

The 25th International Chopin Piano Competition in ASIA
Feedback from the Jury
Final Round of Elementary School Grade 3&4

●Jury A

Overall, many of the performances were great listening to. I would like to mention that while the performances were very rich in shading, it was worrying that some of them were also little too artificially created at time.

●Jury B

I thought everyone practiced with a good understanding of the music, which is difficult for 3rd and 4th year students.

Most of the pieces were dances, such as waltzes, mazurkas, and polonaises, but I felt that it seems difficult for some participants to sing the melody along with the rhythm of each piece. Sometimes when one tried to sing a melody beautifully, the rhythm did not seem to be in place, or it did not seem to connect well with the bridge figures or passages.

Try to think carefully about the relationships before and after the change of figure, change of tonality, and other changes.

●Jury C

I was impressed by how well everyone studied.

The performance is very touching with good sense of agogic with steady technique.

●Jury D

In further work, I suggest to focus on the following elements:

1. Pedalization - it was very often overused and not very precise, resulting in a lack of selectivity and articulatory clarity.
2. Correct reading of the score - accents, dots, or even dynamic markings - the way they are performed always depends on the context . For example-we will perform an accent differently in forte dynamics and differently in piano dynamics. Individual articulation marks can have very different meanings.
3. Expressive, suggestive and natural phrasing.

●Jury E

Congratulations on making it to the Final Round. I think everyone prepared very well to

get this far and it was very high level competition.

And many of you played with some room to spare and you all listened carefully to the sound of the hall. On the other hand, it seemed that each phrase sometimes became sluggish. It would be good if the phrase could be put together more naturally in larger phrase. Look forward to seeing even more growth in the future!

●Jury F

As for my comments and suggestions to the young pianists - those I had the opportunity to listen to during this year's Competition, I must admit that they do not differ from the comments I made earlier, in the previous many years of my contact with the Competition.

The pianist, or rather I prefer to say - a real artist, does not play the piano, but tells his story not with his fingers, but with his artistic imagination. Single notes are words, a phrase is a sentence, a piece is a whole story. Only with this understanding and transmission of music can we reach the soul of the listener and convey all the emotions and expressions of music.

Of course, I could write - as I have done many times before, about the importance of Chopin's "legato cantabile" - legato done with the fingers and not with the pedal, about the sense of harmonic structure, about articulation, precise pedalisation, about naturalness of playing which Chopin paid so much attention to, about playing without any artificial "gadgets" often only aiming at arousing the applause of the audience, about a sense of time in the music and flexible narration not subjected to excessive pressure of the metronome, which often disturbs the artistic imagination in favour of correct but mechanical playing.

All these comments - as I understand it, in this very moment are not directed to the youngest children playing piano. I'd like to transmit it, first of all - to teachers and after that to young pianists. I think so, because I am fully aware that as a juror of a competition judging young and youngest pianists, I am judging to a large extent not only the playing child, but also, and perhaps above all, the teacher of this young pianist, who, at only a few years old or a couple of ten years old, is only trying to politely follow the recommendations of his teacher. Yes, without doubts - the profession of a pianist or musician is not an easy one!

Unfortunately, very frequently especially, we can see artificial theatrical gestures, which - perhaps according to the teachers - because certainly not the playing children! Presumably these gestures are meant to prove that we are listening to a very talented student. In my opinion - the true talent will defend itself without these sometimes ridiculous and not very artistic gestures! This remark is directed at teachers - I do so, because this 'pedagogical phenomenon' has been observed in Japan for many years. Unfortunately it is the twisting of a young performer's personality - and very bad way for the development of young pianists personality.

And a few words directed to young pianists - 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.