



THE CLIBURN

## 48 COMPETITORS ANNOUNCED FOR 2020 CLIBURN INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR PIANO COMPETITION

**“A celebration of music, and the people who have to make music, no matter what.”**  
**–The Boston Globe**

Contact:

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**FORT WORTH, Texas, March 5, 2020** – The Cliburn announces today the **48 competitors** invited to participate in the **2020 Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition**, taking place **May 24–30, 2020**, in Fort Worth, Texas, with the first two rounds at **Van Cliburn Recital Hall** (330 East 4th Street) and the Final Round concert with the **Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Damon Gupton** at **Bass Performance Hall**.

The 2020 Cliburn Amateur competitors hail from all over the world, representing 18 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States. They range in age from 35 to 69, with a median age of 45.

An additional 24 pianists (also listed below) have been selected as non-competing festival participants, bringing the total number of pianists to 72 and countries represented to 23 with the addition of China, Egypt, Greece, Honduras, and Russia.

**Please Note:**

*The Cliburn, in coordination with our partners, is closely monitoring the international situation with the coronavirus (COVID 19) and will be in regular communication with participants and the public as to its effect, if any, on the 2020 Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition. At this point, we are planning to go forward with the Competition.*

The 2020 Cliburn Amateur Competitors represent a wide range of professional industries including: IT/Software (13), Management/Business (14), Medicine (7), Law (4), Finance/Accounting (5), and Academia (2), a playwright, a realtor, and a freelance translator.

Applications closed January 16, 2020, and a selection committee chose the 48 competitors and 24 festival participants from an impressive pool of 205 applicants representing 32 countries, through online applications and video submissions of 15 to 20 minutes in length.

The Amateur Competition highlights the importance of music-making in everyday life, bringing together the

world's best non-professional pianists age 35 and older for seven days of performances, symposia, and social events. All rounds are open to the public, as are many of the festival events. We hope you'll join us for this truly inspiring, international event, where everyday people become stars of the stage. Tickets are available at [Cliburn.org](http://Cliburn.org) or by calling the box office at 817.212.4280.

## 2020 CLIBURN AMATEUR COMPETITORS

*Format: Name, Occupation, Age at time of Competition, Current City of Residence*

[Click here for competitor bios.](#)

[Click here for competitor photos.](#)

[Click here for select photos from the 2016 Cliburn Amateur](#)

### UNITED STATES

#### California

Gorden Cheng, Information Security Architect, 39 (San Diego)

John Gutheil, CEO–Medical Oncologist, 63 (San Diego); also representing **United Kingdom**

Hyongsoon Kim, Attorney, 41 (La Habra)

Jon Lee, Software Manager, 39 (San Francisco)

Aaron Miller, Academic Administrator, 39 (Los Angeles)

#### District of Columbia

Simon Finlow, IT Project Manager (Retired), 64; also representing **United Kingdom**

#### Illinois

Allen Racho, Software Architect, 47 (Bolingbrook)

#### Maryland

Eladio Santiago, President & CEO–Advisory Investment Management, 56 (West Friendship)

Oleg Volkov, Software Developer, 62 (Potomac)

#### Massachusetts

Robert Finley, Electronics Engineer (Retired), 69 (Northborough)

James Rosenblum, Attorney, 39 (Harwich)

#### Minnesota

Adrienne Johnson, Playwright, 65 (Minneapolis)

#### New York

Henri-Robert Delbeau, Physician, 57 (Williston Park)

Michael Slavin, Neuro-Ophthalmologist (retired), 69 (Manhasset)

#### North Carolina

Matthew Barnhill, Accountant, 36 (Charlotte)

Gregory Knight, Software Engineer, 57 (Morganton)

Richard Reid, Software Engineer, 69 (Cary)

#### Rhode Island

Suzanna Laramée, Financial Advisor (Retired), 63 (Newport)

## **Texas**

Noah DeGarmo, Physician, 42 (Dallas)

Marisa Naomi Haines, Business Strategist, 63 (Murphy); also representing **Brazil**

Irene Longacre-Whiteside, Executive Assistant, 64 (Arlington)

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **Argentina**

Miriam Berro, Software Engineer, 62 (lives in Montréal, Canada); also representing **Canada**

### **Canada**

Ricker Choi, Business Consultant, 45 (Toronto)

### **France**

Xavier Aymonod, Marketing Director, 44 (Paris)

Julien Bedon, System Simulation Engineer, 38 (lives in Yokohama, Japan)

Michael Cheung, Management Consultant, 37 (Paris); also representing **Canada**

Thierry Goldwaser, Software Developer, 44 (Ploeren)

Vincent Letourmy, Chief Operating Officer, 49 (lives in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)

Dominique Salloum, CEO–Artificial Intelligence Industry, 50 (Cormontreuil); also representing **Lebanon**

### **Germany**

Uta Hielscher, Executive Assistant, 50 (Deggendorf)

### **Indonesia**

Ferdy Talan, Realtor, 36 (lives in West New York, New Jersey)

### **Ireland**

Deirbhile Brennan, Accountant, 50 (Dublin)

### **Italy**

Filippo Tresca, International Tax Consultant, 38 (Barletta)

### **Japan**

Ken Iisaka, Software Engineer, 51 (lives in Foster City, California); also representing **Canada**

Hajime Kobayashi, Management Consultant, 54 (Niza)

Rie Moore, Translator, 45 (lives in Lexington Park, Maryland)

Masanori Murakami, Clinical Research Associate, 35 (Tokyo)

Kesuke Ota, Research Scientist, 38 (Yokohama)

Yuka Otohata, Marketing Operations Professional, 49 (Tokyo)

Hiroko Toya, Attorney, 63 (Tokyo)

Eiji Yoshimura, Business Planning Director, 47 (Tokyo)

### **Mexico**

Jorge Zamora, Business Development Director–Wireless Technology, 47 (Huixquilucan)

### **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

Sean Sutherland, Production Manager, 43 (lives in Montréal, Canada); also representing **Canada**

### **South Korea**

Youjin Hong, Psychiatrist, 39 (Gangneung)

Yeon Wook Jeong, Entrepreneur/Attorney, 51 (Seoul)

### **Taiwan**

Felicia Cheng, Neuroscience Researcher, 36 (lives in Göttingen, Germany); also representing **Germany**

### **Turkey**

Ipek Bozkurt, Professor, 40 (lives in Seabrook, Texas); also representing **United States**

### **Ukraine**

Dmytro Vynogradov, Business Development Manager, 50 (Kiev)

## **2020 CLIBURN AMATEUR NON-COMPETING FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS**

Kathy Hodge Abrahamson, Nurse Practitioner, 58, United States (Arlington, Texas)

Anna Antimiichuk, Communications Executive, 37, Russia/United Kingdom (London)

Diane Austin, Researcher (retired), 66, United States (Fort Worth, Texas)

Saffet Bayka, Electronics Engineer (retired), 61, Turkey (Ankara)

Luis Alberto Bernhard, Retinal Angiographer, 70, Honduras (Miami, Florida)

Luke Berryman, Director of Faculty Recruitment, 35, United Kingdom (New York, New York)

Stephen Bertges, Sales and Marketing Executive (Retired), 68, United States (El Dorado Hills, California)

Xiao Chen, Management Professor, 41, China/Canada (Charlottetown, Canada)

Ruth Dillon, Project Manager, 59, Egypt/United States (Troy, Virginia)

Vivienne Fleischer, Ergonomics Consultant/Entrepreneur, 56, United States (Brooklyn, New York)

Catherine Grimball, Military Spouse, 39, United States (Camp Lejeune, North Carolina)

Keiko Kircher, College Physics Instructor, 39, Japan/United States (Champaign, Illinois)

Olivia Lee, Scientific Writer, 38, United States (Seattle, Washington)

Eugene Lee, CEO, 57, United States (Palo Alto, California)

Vincent Phillips, Physician – Anesthesiology, 65, United States (Englewood, Ohio)

Barbara Roeser, Physician – Dermatology, 64, Germany (Bad Arolsen)

Heesun Joyce Rogers, Physician, 56, United States (North Royalton, Ohio)

Esfir Ross, Dental Assistant (retired), 72, United States (Oakland, California)

John William Schleifer, Physician, 37, United States (Omaha, Nebraska)

Michael Stefanakis, Tax Attorney, 37, Greece (Athens)

Hideko Tazawa, Supply Chain Professional, 63, Japan (Tokyo)

Wei Ling Wang, Computer Network Engineer, 56, United States (Plano, Texas)

Elizabeth Yin, Stay-at-Home Mom, 53, United States (Los Altos, California)

Victor You, Attorney, 56, United States (New York, New York)

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## **ABOUT THE EIGHTH CLIBURN INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR PIANO COMPETITION**

## COMPETITION SCHEDULE

### **Preliminary Round** (6 concerts at Van Cliburn Recital Hall, 330 East 4th Street)

May 24, 2020 | 2:30 & 7:00 p.m.

May 25, 2020 | 2:30 & 7:00 p.m.

May 26, 2020 | 2:30 & 7:00 p.m.

48 pianists, each performing a 15-minute recital.

Tickets: \$10 per concert

### **Semifinal Round** (4 concerts at Van Cliburn Recital Hall, 330 East 4th Street)

May 27, 2020 | 2:30 & 7:00 p.m.

May 28, 2020 | 2:30 & 7:00 p.m.

20 pianists, each performing a 28-minute recital.

Tickets: \$25 per concert

### **Final Round** (1 concert at Bass Performance Hall, 4th and Calhoun Streets)

May 30, 2020 | 2:30 p.m.

6 pianists, each performing one concerto movement with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Damon Gupton.

Tickets \$25–\$65 (includes awards ceremony)

[Purchase Tickets Here](#)

[Full Competition Rules & Repertoire](#)

## FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Van Cliburn Recital Hall, 330 East 4th Street

May 24, 25, 26, 2020 | 10:00 a.m.

24 pianists each performing 15-minute recital for members of the jury.

These performances are **free and open to the public**.

## 2020 AMATEUR COMPETITION JURY

[Ralph Votapek](#), jury chairman (United States), 1962 Cliburn gold medalist

[Alessandro Deljavan](#) (Italy)

[Leila Getz](#) (Canada)

[Valery Kuleshov](#) (Russia)

[Carol Leone](#) (United States)

[Alex McDonald](#) (United States)

[Pamela Mia Paul](#) (United States)

## APPLICANT POOL

The 2020 Cliburn Amateur received 205 applications from 32 countries (a record number for applications received and countries represented) including (in alphabetical order): Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada,

China, Colombia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States.

The 124 men and 81 women who applied for the Amateur Competition also represent a wide number of occupations including: doctors, lawyers, engineers, homemakers, a playwright, a sommelier, a United Nations officer, a gardener, a theologian, and a neuro-scientist.

The applicants ranged in age from 35 to 78 with an average age of 52 years.

## PRIZES & AWARDS

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize: \$2,000 Cash + Pair of complete subscription packages to the 2021 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (Official Guest Status)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: \$1,500 Cash
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: \$1,000 Cash
- Special Prizes: Audience & Jury Discretionary Awards

## WEBCAST

The Cliburn will offer a fully-produced, multicamera **webcast** of the Semifinal Round (May 27 & 28, 2020) and Final Round (May 30, 2020). The webcast will stream at Cliburn.org and will also be available on YouTube, Vimeo, and Facebook Live.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**New** this year, the **24 pianists selected as non-competing festival participants** will play up to 15 minutes for comments from jurors (these performances will be open to the public). All invited pianists will also have expanded festival opportunities, including a variety of public performances; a practical seminar on repertoire, practice, and performance techniques; four-hand and chamber readings with professional musicians; and a host of social events where they can form lasting relationships with people from around the world who share their same passion. A full schedule of festival events will be announced Spring 2020.

Inaugurated in 1999, the Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition (formerly known as the International Piano Competition for Outstanding Amateurs™) was the first event of its kind in the United States. Hailed by *The Boston Globe* as “a celebration of music, and the people who have to make music no matter what,” the contest highlights the importance of music-making in everyday life and provides a forum for musicians age 35 and older who do not perform, teach, or compose piano music for their primary professional pursuit or financial benefit. The quadrennial competition brings together the best amateur pianists from around the world for seven days of performances, symposia, and social events.

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## ABOUT THE CLIBURN

**The Cliburn advances classical piano music throughout the world.** Its international competitions, education programs, and concert series embody an enduring commitment to artistic excellence and the discovery of new artists. Established in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1962, the quadrennial **Van Cliburn International**

**Piano Competition** (sixteenth edition, May 27–June 12, 2021) remains the most visible expression of that mission and is, as always, committed to its original ideals of supporting and launching the careers of emerging artists, ages 18–30. It shares the transformative powers of music with a wide global audience, through fully-produced webcasts and by providing comprehensive career management and concert bookings to its winners. Rounding out its mission, the Cliburn also produces the **Cliburn International Junior Piano Competition and Festival** for exceptional 13- to 17-year-old pianists (third edition, May–June 2023), and the **Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition** for outstanding non-professional pianists age 35 and older (eighth edition, May 24–30, 2020).

Over a four-year cycle, the Cliburn contributes to North Texas' cultural landscape with over 170 classical music performances for **150,000 attendees** through competitions, free community concerts, and its signature **Cliburn Concerts** series at Bass Performance Hall, the Kimbell Art Museum Piano Pavilion, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, and Scat Jazz Lounge. It presents 1,000 **Cliburn in the Classroom** in-school, interactive music education programs for more than 200,000 area elementary students. During the same time period, it garners the world's attention with **over eight million** visits from 170 nations for live concert and competition webcasts; **300 concerts** worldwide booked for competition winners; more than **5,000 news articles** about the Cliburn and its winners; and regular national radio broadcasts to **245 public radio stations**. [Cliburn.org](https://www.cliburn.org)

#### **Sponsors of the 2020 Cliburn Amateur**

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