

Norah Sande Award



WINNER OF MAJOR PIANO AWARD CHOSEN

Meng Yang Pan won the 2009 Norah Sande Award at a thrilling final held at Eastbourne College Theatre. Meng Yang, 23, received a cheque for £3000 and the opportunity to perform in a recital later in the year. Fourteen semi-finalists performed a 20 minute programme on Saturday 11th July before a prestigious adjudication panel, John Byrne, Richard Deering and Ruth Gerald – all keyboard exponents of international repute. Three were chosen to perform a full recital programme incorporating classical, romantic and contemporary pieces the following day.

Meng Yang started playing the piano at the age of three and was accepted by the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 1996 at just eleven years of age. In 1999 she won second prize in the Ettlingen International Piano Competition for Young People in Germany. In the same year Meng Yang was awarded a full scholarship by the Wall Trust to study at the Purcell School and three years later went on to gain a full scholarship to the Royal College of Music.

Meng Yang has performed at many distinguished venues including the Royal Festival Hall, Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room and St John's, Smith Square. She performed Liszt's Piano Concerto No 1 with Maestro Vladimir Ashkenazy. She also had the honour of performing at the UNESCO in Paris in the presence of HRH Prince Charles. A performance at a charity dinner party at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel led to a private engagement with three-Michelin-starred chef Heston Blumenthal.

Meng Yang won first prize in the Robert William and Florence Amy Brant International Pianoforte Competition in 2006 and the following year was awarded the Royal College of Music's most prestigious prize, the Tagore medal for making an outstanding contribution to college life.

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Most recently Meng Yang was awarded the MBF Educational Award and she also performed in a Master Class with Maestro Murray Perahia. She is competing at this year's Leeds International Competition and from September 2009 she will be supported by the MBF Educational Award. Meng Yang is currently studying with the RCM's Head of Keyboard Vanessa Latache and she is also supported by the Clore Foundation.

Sasha Grynyuk, a student of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama was named as runner-up in the Norah Sande Award and received a cheque for £1000. Sasha was born in Kyiv and has been based in London since 2003. His most recent successes include first prizes at Haverhill International Music Competition and Tunbridge Wells International Young Concert Artists competition and the Guildhall's School's most prestigious prize – the Gold Medal – previously won by such artists as Jacquelin du Pre and Bryn Terfel.

Third place and a cheque for £500 was awarded to Miwako Miki who studies under Professor Frank Wibault. She recently gained First Prize in the President's Prize Competition in the North London Festival.

“ The 2009 competition has again attracted an outstandingly high calibre of entrants, the majority studying piano at Britain's world-renowned music colleges and on the way to a career in musical performance”, said Spencer Freeman, the Award's Artistic Director. “The feedback from the entrants and their professors was that the competition, now in it's fourth year, is already very well-known and considered well worth entering. The Award also now has a regular following with some audience members travelling quite a distance to hear these talented young pianists compete” added Mr Freeman.

Details of the 2010 Award and entry form will soon be available on www.sande-award.co.uk.

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