

2020 VMTA Concerto Winners

Viet Dao - Piano Division A (8th - 11th grades)

Student of Dr. Maria Yefimova

Saint-Saens Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 22 I. Andante sostenuto

Viet Dao is 14 years old and is currently living in Richmond, VA. This year, he is a ninth grader at Mills E. Godwin High School. Viet fell in love with piano when his mother started teaching him at 8 years old. Eventually, at the age of 10, Viet started private lessons with Dr. Yin Zheng, and subsequently, Dr. Maria Yefimova. In addition, Viet is also studying violin with Mr. Adrian Pinteau and has been playing in the Richmond Symphony Youth Orchestra. He loves that he can use music as an emotional outlet and greatly enjoys performing for others. Outside of music and school, Viet likes to practice Taekwondo and play volleyball. His other extracurriculars include reading, writing, and drawing. As of now, Viet's favorite piano piece to play is Ballade in G Minor by Frederic Chopin (his favorite composer).

Sophia Lin - Piano Division A (8th - 11th Grades)

Student of Dr. Marjorie Lee

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 17 in G Major, KV 453 III. Allegretto - Presto

Sophia Lin is an 8th grader at Longfellow Middle school. She is a student of Dr. Marjorie Lee. As the soloist, she had her concerto debut with Amadeus Orchestra at the age 12. She was featured at abc7 News.

Sophia has won many competitions, including the First Place of Robert Spencer Concerto Competition; the 2020 MTNA Eastern District finalist; the First Place of 2019 Virginia State Audition; the First Place of 2018 Ylva Novik Concerto Competition. She is the Third Place winner of 2019 William Knabe International Piano Competition and 2018 East Tennessee State University International Piano Competition. Sophia is the Semifinalists of the 2019 LangLang International Piano competition in China. In January 2020, she won the Honorable Mention prize in the inaugural Elizabeth Loker Concerto Competition. Most recently, she won the 2nd place in the 2020 Asian American International Competition and 3rd place in 2020 Washington Universal Piano Competition.

Sophia frequently performs in venues such as Kennedy Center and many Community Centers in Maryland, Virginia and Washington DC area. Sponsored by the Tacy Foundation COVID-19 Project, she performed virtually for seniors, patients and medical staffs. Her music recording CDs were distributed to patients and seniors nationwide during this pandemic.

Elizabeth Ritchie - Piano Division B (12th Grade - College)

Student of Dr. Eric Ruple

Saint-Saens Piano Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 22 I. Andante Sostenuto

Elizabeth Ritchie is a native of Harrisonburg, Virginia, and is a Piano Performance major at James Madison University and a recipient of the four-year Madison Award for Academic Excellence. She is currently in her Junior year and studies under Dr. Eric Ruple. Before coming to JMU, she studied for seven years under Dr. Patricia Brady. Elizabeth has been teaching students in her private piano studio in the Harrisonburg area since 2015. She is also an active accompanist for JMU vocal and instrumental students, and has accompanied multiple JMU vocalists at NATS competitions in 2019 and 2020. During her freshman year at JMU, she was a winner in the JMU Piano Area Concerto Competition, and received honorable mention in the competition in 2019. In her free time, Elizabeth loves skiing, running, hiking, reading, and spending time with her four younger siblings.

Ari Cho Han, violin - String Division A (8th - 11th Grades)

Student of Dr. Wanchi Huang

Wieniawski Violin Concerto No. 1 in F# Minor, Op. 14 I. Allegro moderato

Ari Cho Han is a 14 year old violinist from Harrisonburg, Virginia. He is a freshman attending Harrisonburg High School, and currently studies under Dr. Wanchi Huang, who teaches at James Madison University. Ari regularly plays piano and violin in the Wednesday Music Club recitals, and participates in competitions such as the Richmond Symphony Orchestra League, and the Youth Orchestra of Central Virginia competition. Ari has also attended summer programs such as the Peabody Prep Summer Program, and the Philadelphia International music festival. In recent years, Ari has also studied in the Heifetz Peg Program with artists such as Carli Smith and Bela Horvath. When Ari's not playing music, he likes to play sports, and spend time with his family and friends, but his true passion is performing on the stage.

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