

2024 Spotlight Classical Instrumental Preliminary Piano Panel

Dr. John Burdett is the Associate Director of Winds and Percussion, 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, as well as 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 started her piano studies at the age of 3. She attended the Los Angeles County High School of the Arts, Manhattan School of Music, and the University of Southern California where she obtained a master's degree in Piano Performance. Ms. Kim-Pedroza studied with Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Daniel Pollack, Constance Keene, and Dr. M'lou Dietzer. She is actively serving as an adjudicator for various piano competitions and auditions throughout Southern California. She is currently serving as the Program Director for the Orange County North Branch of the Music Teachers Association of California. Ms. Kim-Pedroza has served as the Regional Chairperson for the Southern California Junior Bach Festival (2007-present); CAPMT Concerto Competition Chairperson (2011-2013); Recording Secretary (2007-2009) and Treasurer (2009-2011) for the Music Teachers Association of California, North Orange County Branch; and the Director of the West Coast Conservatory, Fullerton, California (2006-2011). Ms. Kim-Pedroza's recent performances include Zipper Hall at the Colburn School of Music, Muckenthaler Cultural Art Center in Fullerton, Marcee Auditorium at the El Camino College, Long Beach City College Auditorium, Westbecker Hall of Pasadena College, Pasadena Presbyterian Church, and the Ruth Todd Hall of Long Beach City College. She has been an adjunct faculty at Long Beach City College since 2012 and teaches privately in Anaheim Hills, California.

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 Dean of the College of Performing Arts and Director of Keyboard Collaborative Arts at Chapman University. She studied at Trinity College in Dublin and at the Hochschule für Musik in Hannover, Germany, and received her Doctorate of Musical Arts in Piano Performance from the University of Southern California. Dr. Thomas has concertized 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 made CD recordings in Germany, at the Banff Center for the Arts in Canada with the Irish Contemporary Music group Nua Níos, and has made numerous radio and TV broadcasts.