

The 23rd International Chopin Piano Competition in ASIA
Message from Polish Jury Members
University Category

●Jury member A

Most of you enjoy playing the piano – keep it in mind.

Chopin music style is unique, be aware of its vocal (lyrical) and brilliant (virtuoso) aspects. Keep an integrity of their large and complex forms being aware of all contrasts.

The titles of the works oblige to search for the appropriate performance means.

Give more importance to Chopin's rubato and learn to apply it in the right way.

Play spontaneously – let music to overtake your feelings, of course within certain limits.

A choice of tempo should be adequate to the score indication and music expression.

Read and respect carefully all markings in the score.

Playing piano pay attention to your posture – the quality of sound depends also on it.

Think of using pedal as an important means of expression.

●Jury member B

First of all, I would like to thank and congratulate everyone whose work contributed to the fact that, despite the very difficult and long months of the pandemic, the already traditional "23rd International Chopin Piano Competition in Asia" could take place. In definitely different conditions - but the most important thing is that it took place ! Bravo !

The competition, for many years now, draws attention not only because its high artistic level, but also because the unusually large crowds of participants in the Competition Finals - in each of the equally numerous categories of the Competition.

The artistic level in the categories that I had a pleasure to judge - High School and University - was generally very high, but at the same time often very diverse. As it is usually the case in online competitions, we heard recordings made often in extremely different acoustic conditions, which certainly makes it difficult for the jury to make a completely objective assessment.

Since the admissible repertoire in those two groups was almost identical, let me briefly describe my general impressions concerning the total of 62 listened video recordings in both mentioned categories.

Generally speaking, the technical skills demonstrated by pianists in the Etudes, drew particular attention. But it is worth remembering that the value of an interpretation of Chopin's music fortunately does not consist of, and is not linked alone to the pianist's technical excellence. And it turned out quite often that audible and visible serious interpretation problems, appeared in performances of Ballades, Scherzos, Sonatas or Polonaises...

At this point, it is worth emphasising that special attention and recognition is due to those interpretations in which the pianists clearly understand the depth of the content of the performed piece - and not only more or less successfully struggle with pianistic technical difficulties.

Attention and recognition to pianists, who not only perform correctly the details of the score text, but

young musicians, whose talent manifests itself in careful listening to the narration of their playing, whose creativity of imagination and power of artistic personality compels the listener to follow the development of the presented interpretation. Such impressions, however, we have only in contact with a pianist possessing a certain artistic personality, which is the basic condition of what we call "talent" - which, after years of hard work, can transform a good "pianist" into a real "artist".

Most often, however, we are dealing with young pianists whose main - audible and visible - challenge and ambition seems to be a correct realization of the text written in the scores. On the other hand, such realization of the text is obviously a very important and valuable attitude for any young musician. However, this is definitely not enough to think about effectively conveying their emotions, expression and imagination to the audience. We as pianists always play for someone, we tell in our playing about something that is hidden in the score, and our task is to find this content and convey it to the listeners by means of a narration which is a result of our imagination and its creativity.

We could write for a long time about the importance of such elements of interpretation as a phrase and its structure, about a flexible narrative whose fluidity is based on its content - and not just on the indications of a metronome. We could write about differentiated articulation, self-control and moderation of agogics and dynamics, which of course should not be considered as the source of expression but only its result! We could write about the extremely important pedalisation, controlled down to the smallest detail and about deep understanding of the form and harmonic structure of a piece. All this should be well supported by knowledge of the history of music, the style of the period in which the piece was composed, and the artistic profile and achievements of the composer.

Yes, without doubts - the profession of a pianist or musician is not an easy one!

Fortunately, the competition video recordings of the finalists of the 23rd International Chopin Piano Competition in Asia, which I had the pleasure to listen to, clearly show that we have a very numerous and exceptionally talented young people, who with the help of their teachers and their own work, should achieve the expected, very positive results.

Please remember - the important purpose of participation in competitions are not the awards! Competitions help us to consciously increase our repertoire, they give us specific and deadline tasks, they have a positive influence on our ambition and concentration at work. Competitions are the important and positive element in the development of every young musician.

To conclude my perhaps a bit overlong comments, let me convey from the bottom of my heart, my best wishes to all participants of the Competition, also to their teachers and parents. I wish you all much of joy from the artistic achievements of their children and students, and satisfaction in the peaceful observation of the natural development of the talent of our piano youth.

●Jury member C

Dear Participants,

I would like to congratulate all of you, regardless of the number of points you received. I am very happy that there is a place for music in your life, and that you are putting so much effort into discovering the beauty of Chopin's masterpieces, especially now, in this very difficult, pandemic time. I would like to share some of my thoughts after listening to all recordings. I guess that the most

important thing in understanding Chopin's music properly is finding a balance of all important elements in every piece you play: playing rubato and playing with simplicity, finding good balance in tempo, playing with strong fingertips but also with great delicately. It is always very important to respect the music text (all indications, dynamics, tempo, expression) provided by the composer. c - Chopin's style is different that e.g. Rachmaninov's or Tschaikovsky's.

I wish all of you all the best for the future. Keep on developing your skills and musical imagination. Remember that improving your piano playing means being a better person each day, because sharing the beauty of Chopin's, Bach's or Beethoven's music with other people is one of the most exceptional gifts we can give, and this is something absolutely priceless.