

Edward and Ida Wilkof Young Artists Competition

2025-26 Rules

CATEGORIES:

Piano
Strings
Woodwind, Brass, Percussion

LEVELS:

Junior – Ages 9-14
Senior – Ages 15-19
(Age as of February 1, 2026)

ELIGIBILITY: Open to all instrumentalists residing in Charlotte, Manatee, or Sarasota Counties. Sarasota Youth Orchestras students residing in another county are eligible to participate.

1st place winners in each category may not compete in the same category or level the following year.

CRITERIA: Participants will prepare a movement of a standard solo (concert-piece) for their instrument (with piano accompaniment, this includes pianists). We suggest a duration of 15 minutes or less. Total duration must not exceed 20 minutes.

PRELIMINARIES: A high-quality recording of the work to be performed must be received by **6pm EST, March 18, 2026**, along with the completed entry form and entry fee of \$25. See Guidelines for Recording and Media Submission Requirements for complete details.

FINALS: Finalists will be notified by email no later than March 23, 2026. The finals will be held on **March 28, 2026**, at the Beatrice Friedman Symphony Center, 709 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34236.

- Finalists must perform the same selection as in the audition video.
- Memorization is required for all finalists in the Senior Level.
- Finalists must provide their own accompanist or second pianist.
- Accompanists and soloists must arrive at the audition site at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to performance for check-in.
- Warm-up rooms will be available for performers. Performers or accompanists may not warm-up on stage at the time of the audition.
- Judges must be provided with at least two copies of the music to be played (NO photocopies will be allowed). **Please number the measures (the beginning of each line is acceptable).**
- Finals will **not** be open to the public.

AWARDS: Judges may select up to three winners in each category and age group but are not required to select any winners.

Cash Prizes:

Junior Level

1st - \$300

2nd - \$200

3rd - \$100

Senior Level

1st - \$1,000

2nd - \$500

3rd - \$250

SUBMISSION: March 18, 2026, 6pm EST Deadline

Complete entry form

Non-refundable entry fee of \$25 (check/money order or credit card)

Video loaded to our Dropbox folder or include a YouTube performance link

Send all materials to:

Email – SYO@SarasotaOrchestra.org – application and YouTube link only. Do not attach video files.

Dropbox – <https://www.dropbox.com/request/IKAEDdZkpVe9YLQ4mMc7>

Questions? Please email questions to SYO@SarasotaOrchestra.org or call 941-487-2731.

Guidelines for Recording

- Use a fixed point of view for your camera with you being the main focus. Shoot straight on, leaving the camera in one location. Do not pan or move the camera. Camera should be no closer than waist up.
- Ensure recording captures good quality image.
- Ensure recording equipment has the ability to capture good sound quality. Check for good balance and blend. Also check your surroundings to eliminate background noises.
- Make sure there is 1-3 seconds of silence before the beginning of the piece.
- No sound enhancements are allowed.
- If you are playing from memory, remove the music stand from view of the camera.
- Hands and fingers must be visible at all times.
- Film with a live accompaniment. Piano or harpsichord (if appropriate) are the only acceptable accompaniment instruments.

Media Submission Requirements

- Video file formats: 3GP, AAC, AVI, FLV, MP4, or MPEG-2.
- Video file size: No more than 2 GB at 1080. No HD or 4K.
- Upload to Dropbox or include a YouTube link. Any files uploaded to Dropbox must be clearly labeled with the participant's full name.
- List the title of piece, movement, and composer in the correct spaces provided on the application.
- When uploading, be sure to upload to your computer first and verify that image is upright (not sideways) and plays smoothly.
- Please do not do any of the following as it may disqualify you:
 - Do not edit within the piece.
 - Do not use special effects, dissolves, fades, or wipes.
 - Do not submit pre-recorded live performances, such as recitals, concerts, or competitions.