



IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE ITS 3rd ANNUAL CONCERTO COMPETITION



2026

Concerto Competition

PERFORMERS WILL COMPETE IN FOUR CATEGORIES

- | | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| I. Junior Piano (up to age 13 or in 8 th grade) | \$100 | 1st Place Award |
| II. Senior Piano (up to age 18, not in college) | \$150 | 1st Place Award |
| III. Winds/Brass (up to age 18, not in college) | \$150 | 1st Place Award |
| IV. Strings/Harp (up to age 18, not in college) | \$150 | 1st Place Award |
| ***All finalists eligible*** \$100 Audience Favorite | | |

On Sunday, January 25, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., up to two finalists in each category will perform in the Sinfonietta Bel Canto (SBC) concert at St. Paul's UCC Church in Downers Grove. All finalists will perform with orchestra accompaniment. During the concert, one winner will be chosen from each category. The audience will also select their favorite performer. Each 1st place winner and the "Audience Favorite" will receive a monetary award as enumerated above. In cases of Audience Favorite ties, monetary award will be divided.

Additionally, the "SBC Concerto Competition" now offers

The Invitational Concert

Up to 5 select non-finalist competitors will be invited to also perform with the SBC orchestra in Fall 2026. (Invitational performers will be notified in Spring/Summer 2026 once rehearsal and concert dates/times have been confirmed.)

Application Process:

1. Entrants apply online at www.sinfoniettabelcanto.org – click on the "SBC Concerto" tab near the top, which includes all forms, guidelines, and a payment button. A completed submission includes all authorizations, attachments, fees, and a video link (see next page).

Submission deadline is 11:59 p.m., Friday, December 12, 2025

2. Finalists from each category will be chosen to compete in the live concert on Sunday, January 25, 2026. SBC reserves the right to limit the number of applicants, combine categories and/or otherwise alter the number of finalists or soloists.
3. Finalists must also be available to rehearse on Saturday, January 24, 2026 from 1:00 – 4:30 p.m. and on Sunday, January 25, 2026 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Application and Competition Rules

(in addition to the rules stated on the previous page)

1. The competition is open to performers up to the age of 18, not in college, who live within a 25-mile radius of Downers Grove IL. All finalists are invited to compete in a live, final round with orchestra. Performers will compete in one of four categories; all ages are by the date of the Finalists concert:
 - I. Junior Piano (up to age 13 or in 8th grade)
 - II. Senior Piano (up to age 18, not in college)
 - III. Winds/Brass: standard winds/brass in an orchestra, including saxophone (up to age 18, not in college)
 - IV. Strings/Harp: standard strings in an orchestra, plus harp (up to age 18, not in college)
2. Before applying, entrants should review the “Repertoire Guidelines” PDF, which includes sample repertoire, under the “SBC Concerto” tab on the SBC website:

www.sinfoniettabelcanto.org

Please contact us at SBCConcerto@gmail.com if you have questions about the repertoire. Entrants will be disqualified if repertoire does not follow the “Repertoire Guidelines” PDF.

3. Entrants can select any classical repertoire with orchestral accompaniments available through Luck’s Music Library at <http://www.lucksmusic.com> or from the sample repertoire in the “Repertoire Guidelines” PDF file. The piece should not exceed 7 minutes in length. If from Luck’s, music must be for purchase only, and not for rental. Past finalists/winners must choose new repertoire. While SBC will purchase the orchestral parts, the price may not exceed \$150. On the Luck’s website, the piece’s listing must indicate a “Set” with a price and usually a string count. If Luck’s website states “Score,” this does NOT mean individual orchestra parts; it must state “Set.” If you can’t find a particular piece on the Luck’s website, contact Luck’s directly. See the “Repertoire Guidelines” PDF for sample repertoire and instructions.
4. Entries are submitted to SBCConcerto@gmail.com by **11:59pm, Friday, December 12, 2025.**
5. Entries must include the following 2 steps:
 - a. The following items in a single email with the entrant’s name in subject line (incomplete entries are disqualified):
 - Fully completed and signed entry form (fillable on your computer or print/fill out), as an attachment
 - PDF file of the sheet music, **with all cuts clearly indicated**, as an attachment. (for cuts, also see #5 – #7 on the right under “Audition Rules”). An example on how to mark cuts in a standardized and unambiguous manner can be found at the link shown on the bottom right corner of this page (*).
 - A photo providing proof of possession of an original copy of the sheet music, as an attachment
 - A YouTube video link (see #7 below) in the main body of the email
 - b. The \$50 entry fee, payable via credit card or PayPal on the SBC website (look under the “SBC Concerto” tab).
6. Please note that the entry fee is non-refundable.
7. The video must have been recorded within the last 6 months and use live piano or high-quality recorded piano/keyboard accompaniment. No editing, splicing, or enhancements are

allowed in any part of the video at any time; use the same source for video and audio (ie: no separate microphone). The video must clearly show the entire instrument or keyboard and pedaling in a static/non-moving view. The video must be uploaded to YouTube as “Unlisted” or “Public” (and not as “Private”) and must include the entrant’s full name, name of piece and movement, and the competition category in the uploader comments section.

8. The finalists must be available to rehearse with the orchestra on January 24, 2026 from 1:00 – 4:30 p.m., and on Sunday, January 25, 2026 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
9. Finalists will be notified with a window beginning Dec 23. Finalists must confirm participation within 4 days of being notified. Confirmed finalists will be announced via email by January 3, 2026. To see the judges’ comment sheets, indicate “yes” on the entry form.
10. For the concert, finalists will be contacted via email approximately 2 weeks before the concert with the final round rehearsal schedule.
11. Questions/problems: SBCConcerto@gmail.com

Audition Rules

1. Performers must perform from memory.
2. Performers must select one piece conforming to the criteria outlined in the Repertoire Guidelines. The performance should not exceed 7 minutes in length including any orchestra alone sections; employ cuts where needed (see below). Pieces that significantly exceed the 7-minute time limit may be penalized or may lead to disqualification.
3. Previous SBC Concerto Competition finalists must audition on a different repertoire than their previous finalist repertoire.
4. Performers are judged using the following criteria: Tone, Technique, Accuracy, Interpretation, and Stage Presence.
5. Entrants must provide proof of possession of an original copy of the music by attaching a photo of the original and attaching it to the entry email. The PDF sheet music attachment must have cuts clearly indicated. (numbering all measures is highly recommended as you will receive better judges’ comments, but they not required).
6. Cuts: When indicating cuts, use the original bar numbers and then indicate your cut(s). After a cut, still use the original bar numbers so that we have an unambiguous and matching reference point in your sheet music, the conductor’s score, as well as the orchestra parts. See the link (*) at the bottom of this page for an example of standardized marking of cuts.
7. The conductor may alter orchestral tutti cuts at his discretion.
8. Contestants will be assigned a rehearsal time on January 24, 2026 from 1:00 – 4:30 p.m. and on Sunday, January 25, 2026 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Times are not negotiable.
9. The location for all rehearsals and the concert is St. Paul’s UCC Church, 5739 Dunham Road, Downers Grove, IL.
10. Rehearsals are not open to the public.
11. No flash photography at rehearsals or performances.
12. The judges’ decisions are final.

(*) Here is a video demonstrating how to mark cuts in a standardized and unambiguous manner:

<https://youtu.be/aifQjWPPOPO>