

The 22nd International Chopin Piano Competition in ASIA – Final Round

Junior High School Category

I extend my highest appreciation to all participants of the competition and their teachers. I am glad that despite of such unfavorable circumstances you managed to keep a very high artistic level of my favorite Junior High School group! I am aware that the preparation for this year's competition was extremely complicated. Thank you all for this unusual effort.

Because last year I have described in details my observations on the Chopin style (which are still valid), this time I have only several suggestions to our young artists connecting with our present pandemic situation...

1. A beautiful, singing sound is a one of the basic distinguished features of Chopin's music. Particularly now, when we are locked in our houses, not always working with the best instruments, we should pay a special attention to this element. When you are making recordings, please pay attention to it even double. You don't need a professional studio equipment to make a good sounding recording. Listen to your performances critically. Look for a beautiful sound. How much Forte I can play to the microphone? What kind of Piano sounds best?
2. Take care of the correct pedaling. During online lessons, your teachers cannot fully help you with this. You have to take more responsibility...
3. Do not abuse the effect of artificial reverb during recordings, please. The Chopin music is very clear, not very far from Mozart in this aspect. The finger's legato is much better than "reverb legato". I strongly believe that the competition will return to the previous formula in the next year. I wish all of you a lot of health and joy from performing Chopin works. Try to express as much of your positive emotions as possible in this beautiful music.

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First of all, I would like to send my sincere congratulations to the Pedagogues and Students for the high level of preparation to the Competition in the difficult circumstances. I wish you all a lot of optimism for the New Year 2021.

1. As the general guide for every day pedagogical work, I would like to recommend the focus on the development of Students' timbral and emotional imagination that should be achieved upon the basis of Chopin's remarks and instructions.
2. The realization of Chopin's ornamentation was in many cases debatable. The ornamentation in the music of Fryderyk Chopin should never be seen through a set of petrified rules; on the contrary, it should always be performed in accord with the melodic and rhythmic context of the given fragment.

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Congratulations for all participants of the Final Round of the 22nd International Chopin Piano Competition in Asia! I was very impressed by the performances in Junior High School Category. The required repertoire – Chopin Etudes, Ballades, Scherzos and Nocturnes represent the highest

level of artistic and technical difficulty. The majority of young pianists faced this challenge excellently and could be candidates for the coming International Chopin Competition in Warsaw!

I admire great pianistic skills, the musical maturity and the sense of Chopin style by the most of the competitors. Many interpretations will stay in my memory.

Different acoustics and pianos used for the sessions caused some trouble to compare the performances. I tried to separate, what is offered by the performer and what belongs to recording conditions.

In some cases, the reason to give the lower score was some not accidental, wrong notes. My explanation is either careless score reading or the lack of harmony analysis. I am convinced that the profound knowledge of harmony is the most important thing in order to understand the form and the essence of the music.

Thank you very much for sharing with the listeners the beauty of Chopin's music. I wish all young pianists successful year 2021!