

## ***Spotlight 2025 Classical Instrumental Preliminary Piano Judges***

**Dr. John Burdett** is an Associate Professor, the Director of Music Graduate Programs, and Director of Music Education at Azusa Pacific University where he conducts the acclaimed APU Wind Ensemble and teaches graduate students pursuing the Master of Music in Conducting and the Master of Music in Music Education degrees. Dr. Burdett completed music education and conducting degrees at Azusa Pacific University and California State University, Los Angeles before earning the Doctor of Music Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has published and presented his research at European and American conferences, including the International Society for Music Education, College Band Directors National Association, Spirituality and Music Education, and California Music Educators Association and contributed to the Peter Lang (Oxford) series. Dr. Burdett particularly enjoys engaging with high school and middle school students through conducting regional and state honor bands and orchestras in Texas and California and serving as an adjudicator with The Music Center of Los Angeles' Spotlight program - Classical Instrumental Division.

**Susan Kim-Pedroza** began her piano studies at the age of three. She studied at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, the Manhattan School of Music, and USC, where she earned an MA in Piano Performance, with training from Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Daniel Pollack, Constance Keene, and Dr. M'lou Dietzer. Ms. Kim-Pedroza is a respected adjudicator for various piano competitions and auditions. She is the program director and chairperson of the Orange County North Branch Styles Festival and the state chairperson of the South Region Adult Performance for the Music Teachers' Association of California. She has held several leadership positions, including Regional Chairperson for the Southern California Junior Bach Festival; Chairperson of the CAPMT Concerto Competition; Recording Secretary and Treasurer for the Music Teachers Association of California, North Orange County Branch; and Director of the West Coast Conservatory in Fullerton. She has performed at numerous venues, including Zipper Hall at the Colburn School of Music, the Muckenthaler Cultural Arts Center in Fullerton, Marcee Auditorium at El Camino College, Long Beach City College Auditorium, Westbecker Hall at Pasadena College, Pasadena Presbyterian Church, McKinney Theater at Saddleback College, and Ruth Todd Hall at Long Beach City College. She is an adjunct instructor at Long Beach College and Saddleback College and offers private lessons in Anaheim Hills.

**Dr. Jacqueline Petitto** has performed throughout the United States, Canada, Latin America, China and Hong Kong as a soloist and chamber musician. She has collaborated with numerous artists including members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and Opera Hong Kong. In high demand as an adjudicator, presenter and masterclass teacher, her creative and award-winning programs have captivated audiences worldwide. She received both Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in piano performance from the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, and her Bachelor of Music cum laude from Santa Clara University. Dr. Petitto has taught an array of music courses at USC, University of La Verne, Pasadena City College, Los Angeles City College, the Colburn Conservatory of Music, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, and served as Assistant Professor of Piano/Director of Keyboard Studies at Long Beach City College. In addition, Dr. Petitto has been active in organizations such as Music Teachers National Association, California Association of Professional Music Teachers, College Music Society, and The Frances Clark Center. She translated a musician wellness book from Spanish into English. Dr. Petitto is currently among the music faculty at Long Beach City College. She also serves Junior Chamber Music as a piano coach and as Director of the Conejo Valley and Los Angeles Coast branches.

**Dr. Louise Thomas** is the Associate Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education at Chapman University. She studied at Trinity College in Dublin and at the Hochschule für Musik in Hannover, Germany, and received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance from the University of Southern California. Dr. Thomas concertizes extensively throughout Europe, North America, and Asia at such notable concert venues as the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire in Moscow, the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing, and Carnegie Hall in New York City. Dr. Thomas has recorded albums in Germany, at the Banff Center for the Arts in Canada with the Irish Contemporary Music group Nua Nós, and has made numerous radio and TV broadcasts.