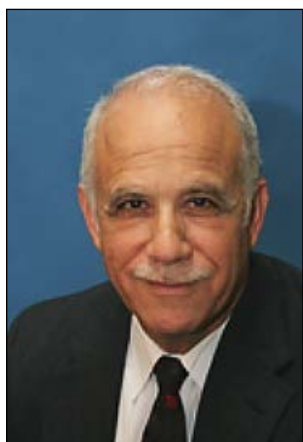
A First Prize winner of the Claude Debussy International Piano Competition in France and Italy's International Piano Competition of Senigalia, Bulgarian pianist, **Pavlina Dokovska** has gained worldwide recognition touring Europe, the Far East, and the Americas, receiving enthusiastic critical acclaim. Ms. Dokovska is the Coordinator of the Piano Department at Mannes College, The New School for Music in New York City. Pavlina is a highly recognized recording artist with an affinity for French music and an avid chamber musician.

She has made numerous appearances with European orchestras, including performances in Germany, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and Poland. She has also appeared in Mexico, Cuba, and concert venues in the United States including New York City and Washington DC, and internationally in London, Paris, Munich, Prague, Vienna, Tokyo and Beijing, to name a few. She is a frequent adjudicator at various competitions and festivals.

As a recording artist, she can be heard on GegaNew, RCA, Koch International, Naxos, Arcadia, Elan, Labor Records. Ms. Dokovska's affinity for French music is evident in many of her recordings, including a CD dedicated to Les Six (Koch Schwann), which was listed as a New York Times "Critic's Choice."

Pavlina Dokovska received her early music education in Bulgaria as a

student of Lydia Kuteva. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from the National Academy of Music, working with Julia and Konstantin Ganev (students of the legendary Heinrich Neuhaus). As a recipient of the French Government scholarship, she spent summers studying with Yvonne Lefébure in Paris. Ms. Dokovska obtained her Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School, as a Fulbright Scholar where she was a student of Beveridge Webster. Pavlina Dokovska is the Head of the Piano Department at Mannes School of Music, as well as Founder and Artistic Director of Mannes Sounds Festivals and Southwest Virginia Festival for the Arts.

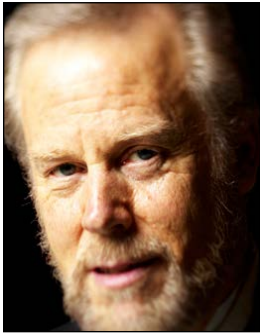


Eugene Pridonoff has maintained an international performing career for almost five decades since winning prizes in the Leventritt, Montreal, Brazil, and Tschaikowsky competitions in the mid 1960's and has been long established as a world-renowned pedagogue. For thirty-five years, he was Professor of Piano and Artist-in-Residence at the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music, where his students won first-place in numerous international competitions. He is also one of a select few pianists in the world linked with the great performing traditions of the 19th and early 20th centuries by virtue of his studies with Rudolf Serkin and Mieczyslaw Horszowski at the Curtis Institute of Music and his earlier training with Lillian Steuber, herself a student of Egon Petri, Harold Bauer, Joseph Lhevinne, and Emil von Sauer.

He has performed on five continents with leading orchestras throughout the world, including the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony, Central Opera Orchestra of Beijing, under such conductors as Seiji Ozawa, Izler Solomon, and Andre Kostelanetz.

He and his wife, Elisabeth Pridonoff, were interviewed and featured on the cover of *Clavier* Magazine and in the Chinese magazine *Piano Artistry*. He regularly performs and teaches in Asia, and after several years as Co-Artistic Director of the Prague International Piano Institute, he now serves as Co-Artistic Director of the International Institute for the Advanced Study of Piano Performance. Eugene Pridonoff served in administrative

capacities as Head of Performance at both the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music and during his previous tenure at Arizona State University. He is an Emeritus Professor of Piano at the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music and currently resides in Arizona.



Professor Robert Hamilton is featured in *The Most Wanted Piano Teachers in the USA* and has given highly acclaimed masterclasses internationally. His students have performed with leading orchestras, and currently hold valued positions worldwide. He has made countless concert tours appearing in the major halls of most music capitals.

Winner of three Rockefeller grants and six grants from the U.S. Department of State, Hamilton was prizewinner of five international competitions before launching a performance career that spans four continents. Recent appearances in St. Petersburg, Russia were televised nationally, and an appearance at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory brought a ten-minute standing ovation. His orchestral engagements have included the Chicago SO, National SO, St. Louis SO, Milwaukee SO, Phoenix SO, Indianapolis SO, Grant Park SO, Chautauqua SO and S.O.D.R.E. Montevideo. He has been heard over NPR, ABC, BBC-London, DRS-Zurich, Radio Warsaw and Voice of America.

Since the year 2000, he has joined with Vladimir Feltsman and a distinguished group of prominent international pianists each July for PianoSummer in New York. Robert Hamilton, was praised by Chief Music Critic of the *New York Times*, Harold C. Schonberg (author of *The Great Pianists*), who wrote: “He is a very fine artist. All of Hamilton’s playing has color and sensitivity...one of the best of the million or so around.”

SEMI-FINAL ROUND JUDGES

Dr. Stuart Foster | Snezana Krstic | Dr. Ann Nagell
Dr. Mary Pendleton Hoffer | Dr. Jan Thompson | Dr. Jessica Yam



About the Performers

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Junior Division

Justin Kang is an Honorable Mention winner in the Junior Division and is an Arizona Prize winner. Justin lives

in Laveen, Arizona and his teachers are Snezana Krstic and Jessica Yam.

Akilan Sankaran is an Honorable Mention winner in the Junior Division. Akilan lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico and his teacher is Lawrence Blind, Director of the New Mexico School of Music.

Taige Wang is the Third Prize winner in the Junior Division. Taige lives in Irvine, California and his teacher is Ariel Yang, on the faculty of the Opus119 Conservatory.

Jonathan Doh is the Second Prize winner in the Junior Division. Jonathan lives in Irvine, California and his teacher is Jenny Shin.

Ella Cho is the First Prize winner in the Junior Division. Ella lives in La Habra Heights, California and her teacher is Jenny Shin.

Senior Division

Daniel Kang is an Arizona Prize winner performing in the Senior Division. Daniel lives in Laveen, Arizona and his teachers are Snezana Krstic and Jessica Yam.

Ziyue Zeng is an Honorable Mention winner in the Senior Division. Ziyue lives in Aptos, California and her teacher is Chia-lin Yang, on the faculty of the University of California - Santa Cruz and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Nancy Zheng is an Honorable Mention winner in the Senior Division. Nancy lives in San Jose, California and her teacher is Kai Chi Zhu.

Alice Zhang is the Third Prize winner in the Senior Division. Alice lives in Suwanee, Georgia and her teachers are Peter Mack, on the faculty of the Cornish College of the Arts, and Lois Finlay, on the faculty of the Cambridge Academy of Music.

Jeslyn Cai is the Second Prize winner in the Senior Division. Jeslyn lives in Spokane, Washington and her



teachers are Karlyn F. Brett, on the faculty of the Suzuki Association of the Americas, and Peter Mack, on the faculty of the Cornish College of the Arts.

Adrian Zaragoza is the First Prize winner in the Senior Division. Adrian lives in Davis, California and his teacher is Richard Cionco, on the faculty of Sacramento State University.

Aspiring Professional Division

Chindanai Nukulvutthiopas is an Honorable Mention winner in the Aspiring Professional Division. Chindanai lives in Kansas City, Missouri and his teacher is Thomas Rosenkranz, on the faculty of the University of Missouri - Kansas City.

Le Binh Anh Nguyen is an Honorable Mention winner in the Aspiring Professional Division. Le Binh Anh lives in Bloomington, Indiana and his teacher is Evelyne Brancart, on the faculty of Indiana University in Bloomington.

John A. Solari is the Third Prize winner in the Aspiring Professional Division. John lives in Chandler, Arizona and his teacher is Baruch Meir, on the faculty of Arizona State University.

Adrian King is the Second Prize winner in the Aspiring Professional Division. Adrian lives in Silverdale, Washington and his teacher is Peter Mack, on the faculty of the Cornish College of the Arts.

Zhiqiao Zhang is the First Prize winner in the Aspiring Professional Division. Zhiqiao lives in Boston, Massachusetts and his teacher is Wha Kyung Byun, on the faculty of the New England Conservatory.

*Arizona landscapes - front and back covers: Oak Creek Canyon in the mist;
inside front cover: Antelope Canyon | next page: Colorado River;
inside back cover: Grand Canyon National Park.*

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Concert 1 Junior Division

August 15, 2021

Étude-Tableau in E-flat major, Op. 33, No. 7
What are you doing Mr. Fox?

Sergei Rachmaninoff
Heeyoung Yang

Justin Kang
Arizona Prize & Honorable Mention

Danzas Argentinas, Op. 2
I. *Danza del viejo boyero*
II. *Danza de la moza donosa*
III. *Danza del gaucho matrero*

Alberto Ginastera

Akilan Sankaran
Honorable Mention

Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother, BWV 992
Hungarian Rhapsody No. 11 in A minor, S. 244

J.S. Bach
Franz Liszt

Taige Wang
Third Prize

Prelude and Fugue in C-sharp major, WTC Book II
Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp major, Op. 78 “à Thérèse”
I. *Adagio cantabile – Allegro ma non troppo*

J.S. Bach
Ludwig van Beethoven

Paraphrase de concert sur Rigoletto, S. 434

Franz Liszt

Jonathan Doh
Second Prize

Piano Sonata No. 31 in A-flat major, Hob. XVI:46
I. *Allegro moderato*

Franz Joseph Haydn

Waltz on Theme from Gounod’s “Faust”, S. 407

Franz Liszt

Ella Cho
First Prize



Concert 2 Senior Division

September 12, 2021

Ballade No. 2 in F major, Op. 38

Fryderyk Chopin

Daniel Kang
Arizona Prize

Sonata No. 1 (1990)
I.

Carl Vine

Ziyue Zeng
Honorable Mention

Variations For Piano (1984), Op. 41

Nikolai Kapustin

Nancy Zheng
Honorable Mention

Prelude and Fugue No. 17 in A-flat major, WTC Book 1
Desperate Measures (Paganini Variations), Op. 48

J.S. Bach
Robert Muczynski

Alice Zhang
Third Prize

Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 36

Sergei Rachmaninoff

I. *Allegro agitato*

Etydit, Op. 42, No. 1
Terssit

Einojuhani Rautavaara

Play Piano Play No. 6 – Presto Possible

Friedrich Gulda

Jeslyn Cai
Second Prize

Prelude and Fugue No. 4 in C-sharp minor, WTC Book 1
Étude in C-sharp minor, Op. 10, No. 4
Caténares

J.S. Bach
Fryderyk Chopin
Elliott Carter

Adrian Zaragoza
First Prize



Concert 3

Aspiring Professionals

October 17, 2021

Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 36

Sergei Rachmaninoff

III. *Allegro molto*

Chindanai Nukulvutthiopas

Honorable Mention

Sonata No. 21 in C major, Op. 53, “Waldstein”

Ludwig van Beethoven

I. *Allegro con brio*

Le Binh Anh Nguyen

Honorable Mention

Prelude and Fugue No. 4 in C-sharp minor, WTC Book 1

J.S. Bach

Miroirs

Maurice Ravel

III. *Une barque sur l’océan*

John Solari

Third Prize

Étude in C major, Op. 10, No. 1

Fryderyk Chopin

Sonate pour piano (1947-1948)

Henri Dutilleux

III. *Choral et variations*

Adrian King

Second Prize

Étude-Tableau in E-flat minor, Op. 33, No. 6

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Variations on a Theme of Corelli, Op. 42

Zhiqiao Zhang

First Prize



The **Arizona Piano Institute**, with your help, will continue to provide enriching solo and collaborative opportunities for young musicians and educators in Arizona. Through performance and shared musical experiences, young pianists will continue to develop their ability to express themselves through their music.

Be sure to explore our annual **API Summer Festival**, which will take place in June of 2022, in Phoenix, Arizona. This week-long, immersive experience provides a safe place where young pianists can work with world-renowned performing artists and exceptional pedagogues, be inspired, add to their understanding of the art, and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow musicians who share a love of music and the piano. You can find out more about the API Summer Festival on our website.

Your support is vitally important in helping us to fulfill our mission with talented young musicians. Please go to our website www.azpianoinstitute.org to sign up as a volunteer or donate and become a part of our valued network of support!



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Thank you.



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