



Notes from the Piano Bench

Washington International Piano Arts Council (WIPAC)

Established 2001

22 E

July 30-August 30, 2014 Volume VI

Special Edition * No. 21

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"Music gives a soul to the universe...

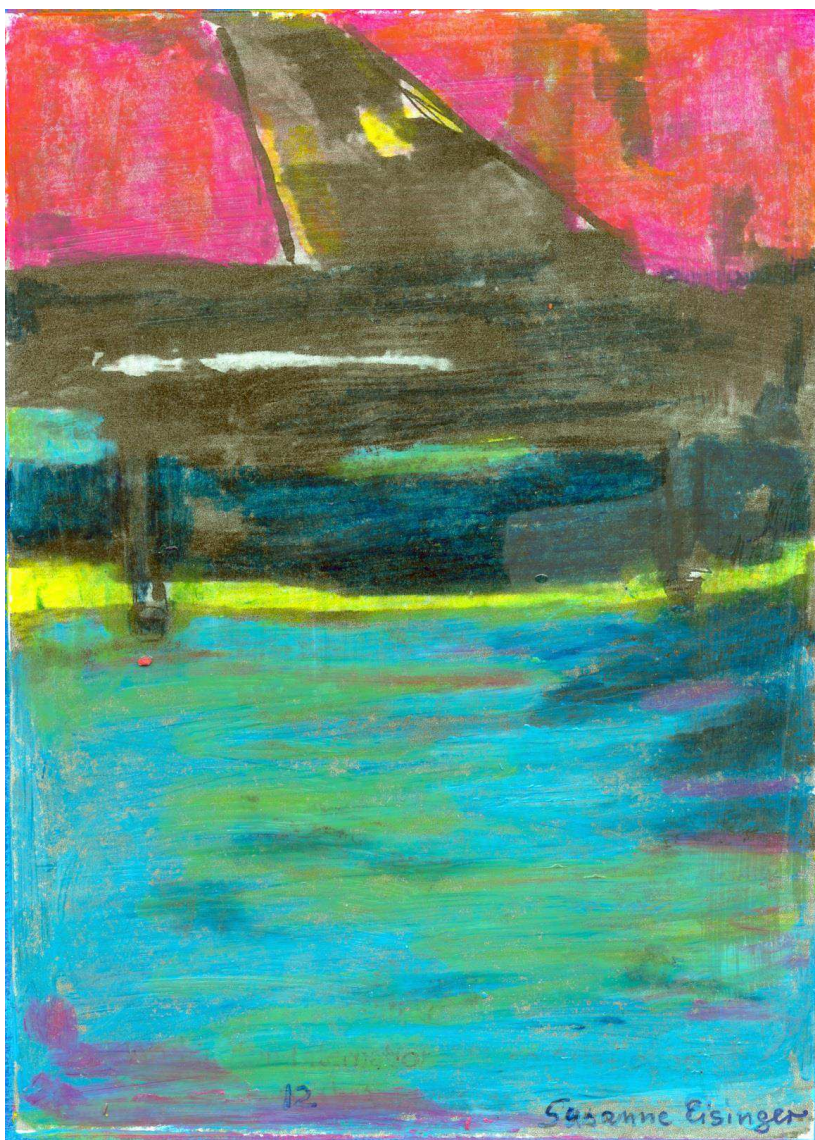
Wings to the mind,

Flight to the imagination and

Life to everything."

Plato

WELCOME to the Wonderful World of Music



The Official Logo of the Festival of Music 2014 & the 12th Washington International Piano Artists Competition



Calendar of Events

Call 703 728-7766

August 31

Hunt Night
Warrenton Horse
Show Grounds
6PM

Dress – Country Chic

TBA

September 13

General Membership
Get together @12:30pm
1:30pm Opening
Concert
Featuring WIPAC Artist-
in-Residence
John Gardecki
2:30pm Tea Reception

October 11

1:30pm-2:30pm
Part II
Featuring WIPAC First
Prize Winner
Michael Slavin

November 14

Fall Gala
TBA

December 12

7pm Cocktails
8pm Dinner
TBA

Message from the Chair



Wow! *The Festival of Music 2014 & the 12th Washington International Piano Artists Competition* just ended. What a whirl wind of 4 days of piano performances with a Final Note Concert!

WIPAC is still on a high note! We welcomed and presented 21 pianists from different walks of life coming from Asia, Europe, North America and the US, ages 34 to 84. Out of 21 at the preliminary round held at GWU Music Department B120, jurors chose 13 to advance to the Semi-Final Round (one more than I planned for), ending with 6 finalists for Sunday performance with the best concert grand piano ever, from Pianocraft.

My sincere thanks to the Competition Committee Chairs, Ben Cox and Elizabeth Cummings; to Clayton Eisinger, WIPAC President whose counsel and support, we value and the hard working volunteers, Diane, Mary, Carol and Walter. To Alix and Erik Sundquist, to Jean Wigham, the Davidsons and Mary Hood, hosts of pianists, most importantly the Board, my deep appreciation.

Special thanks to our Festival jurors headed by our Parliamentarian, Michael Davidson, who has chaired this competition 4 years running. Yes, we had a star, Ms. Susan Starr of Rutgers University and new additions such as pianists extraordinaire Jay Gottlieb from Paris and Larry Berman of Boston who studied with Nadia Boulanger. David Witten, Haskell Small, Eric Himy and Janice Weber, Malinee Peris completed the circle with our mainstay jurors headed by Dr. Raymond Jackson of Howard University, Prof. Tzvetan Konstantinov and Frank Conlon of GWU.

Press Jury has a new face, Henri Polgar of FestivalDC who is Executive Director of PaPa Council joining Cecelia Porter, former respected music critic of Washington Post.

WIPAC Fall Piano Concert Series at The Kosciuszko Foundation Center for American and Polish Culture proudly presenting WIPAC Artist-in-Residence Pianist John Gardecki to open the concert series on September 13, 2014 and Part II will feature Michael Slavin on October 11 both events at 1:30pm, join us!

Happy Labor Day!

Chateau Gardecki, WIPAC Board Chair and Founder



The Festival of Music 2014 & the 12th Washington International Piano Artists Competition

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE PIANISTS

Who participated in the most energetic competition of all!!!!

Results of the competition:

FIRST PRIZE WINNER – Michael Slavin

Grand prize – a debut recital in DC at KOCIUSZKO
and participation to the WINNERS GRAND PRIX CONCERT 2015---



SECOND PRIZE WINNER – Daniel Chow

THIRD PRIZE WINNER – Robert Finley

REST OF AWARDS IN FOLLOWING PAGES!

*Special
Acknowledgement*

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WIPAC DIPLOMATIC

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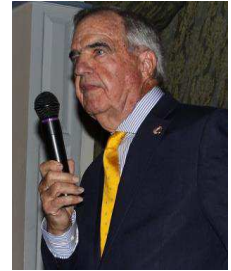
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From the President

The 2014 Festival of Music was a tremendous success. A big thank you to the entire board, committee members and volunteers as well as all of our sponsors and donors ---please know we appreciated your support. Congratulations to all 21 contestants for participating and bringing the enjoyment that comes with your performances. Without you we would have a big void in our world. The contribution of the judges and their difficult task of selecting the winners is also most appreciated.

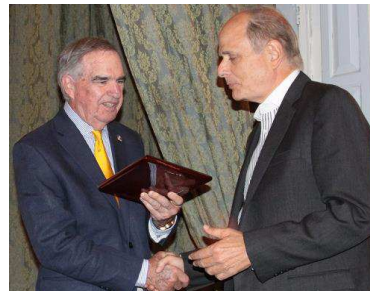


Thank you, to the founders, Chateau and John Gardecki who were the force behind our success. I also want to thank the chairs, **Elizabeth Cummings and Ben Cox** for their contribution. WIPAC has many outreach programs scheduled. I am hoping and looking forward to seeing you at these events.

Clayton Eisinger, WIPAC President

AWARD NIGHT COLLAGE

(photos courtesy of FESTIVALDC)



A gift for the Board Chair *** A Plaque for the First Place Winner *** A word from the Chairs



The People's Choice *** The Dinner Scene – 150 strong *** The Chopin Choice



The 2014 WIPAC Competition Finalists

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Weiling Wang

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Rhoda Septilici

The Festival of Music 2014 & the 12th Washington International Piano Artists Competition

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS

SPECIAL AWARDS: Best performances for.....

BACH - Daniel Chow for Partita

BEETHOVEN - Dana Morgan for Moonlight Sonata

CHOPIN – Robert Finley for Nocturne in B major

RAVEL – Michael Slavin for (his winning piece), Tombeau de Couperin

BAROQUE – Weiling Wang for Scarlatti Sonata in D major

CONTEMPORARY – Weiling Wang for Tan Dun Watercolor Memories

CLASSICAL - Dana Morgan for Haydn Sonata in E minor

ROMANTIC - Daniel Chow for Tchaikovsky/Pletnev Nutcracker

MOST IMAGINATIVE PROGRAMMING - Jeremias Mameghani

AUDIENCE AWARD – Dana Kristin Joie Morgan

PRESS JURY AWARD - Dana Kristin Joie Morgan

THANK YOU ALL until next competition and WIPAC Concerts!!!

AWARD CEREMONY AND CELEBRATORY DINNER

AUGUST 3, 2014



Patron Austin Hay with supporters



♪ Daniel Chow



♪ Chateau & Nicole



Nicole, Daniel & Robin



John Gardecki



*** Lola Reinsch & Al Pierce

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Contact: WIPAC
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Painting by artist
Susanne Eisinger



WIPAC Festival of Music Piano Competition Enhancing the Lives of the DC Community. By Henri and Lisa Polgar

If a phrase could embrace the spirit of the 12th annual Festival of Music and Washington International Piano Artists Competition, it was that which Co-Chair of the event, Elizabeth Cummings, articulated in the closing remarks "... the festival is a great affirmation of great music and an omen for world peace. Where music is concerned there are no borders, there are no boundaries, and there are no nations."

Indeed, the six pianists who made it to the final round of the Competition took the stage in the ballroom of the Fairfax Hotel, after a very rigorous juried selection process of the 23 initial contestants who represented pianists from Europe, Asia, the US and Canada. It was Michael Slavin of the USA who was chosen as this year's first place winner; Daniel Chow of Canada received second place and Robert Finley from England was third place winner. The audience enthusiastically selected US pianist Dana Morgan for the Audience Award. She was also selected for the Press Award.

It is because of the commitment of WIPAC Founders and Co-Chairs Chateau and John Gardecki, together with the hard work of the WIPAC Board of Directors and the support of George Washington University, that the Festival continues to bring to the city of Washington, DC the talents of pianists from all over the world who perfect their pianistic talents whilst continuing other professional pursuits. This year the Competition Co-Chairs were Elizabeth Cummings and Ben Cox.

The keynote speaker, Lola C. Reinsch of the Reinsch and Pierce Family Foundation, and one of the Festival's major Benefactors, commented that the tradition of amateur pianists competitions is one that was started in Europe, a continent which has traditionally valued "amateur" pianists who are devoted to the highest standards of piano performance whilst at the same time choosing to earn his or her livelihood outside of the music profession.

Michael Davidson, the Chairman of the Jury stated, "This is an 'amateur' competition, and we use that term in the finest sense of the word, because believe me, every one of these competitors is excelling in his own field and his own profession... one of our competitors teaches snowboarding in the Canadian Rockies, another is a professor in chemistry... we have an optical engineer who has designed some of the devices on the Hubble Space Telescope." And the quality of the piano performances equally demonstrated exceptional talent and ability.



Michael Slavin won first prize with his final selection, "Le Tombeau de Couperin" by Maurice Ravel. The work is known for its harmonically complex structure and a challenge to the most accomplished pianist. Indeed, Michael Slavin's performance of the work confirmed his pianistic skills and accomplishments. Intended to evoke the style of the musical Baroque era of the 17th century, it was composed as a dedication to Ravel's friends who were killed in World War I (Ravel himself served as an ambulance driver). The suite has a bright and carefree flavor. When asked of this contrast with the music and the dedication, Ravel responded "The dead are sad enough in their eternal silence." Michael Slavin captured the poignant sadness with an interpretation that had profound depth. As to combining a career as an ophthalmologist and a pianist, Michael Slavin commented, "All the years that I was a physician I would play concerts at ophthalmology meetings and some of my fellow ophthalmologists who were some of the most wonderful chamber musicians also performed at our conventions."



Daniel Chow is the natural performer captivating the members of the audience who sat on the edge of their seats during his performance of Franz Liszt "Reminiscence of San Juan." He is the kind of pianist who in addition to his pianistic prowess has an engaging personality that captures your attention even before he plays a note. His performance of the Tchaikovsky-Pletnev "Concert Suites from The Nutcracker" in the previous semi-finalist rounds made him a sure winner from the start.

WIPAC
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*Do you have any tip??
Send it and it will be
shared!*

wipacusa@gmail.com

*Music is the language
of peace!*

Robert Finley, a more introspective artist, equally captivated his audience with great pianistic ability, choosing to emphasize the lyrical quality of his musical palette. His interpretation of Billy Mayerl's "Jill All Alone" was deeply emotional. The Third Prize was given in honor of pianist Robert Pritchard, who was born in 1927 and was one of the first African-American concert pianists to gain viability on the world concert stage in the 1950s as a performer and recording artists of classical music.



the nuances of the romantic period.

Of Dana Morgan, a jury member commented that her performance of the George Gershwin "Rhapsody in Blue" was so captivating that she retained the audience's interest and admiration with a dynamic performance, despite the fact that the piece has to overcome the obstacle of being so well known and heard so often. Indeed her performance of the Shubert Impromptu No 3 in B flat, demonstrated her understanding of

The distinguished jury included concert pianist and professor at the Curtis Institute, Susan Starr (a winner and judge in the Tchaikovsky Competition), Eric Himy, Frank Conlon, Jay Gottlieb, Raymond Jackson, Tzvetan Konstantinov, Laurence Berman, Malinee Peris, Haskell Small, Janice Weber and David Witten. On the press jury was Cecilia Porter, music critic of the Washington Post and Henri Polgar, contributor to FestivalDC.com

~~~~~  
**The Scene at the Semi-Final Rounds at GWU**  
August 2, 2014 (photos from FestivalDC)



Weiling Wang (Texas)

Kazuko Taki (Japan)

Chateau announcing the Candidates. Portia and Henri Polgar in the audience.



Neil McKelvie & Art Olsen \*\*\*  
Prof. Emeritus & a Rocket Scientist



Chateau Gardecki \*\*\*  
the M/C



Competition Co-Chairs & Chow  
Ben Cox & Elizabeth Cummings



Yves & Dr. Gerard de Botton \*\*\*



The Filipino contingent \*\*\*



Weiling Wang & Adrienne J.

**Festival  
of Music 2015  
&  
The 13th Washington  
International Piano  
Artists Competition**

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**Grand Prize**  
Debut Recital -The  
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**Second Prize - \$ 1,000**  
**Third Prize - \$ 500**



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Leonid Kelner  
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Competition  
Certificates**



**SPECIAL AWARDS-  
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Best Performance of  
Bach's composition

Best Performance of  
Beethoven works

Best Performance of  
Chopin works

Best Performance of a  
Ravel composition

Best Performance for  
Baroque Period

Best Performance of  
Contemporary Work

Best Performance of  
Classical

Most Imaginative  
Programming

Best Performance of a  
Romantic Period

Best Performance of  
Bach composition

The Audience Award  
The Press Jury Award  
(Donors for all awards  
Welcome)

---

## Letters to WIPAC from competitors.....

**From:** max sung [<mailto:maxwsung@yahoo.com>]

**Sent:** Saturday, August 9, 2014 9:37 AM

**To:** [JAGardecki@gmail.com](mailto:JAGardecki@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Re: Thanks to ALL for your contributions to a wonderful 12th year competition event

Hi John,

Congratulations to you, Chateau and the WIPAC team for yet another wonderful competition. We are grateful to have a chance every year to come together, talk and play for one another. I thought the master classes were one of the high points of the competition.

One of the charms and challenges of WIPAC is to have adjust to different pianos and venues at each stage of the competition. This happens in the real world and we do not always have an ideal instrument. This year, the GW piano for the preliminaries and semifinals sounded and played better than the previous year. I congratulate you on getting the Steingraeber Concert Grand for the Finals! It is always a pleasure to go to a competition where the pianos are consistently in top shape.

Thank you for the books, which should be de rigueur reading for all pianists.

A visit to the Smithsonian Division of Musical instruments is a great idea. At the Berlin International Piano Amateur Competition, some of the rehearsals were in a small concert hall at the Musical Instruments Museum next to the Philharmonie, and we get to look at all the old instruments.

Looking forward to next year,

Sincerely,  
Max (Max Sung)

~~~~~

Dear Chateau, John, Jean, and Portia,

How are you? Hope everyone was able to rest up a bit after another successful competition!

I just wanted to say THANK YOU to you, and all the board members and volunteers (Diane, Mary, Carol and more), for hosting this fantastic competition including a spectacular celebration dinner in a magnificent ballroom! I felt I was transported to a grand palace in Vienna! It was magical!

In thanking you all for all your support and hard work for this well organized competition, I have donated my "winnings" which I received from the Best Performance of a Baroque and Contemporary work, by making a contribution of \$500.00 to WIPAC via PayPal this morning.

You all are the true champions of this event! I hope to see you soon again at another WIPAC event or next year's competition.

All the Best, **Wei Ling**

**Laughter is good
For you**

*Be a VOLUNTEER and
be counted!*

Link to a Web page
www.wipac.org

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Letters to WIPACCont'd

Dear John and Chateau,
I had a really nice time in Washington and wanted to thank you very much for arranging another wonderful competition, for the prize money, and everything else. This was a very welcome and much needed break for me because as you know I am going through some very difficult times with my parents. As you know, my father is now in a nursing home in Shrewsbury MA, and I am now working to bring my mother back to Massachusetts permanently so that she can be nearer to me if she needs help. My brother is going down to Florida today to help her pack and to bring her to my house on Saturday.

It was very nice seeing you and everyone else. With best wishes.
Robert



Letters from Jurors.....

Dear Chateau –

This is the first time I've opened my e-mail since coming back from Washington, and I find three messages from you!! Many apologies, especially since I wanted to be the first to write you. I had a wonderful time with all of you. The atmosphere was so warm and welcoming, at the same time that the serious business was taken seriously. I feel I have made new friends very quickly, and I hope we will not lose track of each other. If by any chance you and John are thinking of coming to Boston, you must look me up. And I very much wish to get back to Washington. One way or another, I hope we will be together again soon. In the meantime, I send all sorts of thanks for several delightful days. As ever fondly, Larry

A toast to all!



Jay Gottlieb with the Gardecki



Mike, Jay, Marlies, Larry and Carol

At the Sundquist's luncheon to bid farewell to two special friends!

Mary Clare Haskin
Carla Jones-Batka
Doria Kaplan
Gamilla Karjawally
Bridget Kesten
Monique Lass
Kathryn Leckey &
Bob Best
Chrispina & Ian
MacDonald
Mr. Kunihiro Matsuda
Carol McDonough
Mr. Robert L. Miller
Mr. Gary Maslan
Anelia Ognianov
Edwarda & Richard
Okreglak
Robert Pampell
Carleton Penn
Dolores Potosnak
Mr. Charles Potter
Cecil & Pearl
Richardson
Emilio Sacerdoti
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WIPAC “Festival of Music” Welcomes Pianists in Preliminary Rounds - by [Henri Georges Polgar](#) • August 1, 2014

The 12th annual Washington International Piano Artists Competition was off to a great start today when pianist competitors from around the world participated in the preliminary round of the competition held at George Washington University.

Representing the USA, Canada, France, Germany, Japan and Taiwan pianists performed before a distinguished jury comprised of Dr. Raymond Jackson, concert pianist and professor of piano at Howard University; Tzvetan Konstantinov, concert pianist, professor at George Washington University and President of the International Leopold Godowsky Institute; Jay Gottlieb, concert pianist, composer and author; Frank Conlon, professor in the music department of George Washington University, and attorney Michael Davidson.

Madame Chateau Gardecki, founder and director of the Washington International Piano Artists Competition, graciously presided over the rounds introducing each performer.



Indeed, for music lovers and especially devotees of the classical piano repertoire, the WIPAC is a great opportunity to enjoy hours of wonderful piano performances. The next rounds will take place on August 1 at 1:20 pm at the George Washington University Music Department at 801 22 St, NW in Phillip Hall.

The Washington International Piano Artists Competition is one of the leading worldwide events devoted to the “amateur pianist.” These are musicians who have pursued their dedication to piano performance while working in other professions. Today an array of doctors, surgeons, attorneys, educators, railroad officer, scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs gathered to make wonderful music. Gerard de Botton, Casey Churko, Dana Morgan, Andrew Celentano, Daniel Chow, Neil McKelvie, Jeremias Mameghani, Michael Slavin and Andrew Celentano were the pianists that participated in the preliminary rounds. There is a sense of “grandeur” to the lives of these pianists who have developed expertise in their own professions as they preserved their dedication to the art of piano playing at a very high level. Although some contestants performed more successfully than others, they all succeeded in making “time stop” for their audience which is the sign of true artistry.

WIPAC continues to live up to its pledge to “creating a renaissance of interest in the Art of Piano Performance....making music flourish in our communities....promoting international friendship, and cultural understanding, through the arts of classical piano music.” Hurrah for WIPAC.

~~~~~



**Mike Davidson with Chateau & John Gardecki**



**Jeremias Mameghani of Dusseldorf, Germany**



**Canadian Casey Churko**

Message from  
Carol Rudman  
August 18, 2014

Chateau and John,

You reached for  
the moon and  
touched it !!!

MUSIC MUSIC, MUSIC  
PIANO PIANO  
PIANISSIMO!!!

CONGRATULATIONS  
ON THIS 12TH EDITION  
OF WIPAC.

MANY THANKS FOR  
THE LINKS. I have not  
had a chance to read  
them but will soon.

ALL THE BEST AND  
A BIENTOT

## Preliminary Round Reception at GWU B120 August 1, 2014

Erik Sundquist \*\*\* the treats, the sweets \*\*\* and the sweeties



## Invitation to join WIPAC SPONSORS AND PATRONS

We wish to invite you to support and renew your membership to enable WIPAC to present the musical program, which is now a tradition in the Capital City of Washington.

Come join other devoted music lovers and enjoy the numerous benefits that WIPAC has to offer our sponsors, patrons and members.

**WIPAC 2014 Calendar of Events is available at [www.wipac.org](http://www.wipac.org)**

Yes, I/We wish to join the celebration of music and support WIPAC to make music flourish in our community and/or bequeath a gift under the name of \_\_\_\_\_

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Two VIP Seats at November Fall Gala and all the above

Table for 6 at the November Gala and all of the above

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and presentation of the Grand Prize at the Finals.

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Thank you!

WIPAC Executive Board ©

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