

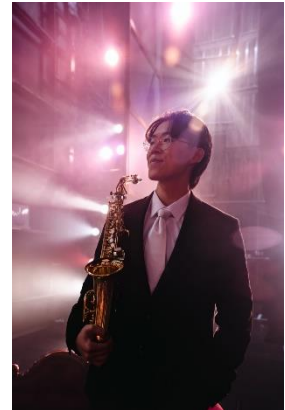
## Edinburgh Competition Festival 2025

### Concerto Class Finalists

**BEN-DAVID ZASMAN** (18) is a student at St Mary's Music School, Edinburgh. He has been playing the piano since the age of six and currently studies with Helena Buckmayer. The Luxembourg born pianist has participated in numerous competitions across Europe and in Edinburgh. These include the 2024 Edinburgh Competition Festival, in which he won 1st prize in the 15-minute recital category for piano, the Liège Piano Competition in Belgium where he reached the semi-final in 2022, and the Samson François International Piano Competition in Cagnes-sur-Mer, France where he claimed 3rd prize in the Junior (13-15 years) category. Ben-David enjoys performing regularly, having played in venues such as St Giles' Cathedral, and St Mary's Cathedral as part of a concert for the Polish Consulate in Edinburgh. He has also attended several summer courses for piano, such as the Austrian Master Classes (Zell an der Pram, Austria) in 2021, the Piano Summer School at St Mary's Music School (2022,2023), and most recently the Musicalta Music Academy in Alsace, France with Sonja Achkar (2024). In addition to the piano, Ben-David has several other musical interests. He plays the trombone and is keen on jazz and ensemble music. He has played in big bands, jazz groups, and various wind ensembles and orchestras. Ben-David is an avid musician who wishes to continue his studies in the field.

**LO JUN HAO CHRISTOPHER**, a saxophonist from Hong Kong, is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in Saxophone Performance at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, studying under Josef Pacewicz and Andrew Somerville. He is a core member of the award-winning Hoolan Ensemble and the saxophonist in the St. Aloysius Duo with Reese Maglicmot, which has performed widely.

Christopher has earned numerous awards since age nine, including first place at the 67th Hong Kong Schools Music and Speech Festival (2015) and top prizes in international competitions like the 23rd St. Cecilia International Music Competition (2018) and the International Music Competition "Paris" Grand Prize Virtuoso (2022), where he performed at the Amphitheatre Cité de la Musique in Paris. He was named "Saxophonist of the Year" at the London Young Musician of the Year (2023).



In 2024, Christopher represented the Hong Kong Youth Orchestra at the 27th Anniversary Ceremony of Hong Kong SAR to play for their Government. He has performed with ensembles such as the RCS Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Youth Orchestra, and in masterclasses with renowned saxophonists, including Arno Bornkamp. He is a recipient of the ABRSM Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award and the School Musician Scholarship in Hong Kong.

**JOEL GUTIERREZ** is an 18 year old musician from Edinburgh. At the age of 6 he started getting violin lessons. A year later he began to show an interest in the piano and taught himself the basics on a little keyboard which he was gifted for Christmas.

Eventually, his parents moved him to a specialist music school where he then started learning piano with Sasa Gerželj who he's been with now for 10 years. He studied at the RCS Junior programme for 4 years doing a joint study with violin where he played in a quartet and co-led the symphony orchestra.

He ended his time there in June by performing Liszt piano concerto No.1 with the symphony orchestra conducted by Dynoneses Grammenos. He's now just started a 4 year Bachelor of Music degree at RCS continuing piano with Sasa Gerželj.

He's competed in a vast number of competitions over the years, notably in 2024 where he won third prize in the Junior Beethoven Intercollegiate Piano Competition in Birmingham. The same year he also competed in BIPC (in Graz, Austria) as well as BBC Young Musician. Aside from competitions, Joel's performed and organised his own concerts in Spain, Australia, the US and more. He's also recorded solo piano for a programme on BBC Radio Scotland in 2022 as a result of a competition.

Whilst he's not playing piano or violin, he composes, improvises and records songs with friends. He also has a YouTube channel with over 1000 subscribers where he posts performances, skits and music related content (@joelgutierrezpiano).

The Concerto Class Final is very special for Joel as ECF gave him his first experience playing a concerto when he was only 11 years old after winning the Junior under 13 strings category. He went on to play at the 2018 Highlights Concert in The Queens Hall performing the first movement of Accolay's violin concerto. Seven years on it feels very much like a full circle moment for Joel to have been given this opportunity to share music once again with you.

**VIKTOR SEIFERT**, 17, is a German-Scottish violinist and composer based in Edinburgh. As a soloist, Viktor has performed to audiences in many of Britain's most prestigious concert venues, including Birmingham Town Hall, Menuhin Hall, Queen's Hall Edinburgh, Perth Concert Hall, Steinway Hall, Cedars Hall and the Millennium Centre Cardiff. From 2019-2021, Viktor was concertmaster in the National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain.

Viktor's work as a performer and composer has been broadcast on UK and German radio, on channels such as BBC Radio Scotland, SWR2 and HR2 Klassik. He has taken part in masterclasses with Nicola Benedetti, Michael Foyle and Jack Liebeck, as well as with composers David Horne and Simon Stockhausen.

Upcoming highlights in 2025 include recitals across the UK, and a performance of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 with the Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra in June.

As a composer, Viktor's work has been performed and recorded by musicians of the RSNO, Red Note Ensemble and winners of the Deutscher Musikwettbewerb, in venues

such as the Tauberphilharmonie Weikersheim, Royal Glasgow Concert Hall, and Menuhin Hall.

Viktor is a laureate of numerous national and international competitions, including Jugend Komponiert, Germany's most important accolade for young composers, which he won four times. He also gained second prize at the Young Composers International Composition Competition of the Franz Schubert Conservatoire in Vienna in 2021.

Viktor currently studies violin with Andrea Gajic at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He was previously a pupil at St Mary's Music School, Edinburgh, where he studied violin with Andrea Gajic and composition with Tom David Wilson and Neil Tomas Smith. Viktor has also been mentored by Jay Capperauld and Jeffrey Sharkey.

Viktor plays on an Edward Withers violin, ca. 1860, on generous loan from a private donor.