

PTNA NEWS LETTER 2016

www.piano.or.jp/english

Piano Teachers' National Association of Japan

1-15-1 Sugamo Toshima-ku, Tokyo 170-8458 JAPAN

Tel: +81 (0)3 3944 1581 Fax: +81 (0)3 3944 8838 oversea@piano.or.jp



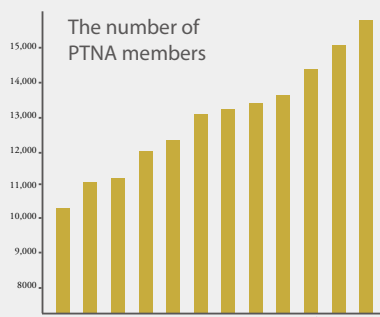
PTNA (PIANO TEACHERS' NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of JAPAN), founded by Yasuko Fukuda, is a nonprofit organization of professional piano and music teachers. Our mission is to advance the value of piano and music teachers committed to furthering a higher level of the pedagogical skills, and to explore cultural and artistic activities by ways of piano. We encourage piano and music teachers in the community to improve the quality of piano pedagogy and performance studies, promote a rich humanism from music pedagogy, communicate with internal and external associations, and contribute to a broader cultural development.

- Established : 1966
- Chairperson: Nobuyuki Idei
- Vice Chairperson: Yuichiro Hata, Yuko Ninomiya
- CEO : Seikoh Fukuda
- Board Members: Trustees, Treasurers, Advisor, Councilors



Nobuyuki Idei

- Groups & Committees
- *Administration and Organization Group
- *Research Group
- *STEP Project Group
- *Competition Group
- Networks: Branches (124), Stations (449)
- Number of Members: 15,882
- Membership Status: Authorized member, Teacher, Performer, Composer, Researcher, Family, Student, Corporates and Institutions, Tuner, GrandMuse (amateurs) as of Dec.2016



Commitment To the Entire Music Life The 50th Anniversary of PTNA



PTNA encourages all who love piano. Its membership service extends to families and tuners this year.

<1> Commitment to the Enrichment of Musical Life

PTNA, established in 1966, commemorates its 50 year anniversary this year. The association started with 30 teachers and now consists of over 15,000 members. Nowadays, the new members are increasing at the rate of about 100 people per month (15% are in their 10-20s, 65% are in their 30-40s, 20% are in their 50s and older). The wider the network becomes, the more individual piano teachers become connected and collaborative. Likewise, its commitment to and impact on the music field has also increased, which led to an increase and diversity in membership services. At present, membership covers piano teachers,

performers, composers, researchers, students, amateurs, families, corporates and institutions, and tuners (added in 2016). This year, a part of "support member", a group of about 1,400 members, was shifted to "family member". Their roles are considered to be more identical and important recently. In fact, it enhances children's growth in many ways as the statistics show. In the PTNA Piano Competition, the number of participants whose parents were support members has increased twice as much as those of non-members in the last 5 years. It signifies that family support enhances the continuation of piano learning. Nowadays, it further encourages their collective participation as family ensembles (in STEP).

PTNA News Letter 2016

<2> Commitment to Development of Careers in Music

-Teachers' License Demands More Well-Balanced Skills

Half a century ago, PTNA was a small study group which provided lectures and seminars for piano teachers, but had no opportunity to assess themselves. In the 1990s, the Teachers' Examination was established to assess a set of teaching skills. It was transformed to the "Piano Teachers' License Program" a few years ago, in order to evaluate teaching skills in a more well-balanced, structured manner; 1) teaching demonstration, 2) stage performance, 3) theoretical comprehension, 4) essay writing.

Then how do they prepare efficiently for these high goals? This year, PTNA started introducing teachers who give professional advice to candidates. Yukiko Watanabe (representative of Hibiya-Dream Station), has already taught 28 candidates who passed all the categories and levels of examinations prerequisite for the license. One of her students and a successful candidate, Erimi Tsuchimochi (representative of Chiba-Asumigaoka Station), already an experienced teacher and local music leader, has completed all the license exams this year. She asked Ms. Watanabe for advices before taking the advanced level exam in order to review her own performance and teaching skills, which brought her success with the highest

score.

Regarding 3) theoretical comprehension, the number of examinees was increased 2.5 times as many as last year. This trend also suggests they would like to have more solid foundations both in theory and practice.

This program is also for young people. Yoko Deguchi, a university student who majors in politics, is one of them. She has not decided her future career yet, but her teacher suggested that the license program would help her have multiple choices after graduation, either to work in the business industry or to work as a piano teacher. In the process of studying, she learned how to teach kids in an appropriate way, and now she has one regular student.

-Various Topics in the 49th Piano Teachers' Seminar

On April 24th, the PTNA Piano Teachers' Seminar vol.49 was held in Tokyo, having 300 piano teachers in the audience. This event is one of the special programs for commemorating the 50th anniversary of PTNA. The 1st session consisted of presentations and poster sessions by 8 piano teachers, sponsored by 8 publishing companies (PTNA corporate members). The lecturers were Yuko Hisamoto ("Excellent instruments created excellent music, from Mozart to Liszt" / Gakken), Mami Imano ("Training techniques and expressions through Gillock's pieces for

introductory level students" / Zen-on Gakufu), Atsuko Fujiwara ("One step forward to refined music making with Bastien Method" / To-on Kikaku), Masayo Baba ("How to choose music to raise children's motivation" / Yamaha Music Media), etc.

The 2nd session was titled "What Should Piano Teachers Consider Now?", in which 4 PTNA executive members talked about the transition of the education trend and its future prospects. The panelists were Katsuko Kaneko, Mitsuyo Esaki, Mutsuko Tozawa, and Hideo Sugiura.

The 3rd session had Akiko Ebi (pianist) as lecturer and Arisa Iida (music writer) as interviewer, to discuss what and how young pianists should learn piano in order to achieve higher levels of artistry. Ebi, who served as a jury member in the Chopin Piano Competition and the Hamamatsu Piano Competition both in 2015, encouraged young pianists to have a strong belief and a solid attitude in their music making. She also showed a video of her teacher, the late Aldo Ciccolini, performing Elger's "Salut d'Amour" full of affection and humanity.

-"Dual Career" to Support Young Teachers

A career as a piano teacher is not built in one day, and not necessarily by one way. There are approximately 4,000 graduates per year from music colleges in Japan, but it is not easy for them to become mentally, technically, and financially independent immediately. Therefore, PTNA proposes "a dual career", as one of the options. PTNA looks for a few employees who are able to work at the PTNA headquarter 3 days a week, and 2-3 days as piano teachers. This is expected to help them learn the work ethics, communicate with experienced piano teachers, and understand what is truly desired for music education. Above all, they



Yuko Hisamoto in the 1st session, panel discussion in the 2nd session, Akiko Ebi (right) in the 3rd session

have “lesson review” time every week, in which they report some challenges discovered in lessons, and receive feedback from their colleagues.

Narumi Uegaki has been working at the PTNA office for 4 years after graduation from the Graduate school of a music college. While she serves as an operator of STEP advisors’ logistics (1,800 advisors for 550 venues / year), she learns the basic working skills and knowledge. At the same time, she teaches 24 students. She will leave the office and become independent from next year.

<3> Commitment to Betterment of Learning Process

What to learn is important, but how to learn is more important. PTNA members including former prize winners, are now piloting younger generations for the betterment of their learning process.

-Scientific Approach to the Piano Performance

The 65th PTNA Piano Festival was held on August 23rd in Tokyo. This festival combined two different fields, music and science. PTNA research member, Shinichi Furuya, the chief of the Musical Skill and Injury Center (MuSIC) and associate professor of Sophia University, gave a lecture titled “Does Music Nurture the Brain?- light and shadow of practicing the piano”, whereas Eisuke Tsuchida, composer,

Shinichi Furuya (right)
Eisuke Tsuchida
(below)



pianist, and professor of Tokyo College of Music, introduced a musical analysis on early works of Beethoven’s sonata, with scientist-like precision and detail. MuSIC is the first research center in Asia that focused on music (location: Sophia University). Emiko Harimoto, a committee member of MuSIC, Executive member of PTNA, and professor of Tokyo College of Music, expects this center to make enormous achievements, and bring assistance and encouragement to pianists and educators.

-Learn Piano Concertos with Piano Accompaniment!

On May 5th, “The Concerto Day - learn piano concerto with piano accompaniment!” was held in Tokyo. In the 1st session, pianist Akira Wakabayashi gave lectures to two young pianists. Wakabayashi himself was a former PTNA prize winner in 1979. Based on his orchestral experiences more than 400 times, he advised the pianists to breathe deeply, feel the entire atmosphere of the music, and share its image, structure, and direction with orchestras. He also pointed out how it helps to have orchestral ideas and perspectives when studying solo pieces.

In the 2nd session, three prize winners of the 2015 PTNA Piano Competition played with an orchestra conducted by Yoichiro Maeda. Sayako Shinonaga (the Grand Prize winner), who performed Schumann Piano Concerto op.54, read the orchestra score carefully in order to bring ideal harmonization between the orchestra and piano.

-Learn Creative Process from Living Composers!

Since the 1960s, PTNA has engaged in appropriate understanding, evaluation, and diffusion of Japanese works. PTNA held a special event in partnership with the Japan Federation



Akira Wakabayashi, 2 participants, and 2 accompanists (Keina Sato & Yuhi Ozaki), at the event “The Concerto Day”.



of Composers Inc. (JFC) on March 6th, in which 10 composers gave lessons of their own pieces to young students. Naoto Omasa, composer and Executive Director of JFC, explains why it is so important to work with living composers. “If one would know true messages from living composers themselves, it could enrich your music-making in a way that you would never experience while studying Classical or Romantic pieces”.

-Piano Arrangement Skills Unveiled in the Audition

PTNA held the 2nd Piano Arrangement Audition last March in collaboration with a music magazine, “Monthly Piano”. Emiko Tamaru, the editor-in-chief, observed the audition and was greatly impressed by works which were simplified but never ignored enchanting elements, which were arranged in unexpectedly inspiring ways, etc. The prize-winning works from each of the 3 levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced) are featured on the magazine or published through the on-demand publishing service “Musse”. This audition steadily captures attention from piano teachers, as this skill is indispensable for adjusting technical levels for students in need.

PTNA News Letter 2016

Fit Into Various Purposes & Lifestyles PTNA Piano Competition & STEP



and showed versatile techniques, mental strength, and sense of sophistication. The silver medal went to Shion Ota(16), and the bronze to Asaka Miyoshi. The rehearsal was open to the finalists of grade E - G (under 22).

Another grade for discovering and nurturing young talents is Jr.G (under 16). The two-day-masterclass for the 14 chosen candidates was held in June, inviting Prof. Gabriel Kwok from Hong Kong as the lecturer of the masterclass, and Prof. Shinichiro Kato as the lecturer of the musical analysis workshop. Moka Takubo got the 1st prize in the final round in August.

STEP--Highest Record of Number In the 20 Years

PTNA Piano STEP, the concert-style public stage, is a unique system to encourage lifelong learning of piano. It has been conducted in a more free-spirited and inviting environment, compared to the competition, and has transformed the mind-sets of piano teachers, students, amateurs, and even pianists. The total number of participants has reached 514,458 since its inauguration in 1997 (as of September 2016).

Mutsuko Tozawa, the chairperson of the STEP Committee who advocated starting this new system in the 1990s, says that the most innovative achievement in the past 20 years was to establish STEP Stations across the nation (449 in total). The 1st Station

A Trend Analysis On the PTNA Competition 2016

PTNA Piano Competition is designed for pianists of all ages, and there were 44,919 participants this year, the highest number on record since 1977. As lifestyles vary over time, competition has reviewed its repertoires, levels, divisions every year, and changed when necessary. Here is the trend analysis of 2016: In the youngest age group (up to 6), the number of participants in the duo division has increased by 16% as compared to last year. The age group of 11-12 decreased slightly in the solo division, but increased in equal proportion in the duo division. Teachers noticed that young children likely enjoy playing together with someone, which makes it easier for them to take on a first challenge and keep motivated

in the long run.

The older they grow, the busier their lives become, and that urges them to consider how to maintain a good balance between academic study and piano. Therefore, the free repertoires category for 15-18 (J category in GrandMuse division, no required repertoires) got popularity nowadays, which resulted in the remarkable increase in the age group of 15.

Misora Ozaki Won the Grand Prize!

The grade superior boasts the highest standard in the PTNA Piano Competition. This year, Misora Ozaki (20) won the Grand Prize. She played Prokofiev's piano concerto No.3 with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Chikara Iwamura,

PTNA Grand Prize 2016 Misora Ozaki

Born in 1996, Misora began playing the piano at the age of four. She is a prizewinner of many competitions throughout Japan and abroad, including 5th Prize Ettlingen (Category A, 2008), Gold Prize PTNA Jr.G Grade(2010), 4th Prize e-Piano Junior(2011), 3rd Prize Chopin for Young Pianists Moskow(2012) and 3rd Prize Hamamatsu International Academy Competition (2016). She is currently studying at Showa University of Music under Fumiko Eguchi.



International Jury Members 2016

Diane Andersen
Honorary Professor of the Royal Conservatoire Brussels (Belgium)

Wolfgang Manz
Professor of Hochschule fuer Musik Nuernberg (Germany)

Ralf Nattkemper
Professor of Hochschule fuer Musik and Theater Hamburg (Germany)



was formed in 1998 by Haruko Kazusa (Tokyo), which held the 31st STEP this year. Kazusa has a belief that it is not only for their incentive, but also contributing to society at large. Keiko Hanasaki, the representative of Sanuki Takamatsu Station which held the 20th STEP this autumn, witnessed that teachers have become more self-motivated and inventive toward music making, and more open-minded toward other teachers, their students, and all the music loving people in the community.

STEP is also supported by over 700 advisors. At more than half of the STEP venues, advisors give 10-15 min “talk concerts” or “demonstration lessons” in between the sessions. They also evoke a feeling of enthusiasm of participants and audience.

Sing Same Song in STEPs for PTNA’s Anniversary

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of PTNA, it proposes a special program to PTNA Stations to sing a

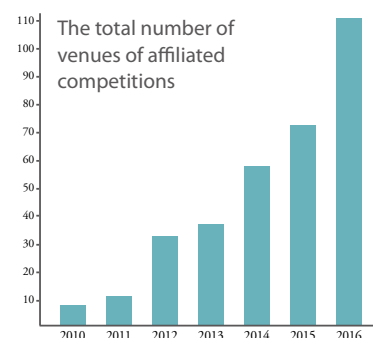
song “Aete Yokattane” (So Happy to Meet You) written by a pianist, Takashi Obara. This song expresses the appreciation for encounters with friends in this world, and celebrates the eternal friendships. Obara dedicated it to the people in Tohoku who suffered from the earthquake and tsunami in 2011, and also Kumamoto in 2016. This song has been sung in several STEP events so far, and will be sung altogether at the end of the commemoration concert next February.

PTNA Acquires New Affiliated Competitions

PTNA has expanded the network of affiliated piano competitions across Japan since 2010. The types of competitions are various; some are locally based, some are internationally oriented, and some are single-purpose. One of the more recent joined competitions, “Sonata concours”, is designed for participants from 10-20 years old who would like to study sonata form exclusively. Finalists will be able to

play the full movements and take the masterclass from a jury member. The preliminary round was held in October-November, followed by the final round in December.

Likewise, The Japan Bach Music Concours exclusively requires pieces by Bach. Naomi Ishii, the chief administrator, published Bach’s selected piano works last year that omit articulation, dynamics, tempo, or any other descriptions, so as to encourage students to do independent-minded learning. The Burgmüller Competition also solely focuses on the works of Burgmüller. Yukiko Watanabe, the representative, suggests the advantage of studying his works in depth, since those are frequently played in daily lessons.



Why “4 Periods” in PTNA Competition?

The objective of the PTNA Piano Competition has never been changed since 1977; that is, to have well-balanced study of 4 musical periods (Baroque, Classical, Roman, Modern/Contemporary). Recent statistics show that more than 80% of teachers, out of 65 respondents, think it important to respect the 4 periods and teach them accordingly. 42% of them try to teach the appropriate performance styles, 27% of them help students study the music history and historical backgrounds, and 21% of them let students play the instruments of those days. One of the teachers owns a spinet in her lesson studio in order to study and feel the historical transition of keyboard instruments.

Then, why the period is divided into 4, not 3, or even 5? Yasumi Taki, one of the jury members of the PTNA competition, poses a question. She analyses that this division is based on social and cultural background;

Baroque music thrived before the piano appeared as the mainstream of keyboards, the Classical period is the time before printed scores went into circulation, the Roman and Modern/Contemporary periods are distinguished by whether there existed recording techniques or not. According to her, those elements imposed a huge impact on musicians to the point that their ways of music making were transformed remarkably. Taki says, “This is just an idea. How to divide the period is an open question, though, I think that these ‘4’ periods are most desirable. We would like to use this framework in order to meet new repertoires and to enhance in-depth learning”.

Atsushi Mitani, pianist, admits that 4 periods are a good way to understand and compare the varieties of different values in music, but also points out that people could become too loyal to a specific way of performance such as “Baroque music should be played like this”. According to him, performance practice has been changed along with time, so it is important to stay open to new ways of interpretation and expression all the time.

PTNA News Letter 2016

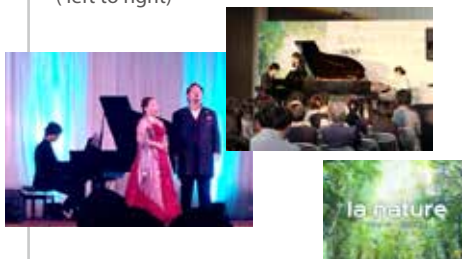
For Society and International Stages News & Achievements



Achievements in International Competitions!

We are delighted to announce successful achievements in international competitions by PTNA former prize winners in the Grand Superior. Tomoki Sakata (2011 PTNA Grand Prize) won 1st Prize at the Liszt International Piano Competition in Budapest, Hungary / Ryota Yamazaki (2014 Grand Prize) won 1st Prize at the Thomas and Evon Cooper International Competition in Ohio, U.S. / Tomoyo Umemura (2010 Grand prize) won 2nd Prize at the Schumann Piano Competition in Zwickau, Germany / Yukine Kuroki (1st in the Yasuko Fukuda Scholarship

Ryota Yamazaki won at the Thomas and Evon Cooper International Competition / Yukine Kuroki won the Balys Dvarionas International Competition / Yuhi Ozaki played at FACP conference / at the La Folle Journée au Japon (left to right)



Audition 2015) won the Grand Prize at the Balys Dvarionas International Competition for piano and violin in Vilnius, Lithuania / Mai Koshio (2015 silver prize) won 2nd Prize at the Mauro Paolo Monopoli Prize in Barletta, Italy / Yurika Kimura (2012 finalist) won Grand Prize at the International Rosario Marciano Piano Competition in Wien, Austria / Vitaly Yushmanov (performer member) won 1st Prize at the Italy-Japan Singing Competition.

Adjudication At International Competition

Rintaro Akamatsu, a councilor and member of the Performance Research

Dual Career; Teaching Piano & Working in A Non-Music Field

There are a variety of paths to choose after graduation. Nana Fukuyama was determined to work for an airline company, seeking a wider view toward her career and life. She visited many cities across the world as a cabin attendant, and wherever she stayed, she tried to find studios to practice. At the same time, she studied for the PTNA Teachers' License. After retirement, she began to teach more than 60 students a week and serve for the representative of a Station.

This topic catches attention nowadays. Seikoh Fukuda, CEO of PTNA, attended a symposium titled "Piano and Its Future" at the Osaka Music College, and talked about various possibilities including "dual career".



Committee of PTNA, served as a chief judge at the 1st Danubia



Talents International Music Competition in Hungary. This competition was inaugurated this year with solo, duo, and chamber music divisions. In Hungary, Akamatsu gives masterclass every spring in partnership with the Franz Liszt Academy, and will play with the Danube Symphony Orchestra next spring.

Int'l Masterclasses at Yasuko Fukuda Foundation

The Yasuko Fukuda Foundation, which conducts Scholarship Audition every two years for young promising pianists under 18, regularly conducted special masterclasses by overseas professors. Here is a list of international masterclass and seminars conducted in Tokyo ; Janina Fialkowska (Feb.) / Michel Dalberto (April) / Aquiles Delle Vigne (May) / Louis Lortie, Gabriel Kwok (June) / Piotr Paleczny, Gabor Farkas (July) / Wolfgang Manz (Aug.) / Joaquín Achúcarro, Stanislav Ioudenitch (Sep.) / Mats Jansson, Lee Kum-Sing (Oct.) / Ronan O'Hora, Pascal Rogé (Nov.) / Kevin Kenner (Dec.)

-Special Lectures in Tokyo; "Play on Silbermann Piano" by Genzo Takehisa (Keyboard player) / "How To Read Scores and Deliver Their Messages?" by Shohei Sekimoto (4th prize at the Chopin International Piano Competition in 2005, 1st prize at the Yasuko Fukuda Audition in 2003)

PTNA Member Inaugurated A Festival in Thailand

Atsuko Seta, pianist and professor of Payap University, launched "The Chiang Mai Ginastera International Music Festival" in October 2016, in

commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Alberto Ginastera (Due to the passing of the King, the festival was partly cancelled). This festival holds a piano competition at the same time, and those who won prizes in the regional final round of PTNA Piano Competition were exempt from the preliminary rounds, and were automatically eligible to take the 1st round in Chiang Mai.

PTNA Member Received An Award In France

Mahoko Nakano was awarded the “Ligue Universelle du Bien Public” in France. She gave charity concerts in support of cultural heritages, human rights in Tibet and Cambodia, people injured in natural disasters, medical patients, the elderly, etc. She also engaged in translating and writing books about Chopin and his contemporaries in Paris.

FACP Japan Branch Established

The annual conference of FACP (Federation for Asian Cultural Promotion) was held in Penang, Malaysia in August. Seikoh Fukuda attended as a FACP governor, and Yuhi Ozaki, the PTNA Grand Prize winner in 2007, performed with two Japanese singers. Prior to this event, the FACP Japan branch was established in June aiming at further commitment to the cultural exchanges between Asian countries and regions, education of personalities who engage in arts and art institutions, and student exchanges.

PTNA Pianists Express The World of Nature in LFJ

“La Folle Journée au Japon” was held in early May, on the theme of “Nature and Music”. A number of PTNA members interpreted their affection for and perceptions of the world

of nature. Takashi Obara, pianist and radio personality who has been offering charity concerts in the Tohoku area damaged by the earthquake and tsunami, replayed a part of those programs in Tokyo. Several PTNA Grand Prize winners performed duos ; Yuhi Ozaki and Keina Sato played Rachmaninov’s Rhapsody on the theme of Paganini, Ichiro Kaneko and Kyoko Kaise played Debussy’s “Prelude a l’apres-midi d’un faune”, Mizuho Nakada and Law Matthew played excerpts of Messiaen’s “Vingt Regards sur l’enfant Jesus”. In addition, PTNA chose an extra 11 players/ groups by a special audition.

Contributions to Support Kumamoto After Earthquakes

Due to the unprecedented large scale earthquakes in Kumamoto and Oita in April. A PTNA member saw her piano damaged, one-third of her students forced to evacuate, and several concert halls suffer severe damage. To help PTNA branch offices in Kumamoto repair and restart their activities, PTNA called for contributions of up to 2 million yen. 189 PTNA members have contributed so far, which added up to a total of over 4 million yen including a matching gift of 1 million yen by PTNA. Mutsumi Miyamoto, one of the members of Kumamoto branch, deeply appreciates this contribution and says that the power of music is really in need now to support the mental recovery of children and people there.



Obituary

-Hiroko Nakamura, pianist, passed away in July. She had been very active in playing around the world, serving as an educator, and as a jury member of major international competitions,

including the Hamamatsu International Piano Competition as a chairperson. PTNA was scheduled to hold the Chopin Special Seminar in October, having her as the special lecturer.

-Hideo Arashino, composer and PTNA executive member, passed away at the age of 81. He composed in versatile styles, taught in several music colleges, and has served as the chairperson of the New Composition Committee of PTNA for many years. He was awarded by MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) for his dedication and achievement in music education.

Special Concert for the 50th Anniversary of PTNA!

To celebrate its 50th anniversary, PTNA will hold a special concert on February 28th, 2017! For this unique occasion, a PTNA special orchestra will be formed in cooperation with musicians who have displayed great dedication to our activities, and past PTNA grand prize winners will appear and perform in duos and concerto pieces. The program includes; Filming “50 Years of PTNA History” / Duo performances; Stravinsky: excerpts from “Le Sacre du Printemps” (Aki Kuroda & Rintaro Akamatsu), Mozart : ‘Hai già vinta la causa’ (“Le Nozze di Figaro”) (Jumpei Niimi & Tomoyo Umemura), Ravel : Rhapsody Espagnole No.4 ‘Felia’ (Yuhi Ozaki & Keina Sato) / Concerto performances; Mozart : Piano concerto No.26 K.587 (Tomoki Sakata), Rachmanoniv : Piano concerto No.2 (Ryota Yamazaki) , Liszt : Piano concerto No.1 (Shohei Sekimoto), performed by the PTNA Special Orchestra for the 50th Anniversary under the baton of Maestro Chikara Iwamura. At the end of the concert, all members of the audience will sing a song together-- “Aete Yokattane” (So Happy to Meet You) by Takashi Obara.

Use Stage Opportunities in Various Contexts and Styles

The PTNA Piano Competition was established in 1977, and 20 years later, the PTNA Piano STEP was established in 1997. These two are different in terms of policy, repertoires, and evaluation systems; the competition is for musical development in a competitive environment, whereas STEP is for musical appreciation and continuation of lifelong learning. Therefore, people who love to study piano take advantage of both opportunities according to their own purposes and lifestyles.

Then how do competition juries evaluate performances? This year, PTNA sent out questionnaires to jury members to survey their criteria of judging. The questionnaires, based on a multiple choice system, ask which element(s) they put priorities on when listening to performances. Here are the top 5 answers (473 responses). 1. Beauty of the sound and sonority / 2. Appropriate musical time and rhythm / 3. Understanding of musical structures / 4. Balance between melody and accompaniment / 5. Stylistic understanding of four periods / additional responses (How they identify and play each voice line in counterpoint-formed pieces in the Baroque period/ Whether

they understand harmonic progression, musical structure, and appropriate phrasing / How to keep physical form during performances, etc. Miwa Yuguchi, a pianist, picked up 3 points that she thought important. "1. potential ability, 2. intellectuality, 3. personality. Regarding intellectuality, it is significant to observe if they have their own ideas, and express them accordingly. The important thing is the natural flow of music and its image; in other words, how to understand the music with objective perspectives, well-balanced sensibility, and clear images."

On the other hand, STEP has neither a point system nor a pass/fail evaluation, but encourages the learning process of participants. Shinji Urakabe, a pianist educated in Conservatoire de Paris, clarifies the difference of each event; "STEP advisors do not evaluate, but help them be aware of their good points and some issues to be improved. It is up to the participants themselves to evaluate their own stage experiences".

Recently, there is an increasing tendency that regular participants of the competition use STEP for their rehearsals in order to make mental and physical preparation on stage, whereas regular participants of STEP try to take part in competition so as to reach higher goals. In this way, these two

become more interrelated. And these days, PTNA affiliated competitions further provide opportunities for intensive studies of specific composers and musical forms (see page 5).

Japanese Creativities in Classical Music Framework

Understanding and appreciation of Japanese compositions was one of the initial aims of PTNA, and has been realized through the competition and STEP. The PTNA Piano Competition proposes at least one Japanese pieces in each grade. So far, over 420 pieces have been selected for the required repertoires, among which 122 pieces were written for the competition. On the other hand, the PTNA Piano STEP picks up one Japanese song as "A piece of the year", and is arranged by several composers to fit in various levels of STEP. The song for this year is "Night with a Misty Moon", composed by Teiichi Okano, with lyrics written by Tatsuyuki Takano in 1914, which has been sung in elementary schools for over a century. This imaginary song illustrates the moon vaguely lighting up the rapeseed fields in early spring. In this way, Japanese compositions have been written and performed among pianists of all ages and levels.

41st PTNA Piano Competition for Promising Pianists

Final Round: 18th-21st August, 2017 Tokyo

Grand Prize: 1,000,000 Yen, Concerts in Japan and abroad

Schedule 2017

• First Preliminary Rounds Solo

First Round (1)
Dates: June 10 (Sat) + 11 (Sun)
Deadline: May 8 (Mon)

First Round (2)
Dates: June 24 (Sat) + 25 (Sun)
Deadline: May 22 (Mon)

First Round (3)
Dates: July 5 (Wed) + 6 (Thu)
Deadline: June 5 (Mon)

• Second Preliminary Round Solo

Dates: August 2 (Wed) + 3 (Thu)
Place: Katsushika Symphony Hills (Tokyo)

• Semi-Final Round Solo

Date: August 18 (Fri)
Place: Dai-ichi Seimei Hall (Tokyo)

• Final Round Concerto

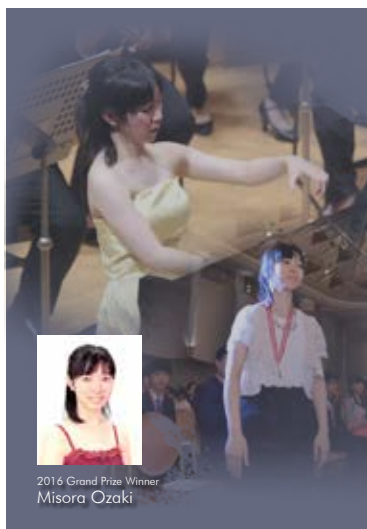
Date: August 21 (Mon)
Place: Dai-ichi Seimei Hall (Tokyo)
The Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra
Kazumasa Watanabe (cond.)

▶ Past prize winners and further careers

Aimi Kobayashi (Finalist, Chopin, 2015)
Kaoru Jitsukawa (3rd, Long-Thibaud, 2015)
Ryota Yamazaki (1st, Thomas & Evan Cooper, 2016)
Akihiro Sakaya (1st, Joán, 2014)
Tomoki Sakata (Finalist, Van Cliburn, 2013 / 1st, Liszt, 2016)
Kei Takumi (6th, Hamamatsu, 2012)
Keina Sato (2nd, HongKong, 2011)
Masataka Goto (1st, Liszt, 2011)
Mami Hagiwara (1st, Geneva, 2010)
Nobuyuki Tsuji (1st, Van Cliburn, 2009)
Hibiki Tamura (1st, Long-Thibaud 2007)
Rina Sudo (5th, Dublin 2006)
Yuhi Ozaki (1st, Ettlingen 2006)
Shohei Sekimoto (4th, Chopin 2005)
Kotaro Fukuma (1st, Cleveland 2003)

▶ Past Jury

2013 Ronan O'Hara
Boris Petrushansky
Jerome Rose
2014 Aquiles Della Vigne
Gilead Mishory
Ewa Pablocka
Soojung Shin
2015 Stanislav Loudenitch
Jan Jiracek von Arnim
Michael Lewin
2016 Diane Andersen
Wolfgang Manz
Ralf Natfemper
▶ July 2017
James Anagnoson
Hortense Cartier-Bresson
Henri Sigfridsson



2016 Grand Prize Winner
Misora Ozaki