

CIPC Round Two, Session Five July 24, 2021

by Cait Winston



Suah Ye (20, South Korea) chose a single work — Prokofiev’s *Sonata No. 8 in B-flat* — for her Round Two, Session Five performance in the Cleveland International Piano Competition on July 24. Throughout the first and second movements, Ye’s phrasing was highly expressive — she facilitated feelings of tension and release throughout the phrases that effectively highlighted climactic moments. Her dynamics were deliberate and skillfully executed, and she was able to maintain an intensity even

in soft moments.

The third movement consists of highly complicated textures with many quickly moving parts, all mastered by Ye, who brought out nuances with consistently effortless technique and poignant drama.



In his performance of Scarlatti’s *Sonata in b*, **Phillip Lynov** (22, Russia) brought out the sweetness of its animated melodies while smoothly navigating highly complex counterpoint. This approach continued into Scarlatti’s *Sonata in A*, making its quick, note-heavy material compelling and exciting.

In Taneyev’s *Prelude and Fugue in g-sharp*, Lynov conquered the urgent, uneven rhythms of the three-against-two meter, and brought vibrant colors and moments of poignant tenderness to the highly dissonant, percussive music of Bartók’s *Sonata*, Sz. 80.



Clayton Stephenson (22, United States) began his set with Beethoven’s *Sonata No. 21 in C*, playing with excitement and urgency, moving effortlessly through swift, fiery material with a masterfully light touch and laser precision. In the slower sections, Stephenson meticulously placed each note of the concise,

straightforward melodies, creating a genuine, emotionally evocative sound.

In Chopin's *Etude in f*, Op. 25 No. 2, Stephenson smoothly shifted emotions, adding nuanced dramatic gestures to the fast-paced material. He finished with Liebermann's Presto and Presto feroce from *Gargoyles*, where he brought a variety of dynamics to the jarringly chromatic music, building his phrases carefully to emphasize climactic moments.



Arsenii Mun (21, Russia) concluded the session, beginning with Beethoven's *Sonata No. 23 in f*, ("Appassionata"). Throughout the lush harmonies, lyrical melodic lines, and intricate textures, Mun played with control but not restraint, shifting the mood fluidly from sweet to intense. In the slower, more straightforward material, Mun brought a gentle richness to his tone, giving depth to the music through subtle dramatic gestures.

Mun ended his program with "La Campanella" from Liszt's *Grandes études de Paganini*, S. 141, where he demonstrated his technical skill by leaping up to the piano's high register in swift, consistently accurate motions. Mun never allowed his sound to be weighted down by the technically challenging aspects of the piece — rather, he maintained a gentle, airy quality throughout.

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