



Tobias Jacob (Jg. 2008), aufgewachsen in Dornbirn, ist ein talentierter junger Musiker, dessen pianistische Reise erst als Jugendlicher begann. Nachdem er zuvor Schlagzeug und Steirische Harmonika gespielt hatte, entdeckte er später seine Leidenschaft zum Klavier. Erst mit 13 Jahren erhielt er Klavierunterricht bei Paul Faderny an der Musikschule Dornbirn. Schon nach einem Jahr erreichte er mit seinem außergewöhnlichen Talent ein solches Niveau, dass er die Aufnahmeprüfung an der Stella-Privathochschule für Musik erfolgreich absolvieren konnte. Dort erhielt er von 2023 bis 2024 Unterricht bei Gerhard Vielhaber und setzt seine Ausbildung seit 2024 bei Katharina Berrio-Quinterro fort.

Tobias erzielte bereits mehrere Erfolge bei Wettbewerben, darunter beim „prima la musica“ und den ersten Preis beim Jugendmusikwettbewerb 2025 in Schiers (Schweiz).

Im Mai 2025 trat Tobias Jacob als Solist mit dem Jugendsinfonieorchester Dornbirn im Kulturhaus Dornbirn auf und interpretierte das Klavierkonzert Nr. 2 op. 18 von Sergei Rachmaninoff mit anschließender Italientournee.



Anna Smerdova

Anna Smerdova is a thirteen-year-old Czech pianist with notable international recognition. She studies at the Tiziano Rossetti International Music Academy under Professor Maria Narodytska and has won over 25 prizes in 13 countries. In 2025, she became the Grand Prize Winner at the Concert Artists International Competition, performing at Carnegie Hall in New York.

Anna's achievements include top prizes at prestigious competitions such as WPTA Italy IPC, WPTA Finland, Globe International Piano Competition (Netherlands), Wiener Klassik (Austria), Music Singapore International Competition, Golden Piano Talents (North Macedonia), Artepiano (Italy), Global Philharmonic (USA), Franco Liszt Center IPC (Spain), OPUS 2024 (Poland), etc.

A 2023 MenART scholarship recipient, Anna studied with Professor Ivo Kahánek and performed at the Prague Spring Festival 2024. She regularly appears on stage in the Czech Republic and abroad, including a solo recital in France attended by over 500 listeners.



Eliana Zoe Bechtold, geboren 2013, erhielt seit ihrem vierten Lebensjahr Klavierunterricht bei ihrer Mutter.

Im Jahr 2024 wurde sie in das Precollege der Würzburger Musikhochschule aufgenommen und studiert seitdem bei Haruka Tsuyama.

Seit 2020 hat sie jedes Jahr beim Wettbewerb „Jugend Musiziert“ teilgenommen, oft in zwei Kategorien gleichzeitig und erzielte immer den 1. Preis.

In den letzten zwei Jahren gab es zusätzlich den ersten Preis beim:

„Orbetello Piano Competition International online“,

„Liszt Piano Center Competition International online“ und

„Piano Summer“ im Schloss Nymphenburg, München.

Außerdem war sie Gewinnerin des Walter-Leibig-Preises des Lions-Club Kitzingen (Höchstmögliche Punktzahl) im Herbst 2024 und erhielt einen Sonderpreis der Wolfgang Hofmann Stiftung für die beste Interpretation eines Liedes des Komponisten Wolfgang Hofmann beim Karel Kunc Musikwettbewerb in Bad Dürkheim.

Darüber hinaus gewann sie im November 2025 den ersten Preis beim Bertold Hummel Wettbewerb in Bayern und den dritten Preis beim Carl Bechstein Wettbewerb in Berlin.



Isabella Lu

PROFILE

11-year-old Isabella Lu studies piano with Professor Dina Parakhina and Yulia Chaplina. She won the 2025 EPTA UK Piano Competition (12 & Under, London Region). At the age of ten, she was awarded First Prize in Munich international piano competition under category A.

An enthusiastic violinist as well, Isabella lead her primary school Orchestra and currently enjoys her chamber music making at school. In 2025, she was the winner of the Baldacchino Piano Prize at Young Musician competition in City of London School for Girls.

She has recently completed her debut of Mozart's Piano Concerto No.21 with Orchestra at RCM.

Outside her music studies, Isabella has a keen interest in reading, hockey and

EDUCATION

Junior Guildhall - 2021 to 2025



Harun Ergen CV:

Harun Ergen began piano lessons at an early age. Since 2015, he has been studying at the Zurich Conservatory Music School (MKZ) with Carolina Sarmiento. In 2021, he was accepted into the MKZ's advanced student support programme. Since September 2022, he has been attending the Kantonsschule Stadelhofen in Zurich, specialising in music, while continuing his piano studies at the MKZ. In 2024, he was accepted into the PreCollege programme at the MKZ. He has been invited to various festivals, including the KlusClassics Festival and the Davos Festival. Harun has won several national and international competitions. He has performed in various concert halls throughout Switzerland, including the main hall of the Zurich Conservatory Music School Zurich, the concert hall of the Zurich University of the Arts and the Kleine Tonhalle Zurich. He received important inspiration in private lessons with various people such as Norma Fischer and Maria João Pires. Since February 2025, Harun Ergen has been studying with Dmitry Demiashevich at the MKZ PreCollege.



Francisco Couto is the current Hilary Fabian & Geoffrey Dellar Award Holder for a Master's degree at the Royal College of Music with Caterina Grewe and Danny Driver.

Francisco has been privileged to play for acclaimed musicians such as Boris Giltburg and Kathryn Stott as well as participate in festivals internationally where he has met renowned musicians like Till Fellner and Wei-Yi Yang. He has performed in the United Kingdom, United States, France, Italy and Portugal.

Recent works include Beethoven's Emperor Concerto and Beethoven's First Concerto. Last year, he was resident artist at one of the most influential orchestras in Portugal having been praised for his "intimate and splendid" performance. A recent orchestral performance earned him a first prize at Bendada Concerto Competition.

Francisco is a teacher, an arranger and an avid cinema lover. He wrote arrangements for many famous themes as well as the soundtrack for a short film.



Rejtő Barnabás

Ich wurde am 31. Dezember 2006 in Budapest geboren.

Seit 2014 lerne ich Klavier.

Im Jahr 2021 wurde ich ins **Szent-István-Musikgymnasium** aufgenommen (Fachbereich Klavier bzw. Tontechnik). Ich lernte zwei Jahre bei Frau **Vera Lugosiné Várhalmi**. Ab dem Schuljahr 2023/2024 setzte ich meine Ausbildung – nur noch im Fachbereich Klavier – bei Frau **Erzsébet Kőrösiné Belák** und beim Herrn **Gábor Monostori** fort.

Beim **nationalen Klavierwettbewerb in Békéscsaba** im Jahr 2024 erreichte ich **in der Altersgruppe III** den **zweiten Platz**. Im Mai 2025 kam ich ins Finale des **Zoltán-Kocsis-Preises**. Anschließend gewann ich den Sonderpreis des **Zoltán-Kocsis-Preises** sowie den **Sonderpreis der Alice Rosner Stiftung**.

Im Sommer 2025 wurde ich an der **Franz-Liszt-Musikakademie in Budapest** für das Bachelorstudium Klavier aufgenommen. Derzeit bin ich Student der Franz-Liszt-Musikakademie im ersten Semester.



Matas Jankauskas (b. 1992, Kaunas, Lithuania) is a pianist and piano teacher actively developing his concert and pedagogical career. He began his musical education at the J.Naujalis Music School and later continued his piano studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, studying with Professor Colin Stone. He has participated in several international piano competitions that have played an important role in his artistic development. In 2025, Matas was awarded Second Prize at the 2nd International Vienna Piano Competition Wiener Klassik. He has also taken part in masterclasses with distinguished pianists. As a performer, Matas presents solo recitals and public performances in Lithuania, and other concert venues in Europe. His repertoire spans from Baroque to contemporary music, with particular emphasis on the Romantic period and lesser-known twentieth-century composers. Alongside his performance activity, Matas is involved in piano teaching, with special attention to online piano education. More about him mataspiano.com



Artistic Biography – Leonard Buta

Born in 2005 in Târgu-Mureș, Leonard Buta started studying piano at the age of 7 at the “National College of Arts” in Târgu-Mures, Romania – Transylvania, finishing high school in the music section.

He started studying piano with teacher Dorina Gherman, and since 2015 he has been under the guidance of teacher Carmen Popescu, together achieving outstanding results and distinctions at various events, and national and international piano competitions.

In the spring of 2023, he debuted with great success on the stage of the “National-State Philharmonic of Târgu-Mureș”, performing first movement of the Concerto for Piano and Orchestra by E. Grieg in A minor, under the baton of the conductor Remus Grama, as part of the "Children's week" project, and in September of the same year, he collaborated with the conductor Shinya Ozaki - Japan (Permanent Conductor of the State Philharmonic of Târgu-Mureș), receiving a scholarship from the "Kumamoto-Romania Association", in collaboration with the Japanese Embassy in Romania. In March 2024 he also collaborated with the Dutch conductor, maestro Theo Wolters, performing the third Piano Concerto by Ludwig van Beethoven with the “National-State Philharmonic of Târgu-Mureș”.

Having an emotional sensitivity and a mature interpretation for his young age, Leonard Buta stands out for his outstanding piano technique acquired over the years of study, with amazing virtuosity and interpretative sensitivity.

He participated in numerous master classes held by pianists from all over the globe: Dr. Josu de Solaun – Spain, Dr. Dana Borșan - Romania, Anna Fedorova - Ukraine, Dr. Csiky Boldiszar – Romania/Hungary, Dr. Daniel Goiti – Romania, Dr. Brendan Kinsella – USA, Krisztina Fejes - Hungary, Anthony Ciaccio - Italy, Dr. Paulina Zamora - Chile, Dr. Dongni Xie - China, Dr. Catherine Garner – United States, Dr. Owen Lowell – United States, acquiring a lot of knowledge in the context of the piano collaboration and the piano performance.

In recent years, Leonard has achieved increasing success in proving his playing skills, with outstanding results at national and international piano competitions as follows: WPTA Finland 2025 International Piano Competition – Silver Award (2nd Prize Winner); WPTA Italy 2025 International Piano Competition – 2nd Prize winner; “Clara Schumann International Piano Competition” - First Prize; 6th Edition of “Vienna International Music Competition” – Finalist; “Great Piano Masters – Sviatoslav Richter Edition” International Piano Competition – First Prize; MTNA Competition – Texas Chapter – Honorable Mention, "The Muse" International Piano Competition, Second Prize; "Great Piano Masters - Rudolf Kehrler Edition" International Piano Competition, Second Prize; "Young Pianists" National Performance Competition, where in 2017 and 2021 he won the competition trophy; National Competition of Interpretation "Equal Chance", participating in all editions winning in 2022 the trophy of the competition and the prize for the best interpretation of a romantic etude; International Piano Competition "Piano Arts", Third Prize; National Music Olympiad Romania 2018, Zonal Stage, First Prize.

Also, after a rigorous examination with difficult requirements, Leonard Buta was admitted to the prestigious "Sam Houston State University - School of Music" in the USA – Texas, studying with Dr. Livia Ilonka Rus, where he also won in the Fall 2024 semester the “Concerto Competition”, organized by the SHSU – School of Music, with the Third Piano Concerto by Ludwig van Beethoven and performed in the Spring semester of 2025, with the SHSU Symphony Orchestra.



Marfa Slipchenko is a 9-year-old pianist from Ukraine. She began playing music at the age of 2 in Kyiv, Ukraine. Due to the outbreak of a full-scale war in Ukraine, Marfa was forced to evacuate first to Cyprus and later to Germany.

In 2022, she reached the Final Round of the XIII All-Cypriot AVANTGARDE Competition in Nicosia, supported by Steinway & Sons. In 2023, Marfa won numerous First Prizes in international online competitions and also received First Prize at the International Music Competition Golden Time Talent in London in the piano category.

In January 2024, Marfa won Third Prize at the 8th Béla Bartók International Piano Competition in Graz, Austria. She successfully passed ABRSM examinations in Piano, Solfege, and Singing.

From March 2025, Marfa has been officially admitted to the Preliminary Class of the Institute for Early Support of the Musically Gifted at the Hannover University of Music, Drama and Media. In July 2025, she won Second Prize at the 2nd International Vienna Piano Competition Wiener Klassik.

In November 2025, Marfa won the First Prize with Distinction and the Special Prize, a masterclass with Professor Jacques Ammon, at the Hamburg Instrumental Competition.



YUJI HUGGETT

Yuji Huggett began studying the piano at the age of five in Japan, where he was born. After moving to the UK in 2019, he continued his musical studies in London with Graham Fitch. Yuji enjoys exploring the piano repertoire from all periods, with a particular interest in the works of Ravel and Scriabin, alongside music by Beethoven, Chopin and Liszt. He is currently a Year 10 student at Wimbledon College. Outside of music, Yuji enjoys exercising and playing cricket.



Xinyi (Sophia) Ran, age 15, began studying piano at the age of five. She holds the **ARCT (Piano Performance)** and **LRCM** diplomas from the **Royal Conservatory of Music** and currently studies with **Professor Michael Berkovsky**.

Sophia has received numerous **top prizes and scholarships** in regional, national, and international competitions, including the **Rose Bowl Prize** at the **Peel Music Festival**, numerous top prizes at leading Canadian festivals in **North York, Hamilton, Guelph, OMFA Provincial Finals**, the **Beijing Piano Festival**, **Canada International Music Festival**, **CCC Toronto International Music Festival**, and **FCMF National Music Festival**. She is also the **Platinum Prize Winner** of the **Schubert International Music Competition (UK)**. In May 2025, she was honored with the **Youth Artist Award** by the City of Oakville and performed at the award ceremony at the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts. She has performed at leading venues in Canada and China, including the **Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts**, **Mississauga Living Arts Centre**, **The Rose Theatre (Brampton)**, **Burlington Performing Arts Centre**, and **Beijing Music Theatre**. In **April 2025**, she performed **Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor** as soloist with the **Burlington New Millennium Orchestra**, and she has been invited to appear as a concerto soloist with the **Seohan Orchestra** in **October 2026**.



Julia Gentry of Connecticut, USA began formal piano training at the age of 3. Now, at 15 years old, Julia was invited to perform on prestigious stages like Carnegie Hall New York as well as Canada, Harvard University-Boston, Mozarteum – Salzburg, Austria, Los Angeles Disney Concert Hall, Spain, Salzburg-Austria, Barcelona Spain, Amsterdam, Paris, France, and Rome competitions. Julia has been featured on ABC News, AP News, and her recordings are available on Apple Store and Spotify. Julia is a Black Belt and is fluent in French, English, and has basic conversational skills in Japanese and Latin. Julia is studying for the Level 10 out of 10 Certificate in Piano Studios from the Musica Teachers Association of California. Julia is currently volunteering her time on teaching and offering piano lessons to blind and visually impaired students by using Braille music notes for piano (please see video of Julia teaching blind children: <https://jgentry.funraise.org/>).



Perrie Lam, 12, a student of Steinway Artist Dr. Yelena Balabanova since 2020, he has won top prizes worldwide, including Absolute First Prize & Expressive Performance Special Prize at UK International Music Competition, the Grand Prix at the International German Music Competition, two Gold Medals at the Time Era Festival, four Gold Medals at SCMTA Sonata and Sonatina Festival, and “The Best Festival” award at the Jazz, Rags, and Blues Festival.

In 2025, Perrie was invited as celebrated pianist to perform at the St Thomas Church New Year’s Eve Concert in Medina (December) and made his debut Carnegie Hall in New York (October), performed a concert in Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue (October), performed at the Gala Concert in Helsinki, Finland (August), and appeared at the EMTA Gala Concert in the Historic Hartley Mansion (June).

Perrie also plays cello, serves as principal pianist in school Jazz Band, sings in church choir, and shares his music in community and fundraising concerts.



Short Biography

Australian pianist James He is currently completing his Master's degree at the Mozarteum University Salzburg under Rolf Plagge, following undergraduate studies at the University of Melbourne. He has also studied with pianists including Stefan Arnold, Igor Machlak and Ronald Farren-Price.

A passionate performer, James has participated in international festivals and masterclasses with renowned artists such as Boris Berman, Milana Chernyavska, Pavel Gililov, Robert Levin and Piotr Paleczny. Recent competition successes include 1st Prizes at the 2025 Munich Piano Competition, the 2024 Bach International Music Competition, the Royal Maas International Competition, and the Colours of Chopin International Piano Competition.

James made his concerto debut in 2016 with Grieg's Piano Concerto No. 1 and has since performed across Austria, Germany, Denmark, Italy and Australia. His achievements have been supported by numerous scholarships, including the 2022 Mary Elizabeth McComas Scholarship. Alongside his performing career, he is dedicated to music education, inspiring students and sharing his belief in music's power to communicate and connect deeply with audiences.