

Rules for the 5th Samson François International Junior Piano Competition – 2026

–JUNIOR Competition–

Categories: YOUNG ARTIST, JUNIOR, YOUNG TALENT, CHILDREN,
YOUNG CHILDREN, VERY YOUNG

Article 1 – Organizer and purpose of the Competition

The organizer of the Competition entitled "Samson François JUNIOR International 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 to enable brilliant 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

The Competition will take place at the Hippodrome de la Côte d'Azur in Cagnes-sur-Mer from Saturday, June 27 to Tuesday, June 30, 2026, under the conditions set out in these rules.

Six (6) categories are available to candidates:

- YOUNG ARTIST category
- JUNIOR category
- YOUNG TALENT category
- CHILDREN category
- YOUNG CHILDREN category
- VERY YOUNG Category

The Competition schedule is set out in Article 3.2 of the rules.

These rules and regulations and information about the Competition are available at the following website: [Samson François International Piano Competition](http://www.samsonfrancoispianocompetition.com).

Any questions regarding the Competition may be sent to the following email address: samsonfrancoiscompetition@gmail.com.



2.1 – Terms and conditions of participation

The Competition is open to pianists of all nationalities, in the following age categories:

- YOUNG ARTIST category (20 years old or younger – born after July 1, 2005)
- JUNIOR category (15 years old or younger – born after June 30, 2010)
- YOUNG TALENT category (12 years old or younger – born after June 28, 2013)
- CHILDREN category (10 years old or younger – born after June 26, 2015)
- YOUNG CHILDREN category (8 years old or younger – born after June 26, 2017)
- VERY YOUNG category (6 years old or younger – born after June 26, 2019)

It is recommended that participants register in the category corresponding to their age. Candidates may register in one or more categories.

Regular students of any member of the jury are not permitted to enter the competition in the YOUNG ARTIST, JUNIOR, and YOUNG TALENT categories.

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

2.2 – Program requirements

The program requirements depend on the category chosen by the candidate.

2.2.1 For the "YOUNG ARTIST" category (maximum age 20)

a – Video preselection:

Free program minimum 10 minutes – maximum 12 minutes, including two (2) works from different periods and contrasting styles, to be sent before 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 entirely without interruption between one piece and the other. It is also possible to submit parts of works individually, for example, the first movement of a sonata alone.
- All videos must be recent (2024/2025/2026).
- The video does not necessarily have to be recorded in a professional studio, but may also be recorded in a domestic environment.
- By submitting your registration, you automatically authorize the competition organizers to use this video for purposes related to the competition: sending the videos to the juries and publishing the videos on the website and on social media.
- Recordings must be attached to the dedicated information form, with a YouTube, Vimeo, or other link, or using file transfer tools, for example. In all cases, the file name or link must contain the candidate's first and last name.

Twenty-four candidates will be selected for the live audition on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, in Cagnes-sur-Mer.

The list of selected candidates will be announced on Monday, May 18, 2026.

b – Live audition:

A free program lasting 15 to 18 minutes, including a work by Chopin.

Only one piece played for the video pre-selection may be repeated in the live audition.

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.

2.2.2 For the "JUNIOR" category (maximum age 15)

- **Program:** Free program lasting 12 to 15 minutes.
- **Pre-selection:** The first **32** registrants will be selected.

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.

2.2.3 For the "YOUNG TALENT" category (maximum age 12)

- **Program:** Free program lasting 7 to 10 minutes.
- **Pre-selection:** The first **40** registrants will be accepted.

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

2.2.4 For the "CHILDREN" category (maximum age 10)

- **Program:** Free program lasting 4 to 7 minutes.
- **Pre-selection:** The first **40** registrants will be accepted.

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.

2.2.5 For the YOUNG CHILDREN category (maximum age 8)

- **Program:** Free program of 5 minutes maximum
- **Pre-selection:** The first **40** registrants will be accepted.

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.

2.2.5 For the VERY YOUNG category (maximum age 6)

- **Program:** Free program of 3 minutes maximum
- **Pre-selection:** The first **40** registrants will be selected.

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

2.3 Registration fee

The registration fee depends on the category and must be paid using the procedure described on the Competition page: [Samson François International Piano Competition](http://www.samsonfrancoispianocompetition.com).

- YOUNG ARTIST category: €90

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– JUNIOR Competition –

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- JUNIOR category: €80
- YOUNG TALENT category: €70
- CHILDREN category: €60
- YOUNG CHILDREN category: €50
- VERY YOUNG category : €40

It is recommended that you register in the category corresponding to your age (see paragraph: "2.1 Terms and conditions of participation"). Candidate may register in one or more categories.

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

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 closing date for registrations is:

- **For the YOUNG ARTIST category** **Friday, May 1, 2026, at midnight GMT +1**
- For the JUNIOR category Monday, June 1, 2026, at midnight GMT +1
- For the YOUNG TALENT category Monday, June 1, 2026, at midnight GMT +1
- For the CHILDREN category Monday, June 1, 2026, at midnight GMT +1
- For the YOUNG CHILDREN category Monday, June 1, 2026, at midnight GMT +1
- For the VERY YOUNG category Monday, June 1, 2026, at midnight GMT +1

Candidate must register online ([Samson François International Piano Competition](https://www.samsonfrancoispianocompetition.com)) 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
- A resume in French or English, only for the YOUNG ARTIST, JUNIOR, YOUNG TALENT, and CHILDREN categories (not for YOUNG CHILDREN and VERY YOUNG)
- A recent high-definition photo
- These rules and regulations, signed, if they have not been signed electronically during the electronic signature process
- The video link for the YOUNG ARTIST category only.

For the application to be valid, the registration file must include all of the following items.

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/>
- Social media 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:

- **Saturday, June 27 and Sunday, June 28, 2026:** YOUNG CHILDREN, CHILDREN, YOUNG CHILDREN, and VERY YOUNG categories
- **Monday, June 29, 2026:** JUNIOR category competition
- **Tuesday, June 30, 2026:** YOUNG ARTIST category competition

This schedule may be adjusted by the Association.

Practice 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](https://www.samsonfrancoispianocompetition.com).

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

The jury is not obliged to award all of the prizes provided for, but reserves the right to award special prizes or to share prizes.

The list of prizes awarded to the winners is based on the categories and is set as follows as of December 31, 2025:

Total cash prizes: €4,950

A **special Chopin Prize** will be awarded in one of the categories: €300.

- **YOUNG ARTIST category: €2,500**
 - 1st Prize: €1,500
 - 2nd Prize: €700
 - 3rd Prize: €300
- **JUNIOR category: €1,500**
 - 1st Prize: €800
 - 2nd Prize: €500
 - 3rd Prize: €200
- **YOUNG TALENT Category: €400**
 - 1st Prize 1st place: €400
 - 1st Prize and Diplomas
 - 2nd Prize and Diplomas

All participants in the CHILDREN, YOUNG CHILDREN, and VERY YOUNG categories will receive a prize, diploma, or... surprise.

- **CHILDREN category: €150**

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– JUNIOR Competition –

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- 1st Prize 1st place: €150
- 1st Prize and Diplomas
- 2nd Prize and Diplomas
- **YOUNG CHILDREN category: €100**
 - 1st Prize 1st Place: €100
 - 1st Prize and Diplomas
 - 2nd Prize and Diplomas
- **VERY YOUNG category**
 - 1st Prize and Diplomas

Other prizes may be added. The updated list is available on the competition website: [Samson François International Piano Competition](https://www.samsonfrancoispianocompetition.com).

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

Article 5 – Awarding of prizes

Prizes will be awarded:

- **On Sunday, June 28, 2026, after the end of the competitions** for the VERY YOUNG, YOUNG CHILDREN, CHILDREN, and YOUNG TALENT categories
- **On Monday, June 29, 2026, after the end of the competitions** for the JUNIOR category
- **On Tuesday, June 30, 2026, after the end of the competitions** for the YOUNG ARTIST category

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 concerned?

- For candidates:

Candidates are informed that the following data concerning them is collected by the Association in connection with the Competition: last name, 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 or persons exercising parental authority over minor candidates have the right to access data concerning them, to rectify it, to request its deletion, or to 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 the context of the Competition, Candidates 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 Candidates 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.

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– JUNIOR Competition –

Categories: YOUNG ARTIST, JUNIOR, YOUNG TALENT, CHILDREN, YOUNG CHILDREN, and VERY YOUNG

For adult candidates:

I, the undersigned:

☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs.

First name:

Last name:

Born on:in:

Nationality:

Address:

Postal code: City:

Country:

Mobile: Email:

1. Competing in the YOUNG ARTIST category
2. I certify that I 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 Candidates:

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":

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

– JUNIOR Competition –

Categories: YOUNG ARTIST, JUNIOR, YOUNG TALENT, CHILDREN, YOUNG CHILDREN, and VERY YOUNG

1. Competing in the following category(ies):

- ☐ YOUNG ARTIST category
- ☐ JUNIOR category
- ☐ YOUNG TALENT category
- ☐ CHILDREN category
- ☐ YOUNG CHILDREN category
- ☐ VERY YOUNG category

2. Certify/certify that we have parental authority over the minor

3. 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:

4. 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.

5. We hereby grant the image rights free of charge under the conditions set out in Article 7 of the rules.

6. Certify that we have read the Competition rules with the minor and ensured that they have understood them.

7. Authorize the minor to participate in the Competition.

Done at:.....

Date://

Signature:

Signature:

Signature of minor over 13 years of age:

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