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## Hollywood Museum Hosts José Iturbi Competition Winners

On Oct. 30, the Hollywood Museum (1660 N. Highland Ave.) will transform itself into a concert hall where classical pianists, Dmitri Levkovich and Anastasia Markina will perform a recital, "From Russia with Love."

Both pianists are past winners of the José Iturbi International Music Competition, organized by the José Iturbi Foundation.

Levkovich and Markina will perform pieces by Chopin, Albeniz, Debussy, Millhaud, Rachmaninov, Infante and Strauss.

"Everybody recognizes several pieces from each program," says Donelle Dadigan, a co-founder of the foundation. Which is appropriate she says, since Iturbi's goal was to popularize classical music.

- Levkovich has performed on six continents. A multiple award winner, he has appeared in leading concert halls and festivals worldwide, including Carnegie Hall, Marinsky Theater's Concert Hall in St. Petersburg, Russia, and Beijing's National Center for the Performing Arts.
- Russian pianist Markina has won multiple music competitions including grand prize at the Young Texas Artists Music Competition in 2007 and second prize at the José Iturbi International Music Competition in

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2007 and 2008.

Training under Russian pianist Vladimir Viardo, for more than 10 years, she performs at events like the Barge Music Series in New York and the Vetta Chamber Music Festival in Vancouver, B.C. She released her album, *Joys and Sorrows* last year, accompanied by cellist Eugene Osadchy.

“These are great young artists,” Dadigan says. Between them, they’ve won more than \$100,000 in prizes from past concerts and competitions.

“The José Iturbi Foundation showcases the world’s greatest classical music talent of tomorrow, today,” said Dadigan, “Each year the foundation awards more than \$250,000 and is the largest cash prize classical music competition in the world,” she adds.

Dadigan, a lifelong Beverly Hills resident, knew Iturbi as her godfather—“I grew up with him. When my father died, he took over my tutelage. I spent three or four afternoons a week with him—he was nocturnal so his day started at noon.”

Iturbi’s sister Amparo, a Rodeo Drive resident, was Dadigan’s first piano teacher at 5, and she is the only student of both Iturbis.

With her godmother Marion Seabury, Iturbi’s companion of four decades, Dadigan created the nonprofit José Iturbi Foundation to keep his legacy alive and give young classical musicians their opportunity.

“The foundation is here to give them that boost,” Dadigan says. “They have the education. They just need help to be able to debut their talent and launch a career.”

Iturbi, a popular pianist from the '40s through the '70s, helped bring classical music to audiences through concerts and appearances in such films as *Anchors Aweigh*, *Thousands Cheer*, and *Three Daring Daughters*, always appearing as himself.

He’s heard on the soundtrack of the biopic *A Song To Remember*, when Cornel Wilde, as Chopin, is playing the piano.

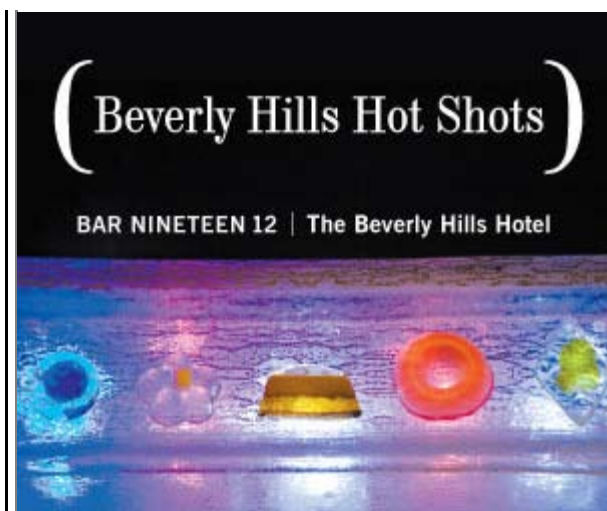
“I think it was important to my godfather to popularize classical music as an entertainment for everyone,” Dadigan says, “it’s not just highbrow.”

Tickets include admission to four floors of memorabilia spanning 100 years of Hollywood history at the Hollywood Museum, another non-profit founded by Dadigan.

It’s an appropriate setting for the concert since the museum is hosting a special Iturbi retrospective with costumes and artifacts from his MGM motion pictures, performances around the world, his personal piano and items from his Bedford home.

The museum has been a lifelong dream of Dadigan’s. She and her mother, both school teachers, “wanted to give back and share what Los Angeles is most famous for—Hollywood.” Knowing that “the best way to educate is to entertain,” Dadigan, with support from all the studios, has built the museum into Hollywood’s official museum and serves as its president.

Housed in the former Max Factor studio—she had to convince Proctor & Gamble to sell it, and spent nine years restoring it—the 35,000-square-foot museum houses “10,000 real treasures from movies’ golden era to today” in ever-changing exhibits.



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The program will be from 2-6 p.m. in the museum's fourth-floor ballroom performed on Iturbi's two completely restored, matching Baldwin concert grands that he flew around the world. Levkovich and Markina will recreate a concert by José and Amparo Iturbi closing the evening with Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* for two pianos.

The concert will be followed by a VIP dessert reception with the performers.

Tickets are \$50, \$85 per pair. Students under age 15 or with valid ID are \$25. They may be purchased at [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/206378](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/206378)

For the concert program visit <http://bit.ly/pVBvYh>.

—Steve Simmons

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