

CONCERT TOUR



COURTESY THE CLIBURN

Pianist Dmytro Choni won the bronze medal in this year's Van Cliburn International Piano Competition and will be in Hawaii for a series of concerts across the islands. His program will pay tribute to his Ukrainian roots.

# Ukrainian pianist Dmytro Choni crosses the world for music

By Steven Mark  
smark@staradvertiser.com

Ukrainian pianist Dmytro Choni, the bronze medalist in this year's Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, comes to Hawaii later this month for a concert tour that seems befitting for the kind of intensity that young classical artists face these days: five concerts in seven days, on all the major islands, after arriving directly from Europe.

He feels like he's prepared for it, having emerged from the grueling competition in Fort Worth, Texas, in May with a third-place finish.

"It was just a marathon," Choni said in a phone interview from Vermont, where he was giving a concert. "We had to play four hours of different music. We had six stage appearances in two-and-a-half weeks. It was very tough. I was completely exhausted after the competition. But this is

## PIANIST DMYTRO CHONI IN RECITAL

- >> **Hawaii island:** 7:30 p.m. Oct. 23, UH-Hilo Performing Arts Center, \$10-\$25, hawaiiconcertsociety.com; and 7 p.m. Oct. 26, Kahilu Theatre, Waimea, \$35-\$65, kahiluthatre.org
- >> **Maui:** 7:30 p.m. Oct. 27, Maui Arts & Cultural Center, \$40-\$55. MauiArts.org
- >> **Honolulu:** 7:30 p.m. Oct. 28: Orvis Auditorium, \$10-\$30. outreach.hawaii.edu/events
- >> **Kauai:** 5 p.m. Oct. 30, Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Lihue, \$15-\$40, kauai-concert.org

kind of how they 'try us out.' One has to be ready for this, and then after that, one can be ready for concertizing, for a concert life."

His performance took place not only under the pressure of competition but also the tension stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Cliburn competition, unlike some other competitive and cultural events, allowed Russian pianists to

participate, saying that art should transcend politics and pointing to the experience of its founder and namesake, Van Cliburn, who during the Cold War formed friendships with Russians through music.

During the competition, Choni, the only Ukrainian in the competition, said that music should serve as a way to unite people.

Despite the pressure, Choni impressed the Cliburn audiences with his

lyricism at the piano as well as his prodigious technique. "Choni offered playing at once sophisticated and natural, and he's clearly a major talent to watch," wrote the Dallas Morning News.

Choni started piano lessons at age 4, mostly because his two older sisters were also taking piano lessons. By around age 14, after playing a Chopin concerto in Kyiv, he decided that music would be his life. "It felt so great playing for people, playing with other people as well. I just consider that from this point, I consciously chose my way as a pianist," he said.

His program here will reflect his passion for 20th-century music, as well as give a nod to his Ukrainian roots. The first half opens with a suite of short pieces by Sergei Prokofiev, who was born in Ukrainian territory when it was part of the Russian Empire, and then continues with a work by Valentyn

Silvestrov, who was born in Ukraine when it was part of the Soviet Union, followed by a sonata by Alexander Scriabin. The second half of the concert will feature Claude Debussy, "one of my favorite composers right now," and a showstopping sonata from Franz Liszt.

"I tried to make this program contrast," Choni said. The Prokofiev pieces, he said, have many different characters and is distinct from the Silvestrov sonata, whereas the Scriabin is "very ecstatic, very emotional."

His performance of the Silvestrov sonata will be his first time ever performing the work, although he included some of Silvestrov's other works in his Cliburn performances. Just a month ago, he gave an all-Silvestrov concert. "I kind of got to know his music much better personally by playing it," he said.

He has not met the composer — Silvestrov is based in Berlin, and Choni studies in Austria when not on tour — but during a visit to Kyiv last year he did meet with Silvestrov's daughters, who gave him some scores. "Some of the scores were hand-written, so it was interesting to see how he writes," he said. "There was also some of his recordings, so it was interesting to see how he writes and how he plays."

It's a program not often heard in the U.S., but he feels its time has come. "The Prokofiev, Debussy and Scriabin were all written about 100 years ago," he said. "It's been a long time already, so I think it can be understood by the general audience. ... I hope the audience will enjoy these pieces because I love playing them."

**ON THE SCENE**  
John Berger's column will return next week.



## Kang-ho looks for solace in a bottle on 'Dearest'

THIS WEEK'S SYNOPSIS

**"Dearest Lady"**  
EPISODES 97-98  
6:40 p.m. today

Kang-ho drowns his sorrow by drinking. Not knowing the reason he is drinking, Ah-reum looks at Kang-ho with concern. Heung-gia and Ah-jung engage in a scuffle at Heung-gia's office. Bo-bae walks in on them. Byung-gi gets on his knees to ask for forgiveness from Ah-jung, begging they start over. Seeing him, Woo-hyuk warns Byung-gi that Ah-jung and he are in love and to stay away from Ah-jung.

EPISODES 99-100  
7:45 p.m. today

Ah-reum and Ah-jung work on a meticulous plan to take revenge on Heung-gia. Woo-hyuk professes his love for Ah-jung. Emotions run deep for Young-kwang and Kang-ho over Ah-reum. Heung-gia is taken into custody. She hands Se-ran a note, asking her to deliver it to the chairman. When Heung-gia is imprisoned, Kang-ho asks Ah-reum if their marriage is null as well.

**"Goodbye to Goodbye"**  
EPISODES 5-6  
6:45 p.m. Monday

Jung Hyo's father, Soo Cheol, is set on having Jung Hyo abort the baby. Min Soo and Sang Jin also side with Soo Cheol. Young Hee and Jung Hyo run away to Jeju Island. Se Young loses Yoo Yeon.

EPISODES 7-8  
6:50 p.m. Tuesday

Rumors start about Jung Hyo's pregnancy. After hearing the outrageous things being said about her, Jung Hyo breaks down in tears. Se Young flips out when he sees Young Hee with Yoo Yeon. Se Young barges into Young Hee's place and they get into a fight. Jung Hyo collapses holding her belly.

**"Secret House"**  
EPISODES 13-14  
7:45 p.m. Wednesday

Chairman Nam tells Ji-hwan about the day of his mother's disappearance. Tae-hyung has a flashback of the accident and confronts his mother. Tae-hee tells Joo-hong to back off because she has feelings for Ji-hwan. Joo-hong's father remembers witnessing the accident.

EPISODES 15-16  
7:45 p.m. Thursday

Min-young gives Tae-hyung an ultimatum. Tae-hyung probes into the accident and learns the identity of the victim. Sook-jin threatens Joo-hong's father and he opposes Joo-hong marrying Ji-hwan. Min-young tells Joo-hong the truth about Seol.

**"Sword and Flowers"**  
EPISODE 19  
7:50 p.m. Friday

Yeon Chung successfully rescues Muyeong from prison with Jangpo's help. However, Yeon Namsang kidnaps Muyeong and schemes once again.

EPISODE 20 (FINALE)  
7:50 p.m. Saturday

Namsang announces his intention to marry the princess and make her his queen to rule Goguryeo. Yeon Chung rushes over to rescue the princess at the celebration.

Jeff Chung is general manager of KBFH TV, which televises Korean dramas with English subtitles. Reach him at 808-521-8066 or jeffchung@kbfh.com.



A HAUNTED

# HOMAWEEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29 • 5:30-8:30PM

Join us at HoMA's annual spooktacular soiree for an evening of spirited art making, entertainment, bites and brews, and fun for the whole family.

Free admission for kids 18 and under.

**ACTIVITIES INCLUDED**

Art making • Games • Keiki costume parade • Beetlejuice (PG) screening • Photobooth • Live performances • Tarot card readings and more!

**HoMA** Book tickets online at [myhoma.org/homaween](http://myhoma.org/homaween)