

CIPC Young Artists Competition Junior and Senior Divisions, Second Round (May 16)

by Mike Telin



The Junior Division continued with its second round on Saturday, May 16, at 10:00 am in Gamble Auditorium.

Nina Yifang Hu (14, USA) kicked things off with an engaging performance of Liszt's "La campanella" from his *Grandes études de Paganini*, which she followed with a nicely-shaped and well-voiced rendition of Chopin's *Nocturne No. 8 in D-flat Major*, Op. 27, No. 2. Hu was in her element during Liebermann's *Gargoyles*, Op. 29, playing with sensitivity and wonderful technique.

Maxim Lando (12, USA) began his program with a commanding performance of the first movement, "Allegro ma non troppo," from Prokofiev's *Sonata No. 2 in D Minor*, Op. 14. His interpretation of Chopin's *Ballade No. 1 in G Minor*, Op. 23 was filled with emotion, and he was simply brilliant during Horowitz's *Variations on a Theme from Carmen*.

Natasha Wu (14, Taiwan/USA) chose the first movement "Largo-Allegro" from Beethoven's *Sonata No. 17 in D Minor*, Op. 31, No. 2 ("The Tempest") to open her enjoyable program. During Liszt's "La campanella" from *Grandes études de Paganini*, Wu played with a lovely sound and controlled technique. She made easy work of Chopin's *Ballade No. 2 in F Major*, Op. 38, and she ended with a secure performance of Prokofiev's *Toccata in D Minor*, Op. 11.

Bon-Hwi Kim (13, South Korea) opened his delightful program with two sonatas by Scarlatti, K. 380 in *E Major*, and K. 24 in *A Major*, both of which were played with secure technique and thoughtful phrasing. Kim brought nice dynamic contrasts to the fast

and furious *Etude in C-sharp Minor*, Op. 10, No. 4 (“Torrent”) by Chopin and well-shaped melodic lines to the composer’s *Nocturne in D-flat Major*, Op. 27, No. 2. A stirring performance of the first movement from Prokofiev’s *Sonata No. 2 in D Minor*, Op. 14, brought Kim’s set and the morning session to a conclusion.

Avery Gagliano (13, USA) started off the afternoon session with a beautiful, well-paced performance of the first movement “Largo-Allegro” from Beethoven’s *Sonata No. 17 in D Minor*, Op. 31, No. 2 (“The Tempest”). She brought a musically flexible interpretation to “Gnomenreigen” from 2 *Concert-Studies* by Liszt. Her playing of Ginastera’s *Danzas Argentinas*, Op. 2 was dazzling.

Junhao Wang (13, USA) played with beautiful tone during Chopin’s *Scherzo in B-flat Minor*, Op. 31, No. 2, which opened his program. He followed with an assured performance of Berg’s *Piano Sonata*, Op. 1.

Jae Hong Park (15, South Korea) began his portion of the afternoon with a wonderfully-controlled presentation of Mendelssohn’s *Fantasie in F-sharp Minor*, Op. 28, which he followed with an engaging performance of Granados’s “Los Requeiebros” from *Goyescas*, Op. 11.

The final contestant in the Junior Division was William Yang (13, USA), who began with a nuanced interpretation of Schubert’s *Impromptu in B-flat Major*, D. 935, No. 3. Yang was in full command of Prokofiev’s *Sarcasms*, Nos. 4 and 5, Op. 17, and he concluded with an emotional performance of the tenth etude, “Allegro agitato molto,” from Liszt’s *Études d’exécution transcendante*.

Llewellyn Sanchez-Warner (18, USA) set a high bar for the second round of the Senior Division with his mesmerizing account of Chopin’s *Nocturne in C Minor*, Op. 48, No. 1. He brought a huge, explosive sound to Rachmaninoff’s *Études-tableaux*, Op. 39, No. 9, and he highlighted the playfulness of Ravel’s “Alborada del gracioso” from *Miroirs* with maturity and grace. He concluded his excellent program with a strong performance of Liebermann’s *Gargoyles*, Op. 29.

Jiacheng Xiong (18, China) kept that high bar in place with his rousing and clean presentation of Chopin’s *Etude in C Major*, Op. 10, No. 7 (“Toccata.”) Beethoven’s *Sonata No. 18 in E-flat Major*, Op. 31, No. 3 made up the remainder of his program, and his performance was terrific, both technically secure and musically nuanced. The second movement “Scherzo” and the final “Presto” were highlights.

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