



PRESS RELEASE

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Event Dates: July 2-14, 2006

Media events: throughout the Competition

MUSICAL PRODIGIES AND TECHNOLOGY CONVERGE AT THIRD MINNESOTA INTERNATIONAL PIANO-E-COMPETITION

—Unique Musical Event Gains Popularity and Prestige as 24 Extraordinary Pianists Compete
Using the Latest in Music Technology—

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn.—Twenty-four of the world’s most gifted young pianists will vie for the grand prize at the Third Minnesota International Piano-e-Competition, held July 3 through July 14, 2006 at Hamline University in St. Paul and Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

“The 2006 Minnesota International Piano-e-Competition promises to be the most exciting yet,” states the Competition’s Artistic Director Alexander Braginsky. “This year’s contestants were of the highest caliber we’ve seen since this competition began.”

Using the latest in music technology, this unique competition enables artists from around the world to record and transmit their audition performances over the Internet through the use of a Yamaha Disklavier. This unique 9’ Concert Grand piano, in addition to being a concert-quality acoustic instrument, features a built-in system to record live performances as MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) data. These performances are then recreated on other Disklavier pianos with each note and nuance delivered faithfully, precisely as the pianist originally recorded.

At invitation-only screened auditions held in Shanghai, China; Paris, France; Los Angeles, California and New York City, sixty young pianists – chosen from a pool of over 130

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applicants from around the world – entered their digitally videotaped and recorded MIDI performances on Yamaha Disklavier concert pianos.

In early February, a six-member screening panel judged the contestants' performances using another Disklavier Concert Grand piano and a large projection video screen at Hamline University's Sundin Hall, where the Preliminary Rounds will also take place. This year, twenty-four finalists were chosen to participate.

The accommodations for the contestants for the duration of the competition as well as the practice facilities will be provided by Hamline University. To increase the practice facilities, two Wenger portable practice rooms equipped with the Virtual Acoustic Environments have been installed. These rooms are capable of imitating nine different acoustic environments and are equipped with complete digital recording and playback. There will be a media opportunity and room demonstration at 5:30PM-6:00PM, July 11 at Sundin Music Hall.

The order of the contestant performances will be determined during drawing of lots on July 2 at 1:00PM at Sundin Music Hall. A media photo opportunity will be around 1:30PM-2:00PM

All of the contestants who travel to Minneapolis for the live Preliminary Rounds will perform a 65-75 minute recital in the Recital Round July 2-7 at Sundin Music Hall. The performances will start at 12:30PM (July 4 at 11:00AM) and will go until 8:30PM. Nine will advance to perform a Schubert sonata in the Schubert Round, held at Sundin on July 8, 12:00PM-8:00PM Performers will be evaluated by a panel of judges comprised of distinguished international scholars and pianists. This year's jury will include Oxana Yablonskaya, Claude Frank, and Awadagin Pratt of the United States; Piotr Paleczny of Poland, Shi Shucheng of China, Alexey Skavronsky of Russia, and Dubravka Tomsic of Slovenia. Alexander Braginsky will be the Jury's non-voting chair.

Nine performers will be critiqued based on his or her imagination, judgment and overall presentation of the Schubert Sonata. Six finalists will be announced on July 8, around 8:00PM at Sundin Music Hall. From there, **six** finalists will perform in final rounds with the Nicollet Quartet at Sundin Music Hall, Hamline University on Monday, July 10 (3:00PM-8:00PM) and with the Minnesota Orchestra at Orchestra Hall on Wednesday, July 12 and Thursday, July 13. (7:30PM-10:00PM each night). The grand prize winner will be selected on the evening of July

13, and perform in a special recital on Friday, July 14 at noon at the Fitzgerald Theater in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

On July 11, 2006 at 6:30 p.m., at Sundin Hall, the Competition's festivities will feature a special event highlighting another fascinating application of Disklavier technology. Dr. John Q. Walker will demonstrate a unique process developed by Zenph Studios for converting old, monaural piano recordings back into note-perfect, dynamic live performances delivered on the Yamaha Disklavier. Powered by this major music production breakthrough, modern audiences can now enjoy Glenn Gould's 1956 recording of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* "live." One of the best known classical piano recordings ever, attendees will be able to experience the performance as if they were in the actual studio with Gould himself.

Like previous Piano-e-Competition winners Mei-Ting Sun (2002) and Jie Chen (2004), the grand prize recipient of this year's competition will be awarded a monetary gift of \$25,000 donated by the Grand Hotel Minneapolis, a CD recording issued on the Ten Thousand Lakes label, as well as a Yamaha DC3M4 Pro 6' 1" Disklavier Grand piano.

The winner will also embark on a prestigious recital tour including a November 2006 debut recital at Salle Cortot in Paris and fall 2007 New York City debut performance at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall. The prevailing pianist will also perform on a live broadcast on Minneapolis Public Radio as well as engagements with the Minnesota and Richmond Symphony Orchestras. Second- through sixth-prize winners will receive cash prizes totaling \$65,000, also furnished by the Grand Hotel Minneapolis.

All rounds at Sundin and Orchestra Halls will be open to the public. For tickets and schedule information, please visit www.piano-e-competition.com. All performances will be videostreamed live over the internet. Audition recitals and final round performances will also be available for the general public to download as MIDI files on their own computers or on their own Disklavier pianos from the e-competition home page.

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