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Brussels Belgium

Special prizes: scholarship for participation in International master classes, concerts & festivals in Europe.

Prize for the youngest promising participants in each category. Monetary prizes.

Merci, Maestro!

8th Competition: March-April 2024
9th Competition: March-April 2025

- Preselection Online : March
- First –Second round in Brussels : April
Piano's MAENE, Brussels, Belgium
- Gala Concert of winners : April
Brussels Town Hall, Grand Place, Brussels, Belgium

Follow us!

Cat A: under 10 years old (incl.)
Cat B: from 11 to 14 years old (incl.)
Cat C: from 15 to 20 years old (incl.)
Cat D: from 21 to 25 years old (incl.)

The registration deadline : March 1st

Information:
Tel: (+32) 496 488780 | info@mercimaestro.be | www.mercimaestro.be

MERCI, MAESTRO !

1. Press Release

The 8th edition of our competition « Merci, Maestro! » will take place at the Piano's Maene's concert room, from April 10th to April 13th, 2024 and will end by a Gala concert on April 14th 2024 at the Gothic room of the City Hall of Brussels.

Organized by Nataliya Chepurenko, founder of the Brussels International Music Academy, « Merci Maestro! » welcomes international and Belgian pianists under 25 years old to participate. This event provide a platform for intercultural exchange, giving artistes the opportunity to be known in Europe and abroad.

“Merci, Maestro!” is also provide a possibility to create a new space to share classical music during the competition, from April 10th to April 13th, 2024, and during the Gala Concert on April 14th, 2024.

For eight consecutive years, the international competition « Merci, Maestro! » gives an opportunity to young pianists to perform in front of a jury composed of world famous musicians. This event also provide chances for every talent to win prestigious prizes and, for some of them, to win opportunities to participate in other festivals or concerts.

The inscriptions, closed in February, will give us a first glimpse of this edition. With a great international diversity, this competition attracts more and more candidates every year. After the preselections (on video), around twenty candidates per category (under 10 years old, under 14 years old, under 20 years old, and under 25 years old) will be selected, coming from more than 20 different countries.

In 2024, the jury will meet under the presidency of the Belgo-Ukrainian pianist, Nataliya Chepurenko, artistic director and founder of the competition « Merci, Maestro! ».

Nataliya Chepurenko (Belgium /Ukraine), president of the jury, artistic director and founder of the competition « Merci, Maestro! ». Founder, director, piano teacher and chamber music teacher of the « Brussels International Music Academy » and of the festival « Music Academy Forte ».

Milana Chernyavska (Germany), professor of piano at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (Austria).

Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden (Belgium), honorary professor at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels and currently at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel.

Johan Schmidt (Belgium), professor at the Royal Brussels Conservatory (Belgium) and Senzoku University in Tokyo.

Olga Zdorenko (Italy/Ukraine), professor of the Conservatoire of Frosinone (Rome). Artistic director of the musical association “Angelica Costantiniana” at Rome.

Diane Andersen (Belgium), Honorary professor of the Royal Conservatoire of Brussels, she is now conducting masterclasses in the universities of North and South America, Canada, Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan and Europe.

Yannick van de Velde (Belgium), professor of piano performance at the Conservatory Grand Duchée in Luxembourg and the Akademie für Tonkunst Darmstadt.

Tamara Kordzadze (Switzerland), professor of piano at the Zurich Conservatory.

Tatiana Kozlov (Israel), professor of piano at the Israeli Conservatory of Music in Tel Aviv. Artistic director of “Stretto international piano competition” in Tel-Aviv.

Herman De Vleeschhouwer (Belgium), former director of the Academy for Music, Theater and Dance of Sint-Niklaas (Flanders).

Yurii Kot (Ukraine), honoured artist of Ukraine, professor at the state P.I.Tchaikovsky Conservatory (now NMAU).

Organized over 4 days, from April 10th to April 13th, 2024, this edition offers the musicians a look back at the work of J.S-Bach, Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, and many others. The two rounds of the competition will take place in Piano’s Maene’s concert room, in Brussels, and they are open to the public. The finalists, between 21 and 25 years old, will have the rare opportunity to play at the finale as a chamber music pianist, playing one of the Beethoven’s trios.

The competition will end with a Gala Concert for all the winners. This Gala Concert will take place on April 14th, 2024, at the City Hall of Brussels.



2. PROGRAM

The International Competition for Young Pianists « Merci, Maestro! » is open for pianists from all around the world and is organized in four categories. The finalists will be announced after every performance of each category.

Category A : candidates aged 10 and under on the date of the competition

Category B : candidates between 11 and 14 on the date of the competition

Category C : candidates between 15 and 20 on the date of the competition

Category D : candidates between 21 and 25 on the date of the competition

Preselection

For all categories: YouTube or any other video file download link to program recently performed by the applicant. Recording can be from any performance, competition or homemade.

Program for every category : one virtuosic study and free choice works

- **Category A** : maximum **5 min**
- **Category B** : maximum **10 min**
- **Category C** : maximum **15 min**
- **Category D** : maximum **20 min**

2. First Round:

Category A : 8 minutes maximum

1. One of the pieces of J.S. Bach
2. One virtuosic study (etude) by Czerny, Clementi, Chopin, Liszt
3. A work(s) of a free choice

Category B : 10 minutes maximum

1. One of the Prelude and Fugue from WTC or two- or three-part invention of J.S. Bach
2. One virtuosic study (etude) by Czerny, Clementi, Chopin, Liszt, Lyatoshynsky, Bortkiewicz
3. A work(s) of a free choice

Category C : 15 minutes maximum

1. One of the Prelude and Fugue of J.S. Bach from WTC
2. One virtuosic study (etude): F.Chopin, F.Liszt, C.Saint-Saëns, C.Debussy, V.Kosenko Etude op.19 n 4 (Courante) ; V.Kosenko 11 etudes op.8 (n 1,3,5,6,9)
3. A work(s) of a free choice

Category D : 30 minutes maximum

1. One of the Prelude and Fugue of J.S. Bach from WTC
2. One virtuosic study (etude) : F.Chopin, F.Liszt, C.Saint-Saëns, C.Debussy, B.Lyatoshynsky "Concert Etude-Rondo", S.Bortkiewicz 10 etudes op.15 (n 1,3,5,9)
3. One movement of a classical sonata (tempo allegro) or variations: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Clementi

3. Second (Final) Round:

Category A : maximum 10 min

1. One of the pieces of J.S. Bach
2. Few pieces of a free choice

Category B : maximum 15 min

1. One movement of a classical sonata (tempo allegro) or variations: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Clementi
2. Few pieces of a free choice

Category C : maximum 20 min

1. One movement of a classical sonata (tempo allegro) or variations: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Clementi
2. Few pieces of a free choice

Category D : Participants must play one of the following piano trios:

1. L.van Beethoven, Piano Trio Op.1 No.3 in C minor
2. L.van Beethoven, Piano Trio op.70 no.1 in D-Major, “Ghost” N 5

The competition will provide Cello and Violin players for trio performances.

GALA CONCERT | 14.04.2024 | 18:00

The Gala Concert will take place on April 14th, 2024, at 18:00 at the Gothic room of the City Hall of Brussels. A reception is organized after the concert during which everyone will have the opportunity to meet and talk with the jury members. Translators will be there to help you communicate, if necessary.



3. JURY MEMBERS BIOGRAPHIES

Nataliya Chepurenko (Belgium/Ukraine)

President of jury, founder, artistic director and founder of the competition “Merci, Maestro!”. Founder, director, piano & chamber music teacher of the “Brussels International Music Academy”. Founder, artistic director, piano & chamber music teacher of the festival & masterclasses “Music Academy FORTE”. Master in Piano Performing, Teaching and Chamber Music graduated from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Kiev, Ukraine; the Royal Conservatory of Liege and the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, Belgium. Jury member at many International piano competitions, member of EPTA, and ballet pianist. For several years main pianist of the Royal Ballet of Flanders and « Brussels International Ballet School », guest pianist at many international ballet companies. Jury member of several international competitions.

Olga Zdorenko (Italy/Ukraine)

Professor of the Conservatoire of Frosinone (Rome). Artistic director of the musical association “Angelica Costantiniana” at Rome. She won a lot of international contests such as “Carlo Zecchi” (Rome), “Classical Sanremo”, “Sulmona Award.” She won the contest “Walter Massaza” in Alessandria and she received the O.Messiaen special award. In 2000 she graduated with the highest grades at the National Academy of Santa Cecilia and she became the chair of the piano department at the Conservatory Gesualdo da Venosa in Potenza (Italy, Basilicata.). She worked with record labels such as Brilliant Classics, Diapason, Movie Sound, to produce her own CD. She is always invited at international festivals and she performed all around the world: France, Austria, Germany, Romania, Switzerland, Greece, Spain, Belgium and Australia. Since 2015 she is the Lady of Malta’s Knights. She received a silver plaque from the President of the Italian Republic and the gold medal from the Italian Ministry of Culture for particular merits.

Diane Andersen (Belgium)

Honorary professor of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, she is now conducting master classes in the universities of North and South America, Canada, Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan and Europe. Currently invited as member of the jury of international piano competitions. Member of the jury and the artistic commission of the world famous Queen Elisabeth International Piano Competition Brussels.

Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden (Belgium)

Honorary Professor at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels and currently at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel. Frequently performed in chamber music formation with musicians such as José Van Dam, Augustin Dumay, Miriam Fried, Silvia Marcovici, Gérard Caussé, Michaela Martin, Walter Boeykens, Frans Helmerson, the quartet Ysaÿe, the quartet Melos and the quartet Enesco. Vanden Eynden was often a jury member in international competitions, primarily on the jury of the International Queen Elisabeth Competition. He was also artistic advisor for some festivals such as in Stavelot. He built a solid career as an international soloist. At the same time he was a professor

at the Royal Music Academy in Brussels and at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel. He was also artistic director of the European Center Eduardo Del Pueyo.

Johan Schmidt (Belgium)

Professor at the Royal Brussels Conservatory (Belgium) and Senzoku University in Tokyo, he regularly gives Master Classes in several European countries including Croatia (LAUS Academy), France (Académie d'été du Grand Nancy, Académie d'hiver du Grand Paris, Académie international d'été de Nice), Belgium (the international piano week in Wavre), and Luxembourg. He also gives masterclasses in Asia including China (Qingdao University of Science & Technology), Shanghai, Japan (Sendai Piano Forum, Tokyo, Nagoya).

Yannick van de Velde (Belgium)

Professor of piano performance at the Conservatory Grand Duchée in Luxembourg and the Akademie für Tonkunst Darmstadt. Finalist of the Busoni Competition in Bolzano, Italy (2015), “Prix d'Argent” and Public Prize in the Piano Campus Competition in Paris, and first prize in the Nany Pillepart Foundation Competition. Performed across the world: the Philharmonie of Berlin, the Acropolis Museum in Athens, Lincoln Center in New York, Center of Fine Arts and studio 4 of Flagey in Brussels, Casa da Musica in Porto, Palacio de Festivales in Santander.

Tamara Kordzadze (Switzerland)

Teaching at the Zurich Conservatory and her piano class counts over 53 Prizewinners of international and national piano competitions. Founder and president of “Vivace” – an association that promotes and supports musically talented children and adults in Georgia. Was co-founder, board member, and head of international relationships of the association « Youth Classics » and « International Music Week Montepulciano » from 2009 to 2014. Leading two associations, successfully working on over 30 projects, and helping over 200 young musicians gave Tamara Kordzadze substantial experience and ultimately led to the « Unite Classics » Association in order to make classical music accessible to a wider, new audience with innovative projects. Tamara has been distinguished and has won prizes – including 1st prizes – at numerous national and international piano competitions.

Tatiana Kozlova (Israel)

Professor of piano at the Israeli Conservatory of Music in Tel–Aviv. Artistic director of “Stretto international piano competition” in Tel-Aviv. Previously artistic director of Scherzo international piano competition. Teaches constantly around the globe in different master classes: Elena Cobb Star Music Festival, Musicfest Perugia, Carmel Klavier International Piano competition. Master in Piano Performing, Teaching and Chamber Music graduated from Tchaikovsky National Academy of Music in Kiev, Ukraine. Touring career: performing at various international festivals and competition in Lithuania, Poland, Holland, Greece and Belgium. Jury member in various piano competitions.

Milana Chernyavska (Germany)

Professor of Piano at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (Austria). She leads numerous international masterclasses worldwide. A German artist with Ukrainian roots. Looking back at her impressive career, she established herself as one of the leading pianists and pedagogues of our times. Her critics agree with Alfred Brendel, who wrote that “Happiness was complete when one listened to Milana Chernyavska”. Since 2009 she is a piano professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Graz, Austria. Milana Chernyavska is a sought-after teacher at international master classes as well as a jury member at various prestigious piano competitions, such as the ARD in Munich, the Busoni Competition, Telekom Beethoven Competition in Bonn, the Mozart Competition in Salzburg , the Santa Cecilia in Porto Competition or the Bluethner Goldaward in Vienna.

Yurii Kot (Ukraine)

Honoured Artist of Ukraine, professor at the state P.I.Tchaikovsky Conservatory (now NMAU). Also, a graduate of the NMAU, class of Professor V.Kozlov. A laureate of numerous national and international piano and piano duets competitions. As a soloist and a soloist of symphony orchestras had concert tours in Europe, Asia and the USA, also made records for TV and radio. Alongside with concert career Yurii Kot carries out educational activities at the piano department at National P.I.Tchaikovsky Music University of Arts, serves as a jury member at many International Competitions, gives master-classes in Serbia, Japan and Ukraine. A laureate of National L.Revutsky Prize.

Herman De Vleeschhouwer (Belgium)

Former director of the Academy for Music, Theater and Dance of Sint-Niklaas (Flanders); honorary president of VerDi, interest group for art education at policy level; former lecturer for Music Theory at the Royal Conservatory of Ghent; Delegation leader of the International Music school Seminar. Director of Musica Mundi School until Sept 2023.

Merci, Maestro!

International Competition For Young Pianists 2024

JURY MEMBERS



NATALIYA CHEPURENKO
(Belgium/Ukraine)
Artistic Director & Founder & Professor. MUSIC ACADEMY FORTE, International competition for pianists «Merci, Maestro!», Brussels International Music Academy



JEAN-CLAUDE VANDEN EYNDEN
(Belgium)
Honorary Professor at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels and currently at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel.



DIANE ANDERSON
(Belgium)
Honorary Professor of the Royal Conservatoire of Brussels. Member of the jury & artistic commission of the Queen Elisabeth International Piano Competition Brussels.



JOHAN SCHMIDT
(Belgium)
Professor at the Royal Brussels Conservatory and Senzoku University in Tokyo, he regularly gives Master Classes in several European countries and Asia.



OLGA ZORENKO
(Italy/Ukraine)
Professor of the Conservatoire of Frosinone (Rome). Artistic director of the musical association "Angelica Costantiniana" at Rome.



TATIANA KOZLOVA
(Israel)
Professor of piano at the Israeli Conservatory of Music in Tel-Aviv. Artistic director of "Stretto international piano competition".



YANNICK VAN DE VELDE
(Belgium)
Professor of Piano performance at the Conservatory of Luxembourg and the Akademie für Tonkunst Darmstadt.



YURI KOT
(Ukraine)
Honoured Artist of Ukraine. Professor of Piano at the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy in Kyiv, Ukraine.



MILANA CHERNYAVSKA
(Germany)
Professor of Piano at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (Austria). Leads numerous international masterclasses worldwide.



TAMARA KORDZADZE
(Switzerland)
Teaching at the Zurich Conservatory and her piano class counts over 53 Prize winners of international and national piano competitions.



HERMAN DE VLESCHHOUWER
(Belgium)
Former director of the Academy for Music, Theater and Dance of Sint-Niklaas (Flanders).

Come join us!
April 10th to 14th, 2024

Contact Us at:
info@mercimaestro.be
+32 496 488780
www.mercimaestro.be








4. RULES

- The international competition « **Merci, Maestro!** » is open to young pianists from all around the world. The competition takes place at **Brussels, Belgium, from April 10th to April 13th, 2024**, after the preselection from **March 6th to March 10th, 2024** (preselection through video performances).

- **There are four categories : A, B, C and D :**

- **Category A** : candidates aged 10 and under on the date of the competition
- **Category B** : candidates between 11 and 14 on the date of the competition
- **Category C** : candidates between 15 and 20 on the date of the competition
- **Category D** : candidates between 21 and 25 on the date of the competition

The **Gala Concert** is scheduled on Sunday 14th April, 2024, at the City Hall of Brussels, Gothic room.

- **Prizes :**

Prizes for the winners of the international competition for young pianists « Merci, Maestro ! »

Category A :

- First prize: 150 euros
- Second prize: 100 euros
- Third prize: 50 euros

Category B :

- First prize: 200 euros
- Second prize: 150 euros
- Third prize: 100 euros

Category C :

- First prize: 300 euros
- Second prize: 200 euros
- Third prize: 150 euros

Category D :

- First prize: 500 euros
- Second prize: 300 euros
- Third prize: 200 euros

Special prizes :

- Prizes to youngest promising participant in each category
- Special diplomas
- Grant (up to 50% of the total fee) to take part in the festival & master classes of the International Festival Music Academy FORTE (www.musicacademy.be) with renowned musicians
- Special prizes: participation in several workshops, concerts and festivals in Europe

If several winners receive the same number of points, the prize is distributed among them in equal proportion.

- Certificate of participation will be issued to participants, who were not selected to the final round, in the evening after the announcement of the first-round results at the secretary office of the competition.
- All works must be performed by memory without scores and without repetition.
- Changes in the repertoire will not be allowed after the registration at the competition.
- The prize-winners commit themselves to giving a benefit concert for the Competition.
- All winners will receive diplomas and prizes in cash at the Gala concert.
- If the winner is not present at the GALA concert the prizes and diplomas will not be delivered
- The candidates have to be present minimum 30 minutes before the performance.
- If the candidate is a student of one of the jury members, this jury member cannot vote.
- The candidate who already received one prize cannot participate one more time in the same category.
- The public is prohibited from photographing or filming during the performances. The organiser of the Competition has the right to do and reproduce pictures, video and audio recordings, as well as broadcasting on the radio and TV channels.
- Members of the Jury are musicians and teachers with worldwide reputation.
- Decisions of the jury are irrevocable. Only the members of the Jury shall be competent for any dispute. Their decisions are irrevocable and should not be justified. The members of the jury can possibly decide not to give any prize in one category. If two candidates end up at the same place, the President of the Jury will decide about the winner.
- The « Merci, Maestro! » competition reserves the right, without payment of fees, to record and distribute recordings for media and other purposes, including on the internet and television, broadcast, film, record, videotape, photograph or live stream all stages of the competition, all prize performances and concerts.
- The « Merci, Maestro! » competition reserves the right to change the conditions and rules in the interest of the competition.
- In case of refusal of the candidate to participate in the competition, the registration fee will not be refunded.
- All the pieces chosen by the candidates themselves must be accepted by the Jury and published in a repertoire.
- The announcement of each category's finalists will take place after the appearance of all the candidates of the category (at the end of the day).
- The order of the candidates is organised in alphabetical order. Nevertheless, the organiser of the Competition has the right to modify their order.
- The organiser of the competition is not responsible for any physical or material damages that could result from the participation at the contest.

- Each participant is responsible for their personal medical insurance, risk and personal belongings insurance.
- No music by Russian composers can be performed during the competition.



5. PARTNERS



City of Brussels :

provides one of the most beautiful concert room in Belgium for the Gala Concert: the gothic room at the City Hall of Brussels



Brussels International Music Academy :

financial support for some costs, and the participation to some concerts during the same year as the winners take part in.



Piano's Maene :

provides several rooms for the competition.



Hoofdstedelijke Academie:

they provide their buildings for the whole competition. Located at only 10 minutes from Sint Jan Berchmanscollege, it's an easy access for everyone.



Point d'Orgue :

provides special prizes for the competition's winners.



Azzato :

provides special prizes for the competition's winners.



MUSIC ACADEMY FORTE :

50% off the price of the masterclasses participation fee for some of the competition's winners, for the next masterclasses.



Radio Channel « La Classique » :

announce the information about our competition



The Alink-Argerich Foundation

an independent worldwide information and service center for musicians and competitions, AAF is a unique organization, offering the most complete details on music competitions ever compiled. By its nature and background, AAF has the widest range of information on piano competitions.



Embassy of Ukraine (in the Kingdom of Belgium)

Patronage of the Gala Concert of "Merci, Maestro!"

6. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

WEB: www.mercimaestro.be
Email: info@mercimaestro.be
Phone: +32 496 48 87 80
Address: « Piano's Maene »
 Rue de l'Argonne 37, 1060 Bruxelles

Dates:

| | | | |
|----------------|------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Preselection : | 06-10.03.2024 | | online (via video performances) |
| Semi-final | 10-11-12.04.2024 | | 09:30 > 20:00 |
| Final | 12-13.04.2024 | | 09:30 > 20:00 |

Price: Every round is open to the public for free

Gala Concert with reception: Sunday 14th April 2024, at 18:00.
Address: Brussels Town Hall - Grand Place
Ticket Prices: Children (9-12 years): **10 Euros**
 Young adults (13-18 years): **20 Euros**
 Adults (>18 years): **50 euros**

* Children <8 years old are not allowed at the Gala Concert.





Follow us!!

8th International Competition for Young Pianists

Merci, Maestro!




10 - 14.04.2024

Brussels, Belgium

Special prizes:
Grant for participation in International masterclasses, concerts and festivals in Europe.

Prize for the youngest promising participants in each category.

Cash prizes.

Cat A: under 10 years old (incl.)
Cat B: from 11 to 14 years old (incl.)
Cat C: from 15 to 20 years old (incl.)
Cat D: from 21 to 25 years old (incl.)

- **Online pre-selection (video recording) : March 6 - 10th, 2024**
- **First & Second round in Brussels : April 10 - 13th, 2024**
“ PIANO’S MAENE »
Brussels, Belgium
- **Gala Concert of winners : April 14th, 2024**
BRUSSELS TOWN HALL
Grand Place, Brussels, Belgium

JURY MEMBERS 2024

Milana Chernyavska (Germany), Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden (Belgium), Johan Schmidt (Belgium), Olga Zdorenko (Italy/Ukraine), Diane Andersen (Belgium), Yannick van de Velde (Belgium), Tamara Kordzadze (Switzerland), Tatiana Kozlova (Israël), Yurii Kot (Ukraine), Herman De Vleeschhouwer (Belgium), Nataliya Chepurensko (Belgium /Ukraine).

The registration deadline MARCH 1st, 2024



Information :
Telephone : +32 (0)496 48 87 80 | E-mail : info@mercimaestro.be | Website: www.mercimaestro.be










