

INTERNATIONAL
VIOLIN COMPETITIONFIRST EDITION, 9 – 11 MAY 2025
cantusfirmuscompetition.bg

GUIDELINES

The Sofia International Violin Competition Cantus Firmus will be held in the period **9–11 May 2025** **2025 in two groups.**

Main Group

The competition is open to violinists from all countries and nationalities who are not older than 30 years as of the opening date of the competition, i.e. they should have been born after 9 May 1995. Application deadline: **2 April 2025**. The competition will be held in the following format: The pre-selection shall take place through a video entry provided by the participant. The first round and the semi-final round shall take place live in front of a jury and an audience. The repertoire shall be performed with piano accompaniment. Participants who reach the final round shall perform with orchestral accompaniment in front of a jury and an audience. The repertoire in the competition programme shall be performed from memory, with the exception of the sonatas in the first round and the contemporary piece by G. Arnaoudov in the final round.

Youth Group

Open only to Bulgarian applicants under the age of 17. Application deadline for the junior group: **25 April 2025**. Up to 15 violinists shall be admitted to the competition. The Youth Group competition will take place on May 10 and will consist of a single live round in front of a jury and audience. Each participant must present the following repertoire with a total duration of up to 15 minutes:

I. A virtuoso piece of choice

II. Johann Sebastian Bach: a slow movement from a Partita or Sonata for Solo Violin.

The pieces must be performed with piano accompaniment. The accompanist shall be provided by the participant. All participants shall be invited to a meeting and masterclass with jury members on May 8 at New Bulgarian University.

Pre-Selection Round, Main Group (Video Recording)

All violinists who have submitted a complete set of documents are eligible to participate in the Competition. Each applicant must submit a video recording of the following works:

I. Niccolò Paganini: one Caprice from 24 Caprices for Solo Violin, Op. 1 (Urtext Edition)

II. Johann Sebastian Bach: Two movements from Partitas for Solo Violin: Partita No. 1 in B minor, BWV 1002; Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004; Partita No. 3 in E Major, BWV 1006 (excluding the Ciacona from Partita No. 2, BWV 1004).

The video recording shall be taped at the applicant's expense. Recordings must be uploaded to the website cantusfirmuscompetition.bg no later than 2 April 2025.

The video recording must meet the following technical requirements:

The recording must be of excellent audio-visual quality. Any post-production or editing is strictly prohibited. The recording must be made no earlier than 6 months prior to 2 April 2025. Applicants must upload a single video file to Google Drive, OneDrive, or a similar platform allowing the file to be downloaded. The recording may also be uploaded to YouTube with a hidden link.

The pre-selection results shall be announced on 9 April 2025.

First Round, Main Group (9-10 May 2025) **Pipkov National Music School Concert Hall in Sofia**

Up to 20 violinists selected by the jury shall be admitted to the first round of the competition. The jury will also appoint four additional (standby) candidates in case a participant withdraws or is otherwise unable to participate in the competition. The piano accompanists for the first round and semi-final round shall be provided by Cantus Firmus, with the option of a preliminary rehearsal before the start of the competition.

Each participant must perform:

I. One of the following sonatas for violin and piano:

Claude Debussy: Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor, L. 140

Maurice Ravel: Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2, M. 77

Ludwig van Beethoven: Sonata for Violin and Piano Op. 12 No. 1 in D Major

Ludwig van Beethoven: Sonata for Violin and Piano Op. 12 No. 2 in C Major

Ludwig van Beethoven: Sonata for Violin and Piano Op. 12 No. 3 in E-flat Major

II. A virtuosic piece up to 10 minutes in length by one of the following composers: Niccolò Paganini, Henryk Wieniawski, Eugène Ysaÿe, Pablo de Sarasate, Maurice Ravel, Camille Saint-Saëns.

III. One of the following works by Fritz Kreisler commemorating the composer's 150th anniversary:

a) Caprice Viennois, Op. 2

b) Recitativo und Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6

c) Danse Espagnole from "La vida breve" (Manuel de Falla/F. Kreisler)

The results of the second round shall be announced after the end of the auditions.

Semi-final Round, Main Group (Violin and Piano)
11 May 2025 (maximum six semi-finalists)
Pipkov National Music School Concert Hall in Sofia

Up to six violinists shall be admitted to the competition semi-final round after the jury has voted.

In the semi-final round, participants must present the following repertoire:

First movement or second and third movements from one of the following violin concertos:

Ludwig van Beethoven: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D Major, Op. 61

Johannes Brahms: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D Major, Op. 77

Niccolò Paganini: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 1 in D Major, Op. 6

Jean Sibelius: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D minor, Op. 47

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D Major, Op. 35

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in E minor, Op. 64

Henryk Wieniawski: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in F-sharp minor, Op. 14 (first movement only)

Sergei Prokofiev: Violin Concerto No. 1 in D major, Op. 19

Pancho Vladigerov: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 1, Op. 11

Final, Main Group
Gala Concert Camerata Orphica NBU
11 May 2025 (Maximum three finalists)
Conductor: TBA
Bulgaria Hall

Up to three violinists shall be admitted to the competition final round after the jury has voted.

In the final round, participants must perform with an orchestra the following repertoire:

I. First movement with cadenza from one of the following concertos:

W. A. Mozart: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 3 in G Major, K. 216

W. A. Mozart: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 4 in D Major, K. 218

W. A. Mozart: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 5 in A Major, K. 219

II. G. Arnaudov: A new Bulgarian violin composition (to be sent via email after pre-selection round)

The order of appearance in all three rounds shall be determined by draw. The results shall be announced after each round.

The chosen repertoire for all rounds must be indicated in advance on the entry form.

AWARDS CEREMONY

(Main Group and Youth Group)

The diplomas will be presented to the awarded participants during the award ceremony, which will take place at **the end of the GALA CONCERT**.

AWARDS CEREMONY

Main Group

- **First prize:** diploma, plaque and a cash prize of **5000 EUR**
- **Second prize:** diploma, plaque and a cash prize of **3000 EUR**
- **Third prize:** diploma, plaque and a cash prize of **2000 EUR**

SPECIAL AWARDS

Main Group

- **Cantus Firmus Grand Prize:** participation as soloist in concert as part of the European Music Festival, accompanied by Cantus Firmus Orchestra
- **Radio Alma Mater – Classic A Special Award:** shall be determined by the media listeners' votes. Voting shall take place after the audio recordings are published on the radioclassica.bg website and broadcast on the radio.
- **Scholarships from the Ministry of Culture** which shall provided by the Ministry of Culture are granted only to pupils who are full-time students in Bulgaria at the high school level from grades 8 to 12, under 18 years of age, under the Children with Exceptional Talents Protection Programme and who are attending state, municipal, and Private schools in 2025, in accordance with the Ordinance on the Conditions and Procedure for the Implementation of the Protection of Children with Exceptional Talents. The scholarships amount to BGN 135 per month for one calendar year. Students in grade 12 receive a scholarship only for the period until they turn 18. Winners of the competition must submit their own documents to the Ministry of Culture under the quota for the Cantus Firmus Competition.
- **Prof. Emil Yanev and Prof. Liliya Gyuleva special scholarship:** 1000 EUR
- **Geza Anda Foundation Award:** A chamber music concert in Switzerland
- **Fritz Kreisler Society Diploma** For Best Performance of a Work by F. Kreisler
- **SIMA Special prize** A full scholarship for the participation at the 15th Swiss International Music Academy (SIMA), 11 – 20 July 2025, Switzerland.

AWARDS

Youth Group

- First Prize: Diploma and plaque
- Second Prize: Diploma and plaque
- Third Prize: Diploma and plaque

SPECIAL AWARDS

Youth Group

- Scholarships from the Ministry of Culture for participants from Bulgaria*
- Master $\frac{3}{4}$ violin by luthier Alfred Binner
- Master violin by luthier Alfred Binner
- 2 scholarships for the Summer Music Academy in Vienna with professors Michael Frischenschlager and Mario Hossen, June 28 – August 4, 2025
- Participation in youth concerts as part of the 100th anniversary of the “Varna Summer” International Festival in 2026
- Participation in the “Laureates” Concert by Cantus Firmus in 2026

* The scholarships provided by the Ministry of Culture are granted only to pupils who are full-time students in Bulgaria at the high school level from grades 8 to 12, under 18 years of age, under the Children with Exceptional Talents Protection Programme and who are attending state, municipal, and Private schools in 2025, in accordance with the Ordinance on the Conditions and Procedure for the Implementation of the Protection of Children with Exceptional Talents. The scholarships amount to BGN 135 per month for one calendar year. Students in grade 12 receive a scholarship only for the period until they turn 18. Winners of the competition must submit their own documents to the Ministry of Culture under the quota for the Cantus Firmus Competition

COMPETITION JURY

The jury consists of distinguished violinists and pedagogues of international renown

Prof. Mario Hossen (Chairman)

Prof. Michael Frischenschlager

Prof. Pavel Vernikov

Prof. Rūta Lipinaitytė-Savickienė

Prof. Joanna Kamenarska

Prof. Philip Draganov

The competition jury's evaluation process shall be guided by the rules that have been formulated by the competition organizers.

Any jury member who is or has been a teacher or is a relative of any competitor must not vote on that competitor under any circumstances.

The jury's decisions are final and shall not be subject to challenge. By registering to participate applicants agree to abide by the competition rules and hereby undertake not to challenge the jury's decisions.

HOW TO SIGN UP

To sign up for the competition, candidates must register at www.cantusfirmuscompetition.bg, fill out the online application form and submit the following required documents and recordings:

- **A short biography** – in English for the Main Group and in Bulgarian for the Junior Group (free format)
- **A current photo** high resolution (3000x3000px)
- **A copy of an ID card or passport** proving age
- **A declaration of informed consent** that waives the right to audio/video recordings, radio/TV/online broadcasts of the open-to-the-public stages of the competition and the use of photos or video taken during the competition, as well as to data processing. Copyright and performance rights of the competition shall remain the sole property of the organisers.
- **Proof of payment**
- **Video recording for the preliminary round (only for the Main group)**

Video shall be taped at the applicant's own expense.

Entry deadline:

MAIN GROUP: 2 April 2025

JUNIOR GROUP: 25 April 2025

Any bank fees shall be paid by the applicant. The name of the candidate must appear as the reason for the amount transferred on the bank document. Application fees shall not be refunded in case of withdrawal or no-show.

APPLICATION FEES

Main Group

- **Application fee:** EUR 100 (paid no later than 2 April 2025)
- **Accompanist fee:** EUR 60 (to be paid upon admission to the First Round)
- **Bank account:** UniCredit Bulbank, Branch: Sofia 1000, 7 Sveta Nedelya Square
IBAN: BG13 UNCR 9660 1020 9398 02
BIC (SWIFT): UNCRBGSF
Account name: CANTUS FIRMUS EAD

Youth Group

- **Application fee:** BGN 100 (paid no later than 25 April 2025)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Travel and accommodation expenses in Sofia during the first round, semi-final round and final round of the competition are the sole responsibility of the participants.
- All entries in all the stages of the competition are without remuneration for the participants.
- If a written invitation for a visa is required, the participant is obliged to notify the organizers.
- If requested, our competition partner travel agency C Trip is available to offer assistance for flights and hotel accommodation for all contestants in relation to their travel and stay in Sofia. If you need assistance, please contact C Trip directly at office@ctrip.bg.
- The competition organisers have no financial obligation whatsoever to any visa-related expenses for contestants. In addition, the competition organisers shall not be responsible for any decisions made by Bulgarian officials or other authorities, as well as authorities in the country of origin in relation to potential travel and visa restrictions. If needed, the competition organisers shall send invitation letters to contestants applying for entry visas, however, the final decision related to entry shall be made by the government authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria.
- The organisers reserve their right to supplement and/or amend the official competition rules. Any additions and/or changes shall take effect after their official publication on the internet page cantusfirmuscompetition.bg
- Applicants agree to all competition rules by submitting the application form.
- The organizers shall not be responsible for any expenses incurred by an applicant in the event of illness or accident during the period in which the competition is held.
- The organizers shall not be responsible for stolen items, documents or musical instruments during the period in which the competition is held.

This competition is made possible with the financial support of the National Culture Fund and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria, and also in partnership with the New Bulgarian University and the Lyubomir Pipkov National Music School in Sofia.

All recordings of the competition are broadcast on the air by Radio Alma Mater – Classic A, principal media partner of the event. The video recordings from the two rounds, as well as the final concert shall be published on the Cantus Firmus YouTube channel.

COMPETITION TIMETABLE

8 May 2025, Thursday

5:30PM Drawing of lots for the competition

9 May 2025, Friday, Pipkov National Music School Concert Hall

9:30AM-8PM FIRST ROUND Main Group (up to 14 participants)

10 May 2025, Saturday, Pipkov National Music School Concert Hall

9:30AM-1PM FIRST ROUND Main Group (up to 6 participants)

2PM Announcement of the FIRST ROUND Main Group results

2PM-6PM FIRST ROUND Youth Group (up to 15 participants)

3:30-8:30PM Rehearsals with accompanist of those admitted to the Semi-Finals

11 May 2025, Saturday, Pipkov National Music School Concert Hall

9:30AM-1PM SEMI-FINAL Main Group (up to 6 participants)

2PM Announcement of the SEMI-FINAL Main Group Round results

11 May 2025, Saturday, Bulgaria Hall

3:30-6PM Rehearsal with Camerata Orphica NBU Orchestra

Conductor: TBA

7:30PM GALA CONCERT Main Group with Camerata Orphica NBU Orchestra

(up to 3 participants)

The final ranking will be announced during the concert.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The organizers reserve the right to supplement and/or change the official rules, with the supplements and/or changes coming into effect after their official publication on the website cantusfirmuscompetition.bg

WE WISH ALL PARTICIPANTS SUCCESS!