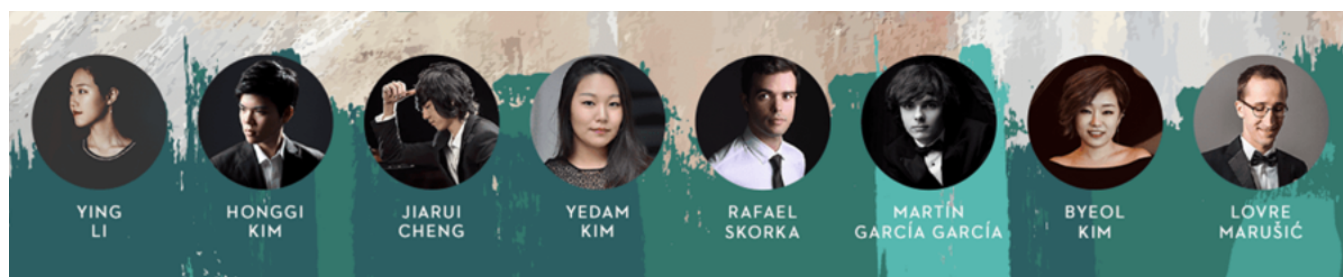


The Cleveland International Piano Competition: and then there were eight

by Mike Telin



Following the Sixth Session of the Second Round on Sunday afternoon, July 25, PianoCleveland announced the names of the eight pianists who will advance to the Semifinals of the 2021 Cleveland International Piano Competition. Having reached this point through videos recorded at locations around the globe, they will now be performing live in Cleveland.

Those four sessions will be held in Gartner Auditorium at the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Thursday, July 29 at 7:00 pm — **Ying Li** (China) and **Honggi Kim** (South Korea).

Friday, July 30 at 7:00 pm — **Jiarui Cheng** (China) and **Yedam Kim** (South Korea).

Saturday, July 31 at 2:00 pm — **Rafael Skorka** (Israel) and **Martín García García** (Spain).

Sunday, August 1 at 2:00 pm — **Byeol Kim** (South Korea) and **Lovre Marušić** (Croatia).

For more information, visit the PianoCleveland [website](#). Purchase tickets [here](#), and download the competition program book [here](#).

New to 2021

A new addition to the semi-final [required repertoire](#) is the inclusion of a virtuosic popular music transcription made by Alexey Kurbatov. “I was introduced to him in 2011 when I was playing a concert in Moscow,” CIPC president Yaron Kohlberg told us in March.

“He has the ability to take familiar pieces and make them into super-difficult pianistic pieces.”

Kohlberg also sees the popular song requirement as audience building. “We want to create a space for people who already love classical music, as well as a space for the audiences of tomorrow — no matter what background or age. When people hear a melody that they know, they may be more inclined to listen to other things.”

Contestants can choose from four arrangements commissioned by CIPC: Themes from *Mission Impossible* (Lalo Schifrin), *Bohemian Rhapsody* (Queen), *America* (Leonard Bernstein), and the *Olympic Fanfare* (John Williams).

Another edition to the 2021 Semi-Finals is the duo-piano round. Teams may choose either the Schubert *Fantasia in f*, or the Mozart *Sonata for Two Pianos in D*.

“We wanted to give the semi-finalists the opportunity to play twice,” Kohlberg said. “This will also give the jury and the audience a chance to get to know the contestants better. We see this as a great opportunity to form friendships and collaborations, and develop the feeling that we are all in this together. It also reveals a different aspect of one’s playing.”

What will you hear? Visit our concert listings [here](#) to view each contestant’s program.

Bartók *Sonata*, Sz. 80, (two) **Bernstein** “America” from *West Side Story* (arr. Kurbatov), **Brahms** *Sieben Fantasien*, Op. 116, **Chopin** *Twelve Etudes*, Op. 25 — *Barcarolle in F-sharp*, Op. 60 — *Polonaise-Fantaisie in A-flat*, Op. 61, **Gottschalk** *The Union*, Op. 48, **Jalbert** *Toccata* (2001), **Leighton** *Fantasia Contrappuntistica*, Op. 24 (“Homage to Bach”) (1956), **Liszt** “Les cloches de Genève (Nocturne)” from *Années de Pèlerinage I*, S. 160 — *Étude de Concert*, S. 145, No. 2 (“Gnomenreigen”) — *Transcendental Etude*, S. 139, No. 10, **Mendelssohn** *Fantasia in f-sharp*, Op. 28, (four) **Mercury** *Bohemian Rhapsody* (arr. Kurbatov), **Mozart** *Sonata No. 13 in B-flat*, K. 333, *Sonata for Two Pianos in D*, **Prokofiev** *Sonata No. 4 in c*, Op. 29, **Scarlatti** *Sonata in b*, K. 87 — *Sonata in E*, K. 380, (two) **Schifrin** Themes from *Mission Impossible* (arr. Kurbatov), **Schubert** *Fantasia in f*, *Wanderer-Fantasia in C*, D. 760, **C. Schumann** *Notturmo in F*, Op. 6, No. 2, **R. Schumann** *Arabeske in C*, Op. 18 — *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, **R. Strauss** “Ramble on Love” from *Der Rosenkavalier* (arr. Grainger), and **Rachmaninoff** *Variations on a Theme of Corelli*, Op. 42.

In the community

During their time in Cleveland, the Semi-Finalists will continue the tradition of presenting recitals at senior centers, retirement communities, community centers, and venues in partnership with local arts organizations. These include Beachwood

Community Center, Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center, Judson Manor, Maplewood at Chardon, Greater Cleveland Chinese Chamber of Commerce (hosted at the Gilmour Academy), Broadway School of Music, and Normandy Manor.

And for the first time, the Semi-Finalists will also be connecting with specific immigrant communities in Cleveland based on their own national heritage through these concerts.

Two events of interest

Have you ever wondered what is going through a juror's mind when they're listening to a contestant's performance? Join the Jury Roundtable on Saturday, July 31 at 10:00 am in CMA's Gartner Auditorium. Yaron Kohlberg leads a discussion with Margarita Shevchenko (Chair – Russia), Michelle Cann (United States), Jeremy Denk (United States), Noriko Ogawa (Japan), Linda Petříková (Czech Republic), Nimrod David Pfeffer (Israel), Balázs Szokolay (Hungary), and Mira Yevtich (Serbia/Australia). Click [here](#) to learn more about the jury and [here](#) for ticket information.

On Sunday, August 1 at 10:00 am in Mixon Hall at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Michelle Cann (Eleanor Sokoloff Chair in Piano Studies at the Curtis Institute of Music) and Nimrod David Pfeffer (Assistant Conductor at The Metropolitan Opera) will present a master class for local piano students. The event will be streamed on Facebook Live. Free but registration is [required](#).

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