

The Embassy of Poland



*Washington International
Piano Arts
Council*

proudly presents

The
8th Annual
WINNERS
GRAND PRIX CONCERT

Thursday April 23, 2009 6:30 PM

**The Embassy of Poland
2640 Sixteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC**





Washington International
Piano Arts
Council

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Washington International
Piano Arts
Council

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**Welcome to Washington,
the most exciting city in the world, where music lives!
Congratulations to these winners of international piano competitions!**

It is our pleasure to present these talented pianists at the annual Winners Grand Prix Concert in the 8th year of celebration of music. On behalf of WIPAC, we are delighted to welcome you, our friends and patrons to this fabulous grand salon of the Embassy of Poland, a historic building that houses the grand piano donated by the former Prime Minister of Poland, Ignacy Jan Paderewski.

This concert amplifies what most of us believe that performing is not just for a select few in the classical world. The concept began a few years ago because of a deep interest to showcase the talents of wonderful pianists who would otherwise not have any other chance to perform after winning a competition.

Our sincere appreciation to all our diplomatic friends who have supported WIPAC in presenting the annual Winners Grand Prix Concert and other special concerts throughout the year. Most especially, we would like to thank this year's Honorary Chair, the Honorable Mariusz Brymora, Counselor of the Polish Embassy whose tour of duty ends this year. He has been a great supporter of the arts and has given so much of his time developing, presenting and organizing the most unique, different and engaging cultural events. He has become a mainstay of WIPAC Competition, serving as Chairman of the Jury and doing it so well, we will have a hard time finding a replacement. We thank him for his tireless and enthusiastic support of WIPAC practically since he assumed his post in 2004.

To Jean Wigham, WIPAC President, and the WGPC Concert Committee Chairmen Nicole d'Amecourt and Maria Zelmira (Mickey) Nedelcovic for their dedication and effort to make this concert a great success; the Committee Members, and WIPAC Board Members for their constant advices and assistance in planning this concert.

To the audience, the advertisers, patrons, donors and sponsors, my gratitude. I hope that you will continue to support WIPAC and its activities.

Last, but certainly not least, I salute the pianists, Matthias Fischer of Germany, Vincent Schmithorst, Christopher Shih and Jelena Vladikovic, Americans all for their devotion to the great art of piano performance. We thank them for being here tonight and for sharing their achievements with us!

WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL PIANO ARTS COUNCIL

**Chateau Gardecki
Chair of the Board and Founder**



Washington International
Piano Arts
Council

In partnership with



The Embassy of Poland

proudly presents

“A Celebration of Chopin and Company”

The 8th Annual
Winners Grand Prix Concert

Jelena Vladikovic, pianist

Winner of 2007 Washington International Piano Artists Competition

Fryderyk Chopin
Franz Liszt

Preludes Op. 28, Selection
Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses,
#7 Funérailles

Christopher Shih, pianist

Winner of Les Concours des Grands Amateurs de Piano

Debussy
Fryderyk Chopin

En Bateau from Petite Suite
arranged by J. Durand
Barcarolle, Op. 60

Intermission

Matthias Fischer, pianist

Winner of Berlin International Piano Amateur Competition

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Variations on a Theme of Chopin

Vincent Schmithorst, pianist

Winner of 2008 Washington International Piano Artists Competition

F. Mendelssohn (1809-1847) Variations Serieuses, Op. 54
F. Chopin (1810-1849) Fantasy in f minor, Op. 49
R. Schumann (1810-1856) Toccata, Op. 7

Reception to follow the concert

No cell phones, videotaping or cameras allowed.

About the Pianists



♫ **Matthias Fischer of Germany, First Place Winner of the Berlin International Piano Amateur Competition.**

Matthias Fischer was born in 1973 in Bad Kissingen (Germany). He got his first piano-lessons from his parents at the age of 5. He studied piano for 1 year in Munich with Prof. Karl-Hermann Mrongovius. Between 1995 and 2002 he studied medicine in Würzburg. Since 2007 he is working as a psychiatrist at the university hospital of Würzburg. After having finished his medical thesis about learning and memory in flies he is currently occupied with an MD/PhD-thesis about a form of mental retardation. In 1996 he won the 2nd prize in the 2nd, in 1998 the 3rd prize in the 3rd "International Students Piano Competition" in Utrecht. In 2000 he won the 1st prize in the 11th Les Concours de Grands Amateurs de Piano in Paris. In 2008 he won the 1st and the audience awards in the Berlin international piano amateur competition, playing Mendelssohn's d-minor piano-trio in the final. He gives concerts as soloist, chamber-musician and with orchestra: He played Haydn's piano-concerto in D-Major with the chamber - orchestra Wratislavia, Mozart's piano-concerto in d-minor KV 466 with the chamber - orchestra of the University of Würzburg and Cesar Francks Variations Symphoniques with the orchestre de la garde républicaine in Paris.

♫ **Vincent Schmithorst of Ohio, First Prize Winner, 2008 Festival of Music and the Sixth Washington International Piano Artists Competition**



WIPAC proudly presents pianist Vincent Schmithorst of Ohio to perform music of Brahms, Chopin and Mozart. Vince is currently working at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center where he is using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology to study how the brain processes sound in children with unilateral hearing loss and auditory processing disorders, and is interested in the effect musical training in childhood may have on other cognitive domains such as math processing. He began his piano studies at the age of four and soloed with an amateur orchestra at the age of eight. At ten years of age, he was a soloist with the Cincinnati POPS Orchestra, and has since also played with the Cincinnati Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, and Columbus Symphony Orchestras. He continued his studies at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where he double-majored in piano performance and physics, graduating with a Bachelor's of Science and Bachelor's of Music at the age of eighteen. Subsequently he pursued doctoral studies in physics.

Vince continues to perform piano in solo recitals, and his awards include sixth prize in the American Music Scholarship Association World Piano Competition, and was a finalist and diploma-recipient in the first international Piano and Organ Competition held in Vilnius, Lithuania.



♪ **Christopher Shih of Maryland, First Place Winner
2008 Les Concours des Grands Amateurs de Piano,
Paris, France**

Physician and pianist Christopher Shih has performed in major venues in over a dozen countries around the globe, including France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Taiwan, and countless cities in the United States. He has soloed with numerous orchestras, including repeated engagements with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington DC. His performance with the NSO on the Capitol Lawn for an audience of 50,000 prompted the Washington Post to declare, "If Shih is as gifted in medicine as he is in music, he has some serious career decisions to make." Other past orchestral engagements include the Georgetown, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, New England Conservatory, Harvard-Radcliffe, Newton, and Paris Garde Republicaine orchestras.

In 1997 Christopher was one of the top four Americans in the Tenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, where he was a press and audience favorite. Christopher is also the grand prize winner of the 2006 Washington International Piano Artists Competition, the 2007 Boston International Piano Competition for Exceptional Amateurs, and the 2008 Paris Concours des Grands Amateurs de Piano. Christopher is a board-certified gastroenterologist practicing in Maryland, received B.A. from Harvard and M.D. from Johns Hopkins. He currently lives in Ellicott City with his wife and two daughters. He frequently collaborates with his wife, who is a violinist on faculty at the Peabody Preparatory Institute in Baltimore.



♪ **Jelena Vladikovic of Arizona, First Prize Winner
of 2007 Washington International Piano Artists
Competition, Washington, DC**

Jelena Vladikovic born in Belgrade, Serbia, immigrated to Vancouver, Canada. She holds the B.M. and M.M. in Piano Performance from Belgrade and the University of BC in Vancouver. Scholarships for academic and performing excellence took her to some of the world's most eminent teachers: Evgeni Timakin, Moscow Central Music School, Pavel Serbryakov, The

Rimsky-Korsakov Music Conservatory in Leningrad, Guido Agosti, Academia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, and Robert Silverman, University of British Columbia. Jelena began her concert career at age 15 after winning 1st place at the most prestigious Yugoslav piano competition. She played in Europe and Canada and appeared on radio and television. Retiring from performing to devote herself to her young son, later she embarked on a new career in journalism and PR. Inspired by her 2007 WIPAC win, she went back to piano and began her D.M.A. studies in Piano Performance/Pedagogy at the ASU School of Music and started teaching again. National Music Certificate Program recently awarded her the Founding Teacher designation for her contribution to "establishing a national standard for developing musicians in the US." She recently became a member of the NMCP and Royal Conservatory of Music.

WIPAC 2009 Calendar OF EVENTS

- May 24 - 1:30PM Spring Piano Concert Series
Robert Dowling, pianist
The Anderson House,
2118 Massachusetts Avenue
- June 7-10 - 1pm-5pm Summer Fling
Upperville Horse and Colt Show
Grand Prix
- July 22 - 5:30PM Welcome Party TBA
- July 23 - 10am -6PM Competition: Preliminary Round I
Western Presbyterian Church
2501 Virginia Avenue, Washington, DC,
- July 24 - 10am -6PM Competition: Preliminary Round II
Western Presbyterian Church
Announcement of Semi-Finalists
Cocktail Reception at the Arts Club
- July 25 - 1:30-6PM Competition: Semifinal Round
- July 26 - 2-6PM Competition: Final Round
6-7PM Jury Deliberation and Announcement of the
Winners and Award Ceremony
8-10PM Celebratory Champagne and Dinner
- ♪♪♪

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His Excellency, the Ambassador of Poland and Mrs. Robert Kupiecki
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Members of the WGPC Committee
Embassy of Poland Officials and their Staff
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The Pianists
Matthias Fischer, Vincent Schmithorst, Christopher Shih
And Jelena Vladikovic

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