

Meet the Competition Performers



Ashley Von Riesen

I am a double-major in piano performance and clarinet performance. I began taking piano lessons from my mother at age five; after eight years, I started studying with Patricia Burge, and I am eagerly looking forward to studying with Dr. Landreth.

I experienced my first success as a pianist by winning gold medals in the Wendel Diebel Keyboard Olympics at CSU two years in a row (2003—2004). The following year I was selected as a concerto winner and performed with the Loveland Chamber Orchestra. In 2006, I placed second at the 2006 Stars of Tomorrow talent show and was one of two soloists chosen in the summer to perform at the Colorado Home School Convention. In the same year, I also won the CYSO (Colorado Youth Symphony Orchestra) Concerto Competition and was given the opportunity to perform at their annual concert. In 2007, I participated in the Wells Steinway Concerto Competition and was selected as a top 15 finalist out of 40 competitors and received an honorable mention.

I enjoy teaching piano at the Main Street Music Academy in Windsor, and in my spare time, I read, write, work with horses, ballroom dance, and design greeting cards for friends and family.



Nelli Gyulamiryan

I was born in Yerevan, Armenia and began piano lessons at the age of seven. I attended the Sayat-Nova School of Music for 4 years and then moved to the United States in 2001, where I continued my music education with a private teacher. In 2002, I won second place in the Wells Music Piano Competition in Denver and won first place in 2007. I wanted to be more involved in the music program at Smoky Hill High School, so I took IB Music, AP Music Theory and joined choir. In 2008, I made All-State Choir, as well as taking first place at the All-State Piano Accompanist Competition.

I am a very outgoing person, I love to be around people, and music is one of my greatest passions! It is a way for me to express what I feel and at the same time, it feels amazing to perform for others to enjoy. When I drive in my car, I listen to the classical station or entertain myself by singing something from choir. Although I get many awkward looks while stopped at red lights, I continue to sing, since it is one of the only times I get to be alone.

I enjoy playing the piano and look forward to continuing my musical education at Colorado State University.



Brian Provencher

I attended Ridgeview Classical Schools from 9th through 11th grade and Fort Collins High School for my senior year, where I graduated with a 3.3 GPA. I used to play sports in school but quit to make time for music; I took private lessons with Mary Ann Ranney.

I have competed in many competitions and won many awards. I have played in school bands and jazz bands and community bands for years. In addition to piano, I also play Scottish snare drum, drum set, flute, trombone, clarinet, bass, guitar, and I've taken some pipe organ.

I love playing music with my friends, whether in concert band or jazz band or a rock band. I like to snowboard, enjoy math, and I like to spend time hanging out with friends, playing music, reading, and thinking.

Protégé Biographies



Garrett Haas

Garrett Haas is a junior at Colorado State University majoring in Music Performance on both piano and trombone. Garrett, 21, lived in Oceanside, California, and moved to Fort Collins in 1990 where he began studying piano with Yvonne Berland at the age of 10, and started trombone two years later with Eileen Street. He was home-schooled along with 4 brothers and 2 sisters but participated in sports and music at Poudre High School.

During his sophomore year at CSU, Garrett won the Wendel Diebel Award for the most consistent and outstanding performer in solo and chamber music in the department, based on a vote of the faculty. In addition to piano studies, Garrett is active throughout the music department, where he plays 1st chair trombone in the University Symphony Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, CSU Marching Band, and in a student Trombone quartet.

Garrett is a protégé of Dr. Janet Landreth.



Elvin Holderfield

Elvin Holderfield, 20, is a junior at Colorado State University majoring in Piano Performance. Holderfield grew up in Loveland and by comparison to many of his peers, has been playing piano for a relatively short amount of time, just 7 years, making his accomplishments even more remarkable. He has won several piano performance competitions, including the Loveland Young Artists Competition, as well as regional and national composition awards.

This last spring, Elvin played in masterclasses with some of the world's most renowned pianists including Olga Kern, Yakov Kasman and most notably, Lang Lang at the MTNA national convention. Elvin was the featured accompanist for the 2008 Arts Connects International Arts Connects International Music Festival in Urbino, Italy, where he was on scholarship to accompany singers and string players from the U.S, Turkey and Russia.

In his spare time, Elvin is an active weightlifter and filmmaker. Elvin is a protégé of Dr. Janet Landreth.



Bryce Boynton

Bryce Boynton, 21, is a sophomore at Colorado State University, majoring in Piano Performance and Music Education. Bryce grew up in Longmont, where he began studying piano at age 5 after his dad brought home a cool keyboard from a friend at work. It had inspiring sound effects, including a train whistle, and kindled a growing interest in technology. This eventually led to his study and graduation from the Conservatory of Recording Arts and Sciences, in Tempe, Arizona.

Bryce has always been very involved in music in school, and has participated in numerous piano activities and competitions in the Front Range area, where he has also won several scholarships to further his studies. Currently, he is the recipient of the David Paul Knight Memorial Scholarship, which involves participation in the Jazz Department, where he is proud to be the pianist for the Jazz I Ensemble with director, Peter Sommer.

Bryce is a protégé of Dr. Silvana Santinelli.