

The Final Six: Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists

by Mike Telin



This summer Piano Cleveland has turned its attention to the stars of the future. Earlier this week the six finalists — three in the Junior Division (ages 11 -14) and three in the Senior Division (ages 15 – 18) — were selected to come to Cleveland for the Final Round of the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists.

Qinyaoyao Ji (13, China), Elisey Myslin (12, Russia), and Zhonghua Wei (14, China) will vie for the top cash prize of \$5,000 USD while Yanyan Bao (16, China), Ryan Wang (15, Canada), and Saehyun Kim (16, South Korea) will compete for the first prize of \$10,000 USD.

The six were selected from 32 contestants who recorded their First Rounds performances at locations in London, Hamburg, Cleveland, New York, Beijing, and Seoul, in partnership with Steinway & Sons galleries. All First Round performances are available to watch on Piano Cleveland's [YouTube Channel](#). Read the pianists' biographies [here](#).

“All 32 were fantastic,” Piano Cleveland President Yaron Kohlberg said during a recent telephone conversation. “We even had difficulty selecting only 32 out of the 213 applicants.”

Kohlberg said that the six finalists have arrived in Cleveland and will play their Chamber Music round with members of The Cleveland Orchestra on Thursday July 13 at 7:30 pm at the Cleveland Institute of Music's Mixon Hall. Tickets for in-person and live-stream are available [online](#).

Junior Division (11-14)



Qinyaoyao Ji
CHINA



Elisey Mysin
RUSSIA



Zhonghua Wei
CHINA

Senior Division (15-18)



Yanyan Bao
CHINA



Saehyun Kim
SOUTH KOREA



Ryan Wang
CANADA

On Saturday, July 15 at 7:30 pm in the Cleveland Museum of Art's Gartner Auditorium, the six will each perform a concerto movement with conductor Stephen Byess and the Canton Symphony. Following the performance, the first, second, and third prize winners in each division and six special prizes, including the Audience, Junior Jury, Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Mozart prizes will be announced. Tickets for in-person and live-stream are available [online](#).

The finalists have already been busy playing community concerts at the University of Akron, Tri-C Metro Campus Theater, and Temple-Tifereth Israel, "This is a great opportunity not only for them to be able to perform in the United States — some of them for the first time — but also for the community to hear them and get to know them, and hopefully get as excited about the final round as we are," Kohlberg said.



On Sunday, July 9 at 7:30 pm in Reinberger Chamber Hall at Severance Music Center, pianist Gabriela Montero will present a special CIPC for Young Artists Recital featuring music by Chopin, Schumann, and Stravinsky as well as her own improvisations. Tickets for in-person and live-stream are available [online](#).

Running concurrently with the Competition for Young Artists is the Cleveland International Piano Institute. “It started a couple of days ago and we have 30 participants from all over the world, which is extremely exciting,” Kohlberg said. “All of them are top- class players.”

Presented in collaboration with the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Lang Lang International Music Foundation, Institute participants receive lessons and master classes from top faculty, as well as performance opportunities and special workshops. “We’re bringing in John Zion from MKI Artists, who will talk about the world of artist management, which is very important. Stephen Byess is going to do a workshop, and Eva Gevorgyan just did one as will Gabriela Montero.”

Participants will have plenty of opportunities for fun, like going to a Cleveland Orchestra concert at Blossom. “There will also be a lot of social activities. So we’re hoping that it will be fun, entertaining, and a unique experience for these young pianists from all over the world.” Click here for more information about the [Institute](#).

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