

Jury english

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Jury Robert Benz, Germany (President)

received his first piano lessons from his father at the age of 4 years. He studied with Naoyuki Taneda at the University of Music in Karlsruhe, and with Rosina Lhevinne and Martin Canin at the Juilliard School in New York. He won first prize at both the International Busoni Competition in Bolzano in 1974 and in 1976 at the International Liszt-Bartók Competition in Budapest. Concert engagements have taken him throughout Europe, the USA, Korea and Japan. Robert Benz has recorded the complete cycle of Beethoven's piano sonatas onto CD and has been the Trio Bamberg's pianist since 1996. He has also held the chair of Professor for Piano at the University of Music in Mannheim since 1990. Since 2005 he is artistic director of the Ettlingen competition.

Andrea Bonatta, Italy

was born in Bolzano. Major influences in his musical development were studies with Paul Badura-Skoda in Vienna, Nikita Magaloff in Geneva, Stefan Askenase in Bonn and Wilhelm Kempff in Positano. He has recorded on CD Brahms's complete works for piano as well as several other CDs dedicated to Liszt and Schubert and likes to play chamber music. His book on Brahms's piano work is considered a milestone in this field and has been translated into German. Andrea Bonatta has been the artistic director of the "Ferruccio Busoni" International Piano Competition in Bolzano and vice president of the WFIMC of Geneva. He has played in Europe, North and South America, Australia, Korea, China and South Africa, and takes part in the jury at important competitions (Bolzano, Terni, Vercelli, Utrecht, Dortmund, Weimar, Pretoria, Moscow, Shanghai, Seoul).

Christopher Elton, Great Britain

was born in Edinburgh and studied piano and cello at the Royal Academy of Music in London. During his studies he won numerous prizes at British and International competitions. He currently is Head of the Keyboard Department at the Royal Academy of Music in London. His pupils have achieved many prizes at international competitions such as Van Cliburn, Moscow-Tchaikovsky, New York Young Concert Artists, Leeds, Munich, Hamamatsu, etc. Christopher Elton is an active jury member in international competitions, at music festivals and television events, and has given concerts in recent years in Europe, USA, Australia and Vietnam. He was appointed a Professor of the University of London in 2003.

Daejin Kim, Korea

holds BM, MM, DMA degree from the Juilliard School where he studied with Martin Canin. He won the first prize at the Robert Casadesus International Piano Competition (now the Cleveland Competition) and has given master classes and performed throughout the United States, Europe and Asia. He received a decoration for 'the Artist of the Year' by the Ministry of Culture in Korea. His recent discography includes the Piano Concertos (KV 488 and KV 453) by Mozart in which he conducted the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra from the keyboard. Currently, he is a professor at the Korean National University of Arts and has been a jury member for the most prestigious international competitions. His student, Sunwook Kim won the first prize in Ettlingen (2004), Clara Haskil (2005) and Leeds (2006).

Renate Kretschmar-Fischer, Germany

The retired Professor of the University of Music in Detmold studied as a pianist under Conrad Hansen, after beginning her studies originally in medicine. In over 40 years of teaching she has taught pupils from numerous countries, of whom many are now respected teachers at home and abroad. Among her students are many winners of international competitions. Renate Kretschmar-Fischer is director of master courses in various countries and a jury member in international competitions.

Wolfgang Manz, Germany

Wolfgang Manz is prizewinner of prestigious international piano competitions such as Leeds (1981) and Brussels (Concours Reine Elisabeth, 1983). He has been influenced by the Czech pianist Drahomir Toman, later with Karlheinz Kämmerling at the renowned University of Music at Hannover. Manz is much in demand as soloist and performed in most important European cultural centres. In 2000 Wolfgang Manz was appointed professor for piano at the University of Music Nürnberg, where actually he is member of the University Board, the Senate and Head of the piano section. Wolfgang Manz is jury member at piano competitions and gives masterclasses. Some of his students won prestigious prizes.

Brigitte Meyer, Switzerland

was born in Biel (Switzerland). She studied with Denise Bidal (Lausanne) and Bruno Seidhofer (Vienna). 1971 she was awarded the "Bösendorfer-Prize", and was finalist of the Clara Haskil International Piano Competition in Vevey (1975). She performed in international Festivals like Schleswig-Holstein Musikfestival and Hakuba-Festival Japan and recorded many discs. She especially focuses on chamber music, among others with Martha Argerich, Maria-Joao Pires, Alexandre Rabinovitch and Heinrich Schiff. Since more than 20 years she teaches at the Conservatory Lausanne (Haute Ecole de Musique) and gives masterclasses in Tokyo and Teheran.

Kristin Merscher, Germany

was born in 1961 in Frankfurt/Main and studied with Karl-Heinz Kämmerling, Pierre Sancan and György Sebök. She performed with many renowned orchestras, such as the London Symphony Orchestra, Amsterdam Philharmonic and the Munich Philharmonic and played all over Europe, as well as the USA, Canada and the Far East. She recorded for radio and TV stations in Germany and abroad. With Maria Kliegel she released on Naxos Records the complete sonatas for piano and violoncello of Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and Brahms. Since 1990, Kristin Merscher is professor of piano at the University of Music Saarland, Germany.

Einar Steen-Nøkleberg, Norway

studied with Nicolai Dirdal and Hans Leygraf and won numerous prizes at international competitions. From 1975 to 1981 and again since 1994 he is Professor of Piano at the University of Music of Hannover, Germany. His international career has included solo recitals in Europe, Japan, USA and Mexico. Concerto appearances include the London Symphony

Orchestra, the Warsaw Philharmonic, and the Oslo and Bergen Philharmonic Orchestras in Norway. His recording of the Grieg Concerto was chosen by the BBC Saturday Review as the best version of this much-recorded concerto. He recently released the recording of all Grieg's piano music on Naxos. Barbara Szczepanska, Germany
Born in Warsaw, she graduated of the Chopin Academy in Warsaw with Lidia Kozubek and Teresa Manasterska). Postgraduate piano studies with Victor Mierzanov. Concerts in Poland, Germany, Hungary, Russia, Spain and Italy. 1998-2002 and 2004-2008 she was vice-rector of the Robert-Schumann-Hochschule fu r Musik Du sseldorf. Now she leads there the training center for talented children „Schumann junior“. Visiting professor in South Korea, Taiwan and China. Her students won many prizes in the international music competitions as the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels, Leeds International Piano Competition and ARD Competition Munich.