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## WIPAC Acknowledges Pianists' Devotion to Music as Semifinalists Announced

by [H and L Polgar](#) • August 4, 2018

There is always a bittersweet atmosphere in the room when contestants and audience nervously assemble to hear the results of the jurors of the Washington International Piano Artists Competition. Every year, for the last 15 years, after long and careful deliberation, the jurors have made the very difficult decision of which pianists will advance to the semifinals the following day.

This year, all 24 piano contestants, who with great devotion and hard work perfected their artistry, were congratulated with flowers and a certificate of appreciation. The 12 who moved on to the semifinals were announced and directed to select a number from a basket to determine their order of performance the following day. The remaining contestants cannot but be philosophical and pleased for the others. Yet we will not know how they really feel but hope they will be inspired to come back to perform another year.

Diane Merriam, Co-Chair of the WIPAC Competition Committee, on behalf of WIPAC President, Michael Davidson, expressed appreciation to all the contestants for their participation, and to the loyal supporters of the WIPAC organization who have made the event possible for the last 15 years. Ms. Merriam especially acknowledged the contributions of Suzanne Finney, Co-Chair Competition Committee 2018 and to the distinguished Jurors, Frank Conlon, Raymond Jackson, Laurence Berman and Thomas Pandolfi.

Dr. Pascal Salomon, who is Co-Chair of the Jury with Georges Mihaies, announced the 12 contestants who advanced to the semifinals. They are: Yiran Wang; Paul Kosak; Jeanne Craig; Simon Finlow; Keiko Kircher; Martin Gallegos; Melinda Morse; Jeni Kong; Joseph Lipare; Kazuo Taki; Toshe Temelkov; and Anqi Wang.

George Mihaies expressed his admiration for the contestants, "There are so many accomplished contestants from all over the world. I have never seen such an internationally represented group of pianists. It was wonderful to see pianists who are parents bring their children to hear them perform and to see pianists who had abandoned piano performing only to take it up 20 years later."

On Sunday at the Cosmos Club, the last three contestants will be left to be judged for first, second and third place. With dedication and a love for the art form the pianists have withstood the pressure of competing, but as contestant Dr. Max Sung stated, "I do it for the enjoyment." Contestant Melinda Morse, who advanced to the semifinals, stated, "Music has been a constant, beautiful and inspiring companion for me since childhood. I think it has been for other amateur pianists as well. It is a special privilege for us to get to share our "companion" with each other at the WIPAC and other competitions". They have apprehended the meaning of true artistry.









