Rules for the 5th Samson François International Piano Competition - 2026

-Master Competition-
ARTIST Category

Article 1 - Organizer and purpose of the Competition

The organizer of the Competition entitled "Samson François International Junior Piano Competition" (hereinafter referred to as "the Competition") is the Association "Le piano en Liberté" (hereinafter referred to as "the Association"), an association governed by the law of July 1, 1901, registered under RNA number: W062017668 / SIREN: 910066117, whose registered office is located at 55 boulevard Victor Hugo 06000 Nice, represented by its president, Ms. Christine Gastaud.

The purpose of the Competition is to perpetuate the musical legacy of Samson François and enable talented young pianists to launch an international career.

Participation in the Competition implies full acceptance of these rules (hereinafter referred to as "the rules").

The financial terms and conditions for participation in the Competition are described in Article 2.3 Registration Fees.

Article 2 - Participation

2.1 - Conditions of Participation

The Competition is open to pianists of any nationality **born after July 4, 1990**. They must therefore be no older than 35 at the time of the Competition.

The Competition will take place at the Hippodrome de la Côte d'Azur in Cagnes-sur-Mer from Wednesday, July 1 to Friday, July 3, 2026, with candidates selected after the video pre-selection phase under the conditions set out in these rules.

Regular students of any member of the jury during the last three (3) years are not eligible to enter the Competition.

Students who have taken masterclasses or occasional private lessons are not considered regular students.

2.2 - Program

a - Video pre-selection:

Free program minimum 13 minutes - maximum 15 minutes including a virtuoso study.

Submission deadline: **Friday, May 1, 2026, at midnight GMT +1**.

Video recording requirements

- It is important to ensure the quality of the video recording. The video must be filmed without cuts, in a fixed shot, with the candidate's face and hands clearly visible at all times and without special effects such as zooms and others. Preference should be given to sound quality.
- Any type of editing or manipulation of the audio and video is prohibited and may result in the candidate's disqualification.
- The two (2) works may be recorded at different times and then assembled into a single video, or they may be recorded in one take. It is possible to submit part of a work, for example the first movement of a sonata.
- All videos must be recent (2024/2025/2026).
- The video may be recorded in a professional studio or in a domestic environment.
- By submitting your application, you automatically authorize the Competition organizers to use this video for purposes related to the Competition: sending videos to the juries and publishing videos on the website and social media.
- Recordings must be attached to the dedicated information form, with a YouTube, Vimeo, or other link, or using file transfer tools. In all cases, the file name or link must contain the candidate's first and last name.

30 candidates will be selected for the semi-finals on Wednesday, July 1 and Thursday, July 2, 2026 in Cagnes-sur-Mer.

b - Semi-final:

Free program minimum 25 minutes - maximum 30 minutes, including a piece or set of pieces by Chopin with a minimum duration of 7 minutes.

The program provided may be modified until Monday, June 1, 2026. Any requests for program changes must be sent by email to:samsonfrancoiscompetition@gmail.com . No program changes will be accepted after this date.

c - Final:

The final will take place on Friday, July 3, 2026, in Cagnes-sur-Mer.

A maximum of five (5) candidates will be selected.

Program: recital lasting a minimum of 50 minutes and a maximum of 55 minutes, including at least 10 minutes of works of your choice by Debussy, Ravel, or Fauré.

Note: Works recorded for the preliminary selection may be repeated for the semi-final or final. However, no work played in the semi-final may be played again in the final. All works must be published and played without a score.

2.3 Registration fee

The registration fee is €120 and must be paid via the procedure described on the Competition page: Samson François International Piano Competition.

Applications will only be considered once the registration fee has been paid in full. Any bank or transfer fees are the responsibility of the applicant.

No claims will be accepted and the registration fee will not be refunded under any circumstances, except under the conditions set out in Article 11 - Force majeure.

2.4 Validity of the application

The registration deadline is Friday, May 1, 2026, at midnight (GMT +1).

Applicants must register online (Samson François International Piano Competition) using the information form, sending the following supporting documents and having paid the registration fee in advance:

- A copy of their identity card or passport (PDF format recommended)
- A resume in French or English (PDF format recommended)
- A recent high-definition photo (image format: .pdf, .jpg, .png)
- These rules and regulations, signed, if they have not already been signed electronically during the electronic signature process.
- The video link

For the application to be valid, the registration file, including all of the items listed below, must be received before the competition registration deadline. Any incomplete applications will be rejected.

Article 3 - Competition procedure

3.1 Announcement of the Competition

The Competition is announced on:

- The Association's website at https://www.lesnocturnesdupiano.com
- Websites such as: www.alink-argerich.org
- The website dedicated to the Competition at: https://samsonfrancoispianocompetition.com/
- The social networks used by the Association and its partners
- Paper communication tools produced by the Association.

3.2 Competition schedule

The events are open to the public and admission is free.

The Competition will take place according to the following schedule:

- **Friday, May 1, 2026, at midnight (GMT +1):** Registration deadline
- **Monday, May 18, 2026:** Announcement of the 30 selected pianists
- **Wednesday, July 1 and Thursday, July 2, 2026:** Semifinals
- **Friday, July 3, 2026:** Finals followed by the announcement of the results and the closing ceremony

This schedule is subject to change by the Association.

Pianos will be made available to candidates at the Hippodrome de la Côte d'Azur. The schedule will be communicated by email in June 2026.

3.3 Jury - Selection of winners

The jury is responsible for selecting the winners.

The jury is composed of international figures from the world of music. The composition of the jury is available on the Competition website: Samson François International Piano Competition.

The jury president has the casting vote in the event of a tie. The jury's decisions are final and cannot be contested.

The jury may interrupt the performance of a piece if it considers the competitor's playing to be insufficient or if the maximum time allowed for the round is exceeded.

Article 4 - Prizes

Total cash prizes: €14,000

- **Samson François Grand Prize: €7,000.**

  The winner will also be invited to give a recital at the **Les Nocturnes du Piano** Festival.
- Each finalist will be engaged for a recital: Estivales du Conseil Départemental des Alpes-Maritimes or private concerts.
- **Chopin Special Prize:** €750
- **Debussy, Fauré, or Ravel Special Prize:** €750

Other special prizes may be added. The updated list is available on the competition website: Samson François International Piano Competition.

All candidates may request a certificate of participation in the Competition.

Article 5 - Awarding of prizes

Prizes will be awarded on Friday, July 3, 2026, during the closing ceremony.

All candidates are encouraged to attend, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian for minors.

Article 6 - Travel and accommodation expenses

Travel, transportation, and accommodation expenses are the responsibility of the candidates.

Article 7 - Image rights

Candidates are required to accept all interviews, videos, or promotional meetings related to the Competition.

The Association reserves the right to make or authorize any audio or video recordings and take any photographs throughout the duration of the competition and during the closing ceremony. It also reserves the right to store and communicate these recordings and photographs for the benefit of the Association, as well as to retain ownership of them.

By participating in the Competition, candidates authorize the Association, free of charge, to use their surname, first name(s), image and, where applicable, any other attributes of their personality, for the purposes of communication relating to the Competition exclusively, by any digital and/or analog means, on any media, worldwide and for a period of fifty (50) years from the start of the Competition.

Article 8 - Official version of the rules

These rules are written in French and English. **Only the French version is authoritative.**

Article 9 - Protection of personal data

In organizing the Competition, the Association collects and processes the personal data of Candidates and, where applicable, their parents and/or legal guardians.

The Association undertakes to ensure that the processing of personal data carried out in this way complies with the regulations in force regarding the protection of personal data, in particular the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679 of April 27, 2016, and the amended French Data Protection Act No. 78-17 of January 6, 1978.

What are the purposes of this data collection?

The collection of this data is necessary in order to:

- Consider or reject candidates' participation in the Competition
- Where applicable, to inform the winning candidates individually and on the Association's website
- Obtain the necessary authorizations from the person(s) exercising parental authority over the candidates
- Processing requests and questions sent by email to the Association
- Awarding prizes to winners.

What data is involved?

- For candidates:

Candidates are informed that the following data concerning them is collected by the Association as part of the Competition: surname, first name, pseudonym (if applicable), title (if applicable), email address (if applicable for candidates aged 15 and over), date of birth, and category in which the candidate is participating. This data is collected when the form authorizing the candidate's participation in the Competition is sent, completed by the person(s) exercising parental authority over the minor. The Association also collects the postal address of the minor candidate as part of the authorization provided by the person(s) exercising parental authority.

- For persons exercising parental authority:

The person(s) exercising parental authority are informed that the following data concerning them is collected by the Association: their surname, first name, title (if applicable), date of birth, email address, mobile phone number, postal address, and parental relationship to the minor candidate (for the exercise of parental authority). This data is collected as part of the authorization for the minor candidate to participate in the Competition, completed by the person(s) exercising parental authority.

What are the legal bases for this processing?

The legal basis for the processing of personal data by the Association is the consent of the person(s) exercising parental authority over the candidates.

Who are the recipients of this data?

All personal data collected by the Association is intended for its services.

How long is this data stored for?

This data is deleted at the end of the Competition, except where extended storage is necessary for the management of any disputes that may arise, with the exception of the identity and, where applicable, the pseudonym of candidates in accordance with the right of authorship, and with the exception of data relating to minor candidates and the person(s) exercising parental authority provided in the context of the authorization issued by the latter, which is retained for the legal limitation period and then archived.

Other information brought to your attention regarding this processing:

The Association undertakes to implement and enforce the security measures it deems necessary to ensure the confidentiality of the data collected for the duration necessary for their processing, in

accordance with the aforementioned "Data Protection Act." The processing does not involve automated decision-making. No data is transferred outside the European Union.

What are your rights?

In accordance with the amended Law No. 78-18 of January 6, 1978, relating to data processing, files, and freedoms, the person(s) exercising parental authority over minor candidates may access data concerning them, rectify it, request its deletion, or object to its processing, as appropriate. However, certain data is essential for participation in this Competition and for awarding prizes to the winners.

To exercise these rights or for any questions about the processing of their data in connection with the Competition, applicants should contact the Association's data protection officer at the following address:contact@lesnocturnesdupiano.com , specifying the subject of the request and providing proof of their identity by any means.

Visit the website cnil.fr for more information about your rights.

The person(s) exercising parental authority over minor applicants are informed of their right to lodge a complaint with the CNIL if, after contacting the Association, they believe that their rights regarding their data have not been respected.

Article 10 - Insurance and Civil Liability

The Association holds civil liability insurance.

Article 11 - Force Majeure

The Association shall not be held liable if, in the event of force majeure within the meaning of Article 1218 of the Civil Code and case law, it is forced to cancel the 2026 edition of the Competition due to health conditions or government directives, or in the event of an insufficient number of registrations.

Article 12 - Applicable law and competent court

The rules are subject to French law.

Any dispute shall be brought before the competent court in Nice, after all avenues of conciliation have been exhausted.

For adult candidates:

I, the undersigned:

☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs.
First name: .....
Last name: .....
Born on: .....in: .....
Nationality: .....
Address: .....
Postal code: ..... City: .....
Country: .....
Mobile: ..... Email: .....

- Competing in the "ARTIST" category
- Certifies that they have read and accept all the rules of the "Samson François International Piano Competition" organized by the Association "Le piano en liberté," and in particular:
- Consents to the collection and processing of personal data by the Association "Le piano en liberté" within the framework and for the purposes of the Competition, in accordance with Article 9 of the rules.
- I graciously transfer my image rights under the conditions of Article 7 of the rules.

Done at: .....

Date: ...../ ...../ .....

Signature of adult candidate:

For the minor candidate:

AUTHORIZATION FROM PERSONS
EXERCISING PARENTAL AUTHORITY

AUTHORIZATION

To be completed by the parent or both parents or person(s) with parental authority.

I, the undersigned / We, the undersigned
☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs.
First name: .....
Last name: .....
Born on: .....in: .....
Address: .....
Postal code: ..... City: .....
Country: .....
Mobile: ..... Email: .....

And/or
☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs.
First name: .....
Last Name: .....
Date of birth: .....in: .....
Address: .....
Postal code: ..... City: .....
Country: .....
Mobile: ..... Email: .....

Parent(s) / legal guardian(s) of:
☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs.
First name: .....
Last name: .....
Born on: .....in: .....
Nationality: .....
Address: .....
Postal code: ..... City: .....
Country: .....
Mobile: ..... Email: .....

hereinafter referred to as "the minor":

- Competing in the "ARTIST" category
- Certify/certify that we have parental authority over the minor
- Certify/certify that we have read the rules of the "Samson François International Piano Competition" organized by the Association "Le piano en liberté" and accept them in their entirety, in particular:
- Consent/consent, when the minor is under the age of fifteen, to the collection and processing by the Association "Le piano en liberté" of the minor's personal data within the framework and for the purposes of the Competition, in accordance with Article 9 of the rules.
- We hereby grant the image rights free of charge under the conditions set out in Article 7 of the rules.
- Certify that we have read the Competition rules with the minor and ensured that they have understood them.
- Authorize the minor to participate in the Competition.

Done at: .....

Date: ...../ ...../ .....

Signature:	Signature:

Signature of minor over 13 years of age: