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Friends Meet Once Again at WIPAC Competition

by [Henri Georges Polgar](#) • August 4, 2018

Anqi Wang and Yiran Wang, two long-time college friends from China found occasion to meet again as competitors at the Washington International Piano Artists Competition held at George Washington University's School of Music. Although they share the same last name, they are not brothers or family related but both are accomplished pianists.

Their paths have diverged since college. Yiran is a portfolio manager at an investment company in Connecticut and during the evening continues his piano studies at Julliard. Living in White Plains, NY, Mr. Yiran Wang lives with his wife and one-year old child, and commutes to Connecticut to his office. By virtue of the new member of his family, no practicing the piano after 8.30 pm.

Mr. Wang has moved to the semifinals of this year's WIPAC Competition, the longest running competition in the United States for non-professional pianists. When queried about his life as a pianist, Yiran explains that he has always studied and been attracted to the piano, and although he chose to major in engineering at the university in Beijing, and to come to the USA to graduate from Cornell University in engineering and finance, his passion to find musical expression in the piano has always been a constant for him.

Yiran's close friend Anqi Wang lives in Beijing. He especially came to Washington to compete in the WIPAC Competition and is returning to Beijing on Monday. Anqi has also made it to the semifinals. Like his friend, studying the piano has been a mainstay in his life, as he also has pursued studies in engineering, and has also studied finance in Nice, France. Anqi has become a part of the coterie of amateur pianists' worldwide network, having competed in Warsaw, Paris and San Diego. He has also met former winners of WIPAC contests such as Michael Cheung, Michael Slavin, and Robert Finley in Europe, who encouraged him to compete in WIPAC. Anqi also persuaded Yiran to enter the competition.

Both Yiran and Anqi commented on how WIPAC enjoys a worldwide reputation for being one of the most well-organized piano competitions as well as for its thoughtfulness and attention to the competitors during their stay in Washington.

Anqi is a director of an organization in China that recruits some of the best school teachers in Beijing and arranges for them to teach online students in rural areas who do not have access to the same quality of teachers in the urban areas.

Both pianists expressed their devotion to the art of piano performance and to the importance of music in their lives. Yiran commented on one of his favorite composers, Rachmaninoff, and that performing his works is, "like touching your heart with a soft touch".

On Sunday we will know who the winners of this year's competition will be. We wish them both well.

