



The 33rd United States International Music Competition

ABOUT: The **United States International Music Competition (USIMC)** is organized by the nonprofit United States International Music Foundation and Chinese Music Teachers' Association of Northern California. Its purpose is to provide music enthusiasts with opportunities to showcase their talents, reward their dedication to learning, and encourage the appreciation of cross-cultural music.

ELIGIBILITY: Open to all musicians age 35 years old and under worldwide. Previous first-place winners of this competition are not allowed to participate in the same instrument or vocal category for the same age group but are able to compete in a higher age group. (Note: This restriction does not apply to Chamber Music, Vocal Ensemble, or Piano Duet when one or more performers are replaced.)

AGE GROUPS FOR ALL AWARDS DIVISIONS: Eligibility for each group will be determined by the contestant's age as of **June 1, 2026**. Each instrument category has different age groups.

CATEGORY & AGE Groups

Category & Age groups	Piano	Violin	Viola	Cello
A	Age 9 or under	Age 9 or under	Age 14 or under	Age 11 or under
B	Age 11 or under	Age 11 or under	Age 18 or under	Age 14 or under
C	Age 14 or under	Age 14 or under	Age 35 or under	Age 18 or under
D	Age 18 or under	Age 18 or under		Age 35 or under
E	Age 35 or under	Age 35 or under		
Category & Age groups	Winds	Vocal	Piano Duet, Piano Concerto Chamber Music, Vocal Ensemble	
A	Age 9 or under	Age 9 or under	*Age 12 or under	
B	Age 11 or under	Age 12 or under	*Age 18 or under	
C	Age 14 or under	Age 14 or under	*Age 35 or under	
D	Age 18 or under	Age 18 or under	*Ensemble group is determined by the oldest contestant in the group	
E	Age 35 or under	Age 35 or under		

Category & Age groups	Harp		Traditional Chinese Instruments	
	Harp	Celtic Harp	Plucked Strings	Bowed Strings & Winds
A	Age 12 or under	Age 15 or under	Age 14 or under	
B	Age 15 or under	Age 35 or under	Age 18 or under	
C	Age 18 or under		Age 35 or under	
D	Age 35 or under			

COMPETITION DATES AND LOCATION:

- Online Registration Submission **May 1st - June 5th (11:59pm) 2026**
- Competition Location: Valley Christian Conservatory of the Arts, 100 Skyway Dr., San Jose, CA 95111
- Competition Date: August 15th 2026 (Saturday) and August 16th (Sunday) 2026
- Winner will be announced on www.usimc.org
- Winner Concert/Award Ceremony: August 22th, Location: First United Methodist Church-Palo Alto

THREE AWARD DIVISIONS:

Important Notes: Final Round Rules (Any violation of the following rules will result in no scoring)

- The entire piece must be performed in full, including cadenzas and NO repeats
- Contestants CANNOT select excerpts or use simplified versions of the music. **Judges have the right to select specific sections to listen to as well as determine the performance duration.**
- Memorization is required. (Except Classical Chamber music and Piano Duet)
- Original scores or proof of purchase must be provided for all pieces **(Chinese compositions are exempt from requiring original scores but must still bring sheet music).**
- All instrumental and vocal accompaniments (except self-provided CD or MIDI accompaniments) must be performed by piano accompanists designated by our competition.

I. YOUNG ARTIST AWARDS:

- **Winners from each instrumental group will be awarded the following: (Age groups refer to page 1)**

- 1st Place: USD \$300, Trophy, E-Certificate
- 2nd Place: USD \$150, Trophy, E-Certificate
- 3rd Place: USD \$100, Trophy, E-Certificate
- Honorable Places: Medals, E-Certificate
- All winners' instructors will receive the Certificate of Recognition

- **Preliminary video round: due on 11:59 pm June 5, 2026 along with the application**

The finalist will be announced on July 1, 2026 on our USIMC website: www.usimc.org

Video Upload Requirement as below:

- The Video must be recorded in 2026
- Editing is not allowed; the video must be a single take with clear visuals, including framing, portrait, and sound quality. Please refer to the attached sample photos of video angles.
- Accompaniment is NOT allowed in the preliminary round. (Except Vocal and Piano Concerto)
- **The performance must be memorized; otherwise, it will not be scored.**
- The pieces for the preliminary and final rounds must be the same.
- If there are two pieces, they must be uploaded separately.
- Upload the video as "Unlisted" on YouTube.com or YouKu.com. Submissions not meeting these requirements will be considered invalid.
- No self-introduction or announcement of the repertoire is needed at the beginning of the video.
- Dress Code: Formal attire and shoes are required

Repertoire requirement:

Piano Solo/Viola/Cello/Winds/Piano Duet:

- Two pieces - with contrasting styles from different musical periods, and one must be Baroque or Classical **(The two pieces can be one Baroque and one Classical)**

Violin:

- Two pieces - One from the Romantic or the 20th century, and the other must be from the following

Group A	Vivaldi Spring 1st movement Haydn Serenade from string quartet 17, op. 3 no. 5
Group B	G.P. Talleman 12 Fantasias for Solo violin No. 9 Mozart Rondo in C major. K373
Group C	Bach Sonata No. 1 Adagio Bach Partita No. 3 Gavotte en Roudau Haydn concerto in C Major
Group D	Bach Sonata No. 1 Fuga Bach Partita No. 3 Prelude Beethoven Sonata No. 8
Group E	Two contrasting pieces and one must be from either the Baroque or the Classical period.

Vocal: including solo and ensemble categories. Vocal ensemble: Maximum 6 people in each group.

- Two songs - Must be performed in their original language (Official Publication) and memorized. There are no restrictions on style, but the lyrics of songs must be appropriate.

- Accompaniment is required, except for acapella. The form of accompaniment is flexible; participants may use a CD backing track, USB mp3 or accompanist provided by USIMC, or self-accompaniment.

Piano Concerto:

- One piece - One movement from a piece of music from any musical period.

Chamber Music: Maximum 6 people in each group: (western instruments ONLY)

- One piece - One movement from a piece of music from any musical period.

Traditional Chinese Instruments: Solo only

- Two pieces - contrasting from different musical styles, one must be traditional Chinese music.

Bowed Strings/woodwinds: Erhu, Di, Xiao, Bawu, Suona, Sheng, Gunazi, Hulusi

Plucked Strings: Guzheng, Pipa, Liuqin, Zhongruan, XiaoRuan, Yangqin, Sanxian

Harp/Celtic Harp: Two contrasting pieces from different music periods

Pedal Harp	
Group A	One free choice, should not exceed 5 minutes, and one of the following, pedal changes required : <i>Yongsters at Play (Marche Enfantine)</i> , by Alfred Holý <i>Any from Six Pièces (Menuet, Aubord Du Ruisseau, Petite Valse, Air Ancien, Lied, Valse Mélancolique) or Six Pièces Brèves (Conte de Noël, Recueillement, Air de Danse, Invention dans le style ancien, Rêverie, Gavotte)</i> , by Henriette Renié <i>Any from Epices I and II</i> , by Bernard Andrès <i>Any from Graded Recital Series Harp Solo Volume 2, 3, 4, 5</i> by Susann McDonald & Linda Rollo
Group B	One free choice, should not exceed 7 minutes, and one of the following: 1st Mov. from the <i>Concerto in Bb</i> , by George Frideric Handel, trans. by M. Grandjany or C. Salzedo <i>Chanson de mai, Romance sans paroles, op.40</i> , by Alphonse Hasselmans <i>Étude de Concert</i> , by Félix Godefroid <i>La Désirade or Chanson dans la nuit (Song in the Night)</i> , by Carlos Salzedo
Group C	One free choice, should not exceed 9 minutes, and one of the following: <i>Bourrée from the Partita I</i> , by Johann Sebastian Bach, trans. by C. Salzedo <i>La Source</i> , Am Springbrunnen, Op. 23, by Albert Zabel <i>Jazz-Band, Op. 33</i> , by Marcel Tournier <i>Duke</i> , by Bernard Andrès
Group D	One free choice, should not exceed 12 minutes, and one of the following: <i>Fugue from Sonata for solo violin No.1 in G minor, BWV 1001</i> , Bach-Grandjany <i>12 Etudes for Harp, Op. 45, No. 2</i> , by Johann Sebastian Bach, trans. M. Grandjany <i>Introduction, Cadenza & Ronda</i> , by Elias Parish-Alvars <i>Une Châtelaine en sa Tour, Op. 110</i> , by Gabriel Fauré <i>Toccata</i> , by Guillaume Connesson
Celtic Harp	
Group A	One free choice, should not exceed 5 minutes, and one of the following: <i>Any from Les Petits Pas Harpe Celtique, Automates or Danses d'Automne</i> , by Bernard Andrès <i>Pastorale</i> or <i>Any from Trois petites Pièces. Op. 7</i> , by Marcel Grandjany <i>Landler or Carillon</i> from <i>Trios Petites Bluettes</i> , by Alphonse Hasselmans <i>Any from Graded Recital Series Harp Solo Volume 1, 2</i> , by Susann McDonald & Linda Rollo
Group B	One free choice, should not exceed 6 minutes, and one of the following: <i>Any from Counterpieces (4 pieces pour harpe celtique)</i> , by Jean-Michel Damase <i>Baroque Flamenco (Based on a theme by J. J. Rousseau)</i> , by Deborah Henson-Conant <i>Any from Five Pieces for Celtic Harp</i> , by Evelyn Huber <i>Any from Six Pieces for Harp</i> , by David Watkins

Young Artist Award Performance time limited for Final in person audition

Age Group	Piano	Violin	Viola	Cello	Vocal Solo
A	8 minutes	8 minutes	10 minutes	10 minutes	6 minutes
B	10 minutes	10 minutes	15 minutes	12 minutes	8 minutes
C	12 minutes	15 minutes	15 minutes	15 minutes	10 minutes
D	15 minutes	15 minutes		15 minutes	12 minutes
E	15 minutes	15 minutes			12 minutes
Age Group	Harp/Celtic Harp	Winds	Traditional Chinese Instruments	Piano Duet/Piano Concerto/Chamber Ensemble/Vocal Ensemble	
A	10 minutes	10 minutes	10 minutes	12 minutes	
B	12 minutes	12 minutes	12 minutes	12 minutes	
C	12 minutes	12 minutes	12 minutes	12 minutes	
D	15 minutes	15 minutes			
E	15 minutes	15 minutes			

II. CHINESE MUSIC AWARD: The final in-person audition is limited to 6 minutes

- The purpose of the Chinese Music Award is to promote Chinese composers' compositions.
- The Chinese Music Award is **only** for **Western instruments' solo and vocal solo**.
- One piece or one movement ONLY. Each piece is required to be performed in its entirety.
- Contestants can choose to compete in this award only; a separate application fee is required.
- **No preliminary round for this category.**
- **J & V Foundation & CMTANC Commission Project Award**
 - If the contestant selects a piece from the *J&V Foundation & CMTANC Commission Project* and wins First Place, we will reward a USD \$150 scholarship in addition to the Chinese Music Award.
 - These compositions include works by composer Ming Hsiu Yen/ Ruo Hwang/Chiung Ying Chang/Sarana Chou/Hao-Yuan Chiu/and Ke Chia Chen/Yuan-Chen Li
 - To request the music, please visit our website: www.USIMC.ORG/J&V Commission.
- **AWARDS:**
 - 1st Place: USD \$150, Trophy, E-Certificate
 - 2nd Place: Medals, E-Certificate
 - 3rd Place: Medals, E-Certificate
 - All winners' instructors will receive the Certificate of Recognition.

III. SPECIAL THEME AWARD: Western Instruments Solo (not Woodwinds)- J.S. Bach or L. v. Beethoven

Vocal Solo and woodwinds solo - J.S. Bach or F. Schubert

The final in-person audition is limited to 6 minutes

- The purpose of the Special Theme Award is to promote specific western composers.
- The Special Theme Award is **only** for **Western instruments' solo and vocal solo**.
- One piece ONLY. For all instruments, the choice includes but is not limited to Prelude & Fugue (**except piano which needs to play both**), short section(s) of a Suite or one movement of a Sonata. Each piece is required to perform in its entirety.
- ***Violin cannot select a concerto for this category.**
- Contestants can choose to compete in this award only; a separate application fee is required.
- **No preliminary round for this category.**
- **AWARDS:**
 - 1st Place: USD \$150, Trophy, E-Certificate
 - 2nd Place: Medals, E-Certificate
 - 3rd Place: Medals, E-Certificate
 - All winners' instructors will receive the Certificate of Recognition.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

- The registration submission opens on **May 1, 2026** on www.usimc.org. The deadline is **11:59pm. June 5, 2026**.
- Late Registration during **June 6 to June 10** will need to pay an extra processing fee of **\$45**.
- Submitting proof of age (photocopy of driver's license, passport or birth certificate) online is required.
- Application Fee (USD) :
 - Young Artist Award** (Instruments Solo, vocal solo, piano concerto)
 - \$120.00 per contestant, per category (students of Active CMTANC members)
 - \$150.00 per contestant, per category (students of Non-CMTANC members)
 - Special Theme Award or Chinese Music Award**
 - \$100.00 per contestant, per category (students of Active CMTANC members)
 - \$130.00 per contestant, per category (students of Non-CMTANC members)
 - Young Artist Award (Piano Duet, Choir, Classical Chamber)**
 - \$70 per contestant (coached by Active CMTANC members)
 - \$80 per contestant (coached by Non-CMTANC members)
- All fees are non-refundable.
- \$45 will be charged if the application has missing documents or any errors (submitted before June 10).
- All contestants pay an application fee **ONLINE ONLY** via the registration system.
- If a contestant is entering more than one category, the total fee for all categories entered will be included in one transaction.
- All video links must be provided in the Registration Form. Once it is submitted after the deadline, the music selections/titles cannot be changed.
- Please visit **www.usimc.org** for more information. For questions, contact us by email: info@usimc.org or +1(408) 389-8939.

GENERAL RULES:

1. Past first prize winners in the same instrument or vocal category and age group are not allowed to compete again in the same category. (This restriction does not apply to chamber music, vocal ensembles, or piano duet if more than one performer is replaced).
2. Contestants may register for multiple categories (e.g., registered for both **Young Artist Award** and **Chinese Composition Award**)
3. Repertoire selections cannot be changed after the submission deadline.
4. Judges will determine the list of winners and finalists for each category. If no contestant meets the standard, the judges reserve the right to withhold the award.
5. All decisions made by the judges are final.-Any attempts to discuss or direct contact with judges will result in disqualification of the participant and/or winner.
6. No comments will be provided by the judges.
7. All Winners will receive their trophies and prizes during the awards ceremony and winners' concert. If unable to attend in person, the following options are available:
 - **By proxy:** A handling fee of \$10 per award.
 - **By mail:** * Domestic (within the U.S.): \$60 per award.
* International: \$80 per award.
8. The organizers, CMTANC-USIMC, reserve the right to record, use, and reproduce any video materials.
9. Each participant and their parent or guardian automatically agrees to waive any rights to legal action against CMTANC-USIMC and associated personnel.

Visual Demo of How to Frame Your Video:

*Pianists need to show their keyboard and the pedals.



*Strings players need to show the fingerboard and bow



*Winds player needs to show a waist up view *Vocalists need to show a waist up view



*Harp Players need to show the entire instrument



*Chinese instruments players need to show the whole instrument

