



Online Piano Competitions

Below, the schedules of several AAF online competitions are depicted, but first, a more general overview with some useful remarks is given.

Due to the corona crisis, many competition organisers have been forced to cancel and postpone their events. More and more have decided to let the competition continue by having it as an "online" event this year: the pianists can take part by submitting a video recording and do not need to travel. Also the jury members do not need to travel: they can judge by watching the recorded performances from their own homes.

It is good that organisers are looking for a solution in these difficult times, but there are a few setbacks in having a music competition online:

- the absence of an audience
- missing the inspiration and opportunity to perform on stage in a new place, possibly a beautiful concert hall
- no opportunity to experience, learn and adjust to the different acoustics and a good concert grand piano
- the lack of contact and immediate reactions from people in the audience and no chance to meet the jury members
- the big difference in quality of the submitted recordings and unequal circumstances and conditions.

Apart from this, there are also several other aspects which are not always clear:

- who are on the jury?
- when and how do the jury members judge?
- will all the jury members listen to each recording from the beginning until the end?
- which rules for the jury are applied to aggregate the votes and to establish a verdict and the results?
- does the competition organiser have some control: can he check the proper commitment of each jury member?

And then, there are the organisational aspects and time lines that are very important for the participants:

- the application period and application deadline
- sometimes, there is a different period during which the video recordings can be submitted
- the time frame during which the recording has to be made*
- some competitions conduct the preliminary round(s) online, but still arrange a live final round and/or a live prize winners concert. Understandably, in the current situation, one cannot tell under which conditions this final round or the prize winner's concert will take place.
- a few competitions require that the pianists who have passed the preliminary round, register once again in order to take part in the finals.

*: some competitions do not stipulate when or how the recording has to be made. At most competitions, the competition repertoire is more or less specified. Naturally, one would expect that the contestant will record these pieces for this competition. But, especially when the required repertoire is quite common or even entirely free, the contestant may very well consider to submit an earlier recording. (It might be a recording that he/she already made for another competition, or an excellent recording made at another competition). The contestant is allowed to do so, if there are no specific restrictions regarding the time frame of the recording. The rules may also be more or less strict with respect to the number of takes of the recording: at some competitions, contestants may submit several separate recordings of the various pieces, while other competitions require that the entire programme is recorded in one performance, similar as to when the contestant would go on stage to perform his pieces during the competition.

Most online competitions request that the submitted video recordings be unedited. This does not prevent a pianist to make 10 recordings and to submit the one he/she considers the best.

Now that the format for these online competitions is being explored more and more, we can see that refinements are introduced to some of these important competition elements.

- a date is specified, after which the recording must have been made
- some competitions state a precise time frame during which the recording must be made. To ensure that the recording was not made earlier, the organisers send the contestant a unique code or phrase which has to be said or shown at the start of the recording (Ettlingen, EUPLAYY, ...)
- to give the contestants an opportunity to produce a high quality video recording of their performances under more equal circumstances, a few competitions have arranged several studios at different sites in the world, where a fine instrument is available and a professional recording can be made. (For example, the Virtualoso Competition and the Busoni Competition, in collaboration with Steinway & Sons.) Of course, the contestants still need to travel to one of these venues, but under normal circumstances they would also have undertaken the trip to the main competition. (The Virtualoso Competition provided a financial relief of at least US\$ 1,000 for each pianist who had been selected to take part.)
- most online competitions publish the videos of all the contestants. They can thus be seen by everybody who is interested. Some competitions also made arrangements for an online public vote, by which a special Audience prize can be awarded.
- a few competitions have announced a specific period (of several days or even one or two weeks) during which all the videos are being streamed and during which the jury members will watch and judge. (Ettlingen, EUPLAYY, StayHome, Piano Talents ...) The StayHome Competition even showed in real-time all the jury members in different windows on the screen, so that everybody can see that they are indeed listening to the pianist during his entire performance.
- each competition organiser must think about fairness of the competition and several have implemented the rule that students of jury members may not take part. To this end, it is, of course, important that the names of the jury members are announced well in advance.
- transparency is another important aspect of music competitions. Some competitions provide full transparency by publishing all the votes by the jury members.

[NB: at another competition, the names of six jury members were published, but we know that at least one of them did not judge, and another one did not understand how the organiser came up with the final results ... This (but also other examples) asks for more transparency.]

Naturally, we all hope that the situation in the world will get better and that our lives will become more normal again. It would be wonderful when all the musicians can fully resume their activities and can travel and perform and give concerts again in full halls. The sound of a recording is never the same as in the hall.

Below, the time schedules of the AAF online piano competitions are depicted, with some extra information and a link to the competition's website.

Piano Talents International Piano Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<i>Piano Talents (Italy) (AAF)</i>	Dates of video rec. not spec.					1 Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	... < 10 Appl. deadline		13 Prize w. concert <i>Live!</i>
Ages 6 ... 9 10 ... 15 16 ... 21	7 age categories										15 - 20 streaming + adjud.		Milano (Italy)
<i>Website</i>	Jury (6) published										22 Results		

Harmonium OnlinePlus International Music Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<i>Harmonium (Armenia) (AAF)</i>	Period of video rec. specified								> 15 Appl. period	..... Appl. period	1 Appl. deadline	9 - 24 streaming + adjud. Finals	
Ages up to 10 up to 13 up to 18 up to 35	4 age categories										11 - 29 streaming + adjud. 1 st round	25 Results Finals	
<i>Website</i>	Jury (4) names published										30 Results 1 st round	26 Result Gr. Prix	2021 Prize w. concert <i>Live!</i> Armenia

International Music Talents Online Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Music Talents (Hong Kong) (AAF)	Period of video rec. specified									..... Appl. period	.... < 31 Appl. deadline	7 Presel. results	
All ages	18 classes for piano											16 - 30 streaming + adjud.	
Website	Jury published												

Campillos International Piano Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Campillos (Spain) (AAF)	Period of video rec. specified									..... Appl. period	.... < 18 Appl. deadline	..... < 24 video rec. deadline	5 - 8 streaming + adjud.
No age limit	Jury (5) published										24 Presel. res.		
Website											> 25 video rec.		

Neapolitan Masters International Piano Competition (AAF)

NB: Spring 2021: prize winners concert live in Napoli

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Neapolitan Masters (Italy) (AAF)	Dates of video rec. not spec.					..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	... < 25 Appl. deadline Young & Masters	... < 5 Appl. deadline Junior cat. ABC
Ages 0 ... 16 17 – 20 16 – 40	5 age categories ABC Young Masters											30 Results 1 st round Young & Masters	... < 5 Reg. DL Finalists Young & Masters
Website	Jury (5) names published												31 Final Results

already finished in 2020:

Sviatoslav Richter Online International Piano Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<i>Richter (Korea) (AAF)</i>	Dates of video rec. not spec.	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	... < 14 Appl. deadline	1 Results						
<i>Website</i>	Jury (4) names published												

WPTA International Piano Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<i>WPTA (Serbia) (AAF)</i>	Dates of video rec. not spec.	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	... < 12 Appl. deadline	> 26 ... prize w. concert	... < 3 prize w. concert					
<i>Website</i>	Jury (4) names published					15 Results	in WPC (online)	in WPC (online)					

Teresa Carreño International Piano Master Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<i>Carreño (USA) (AAF)</i>	Dates of video rec. not spec.	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	... < 10 Appl. deadline						
<i>Website</i>	Jury (4) names published						22 – 26 1 st round online						
							24 – 25 2 nd round online						
							26 Finals online						

Windsor International Piano Competition - *WIPC* (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Windsor (England) (AAF)	Dates of video rec. not spec.	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	... < 15 Appl. deadline	..... video link					
All ages	4 age categories						..... video link	15 Results					
<u>Website</u>	Jury (9) names published												

Ettlingen International Piano Competition (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Ettlingen (Germany) (AAF)	Dates of video rec. specified	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	..... Appl. period	... < 21 Appl. deadline	..... Registr. finalists	... < 1 Registr. deadline	20 - 31 recording videos	7 - 9 streaming + adjud.				
Ages 0 – 15 0 – 20	2 age categories								9 Results				
<u>Website</u>	Jury (5) names published								16 presentation of Prize w.				

EUPLAYY Online Piano Competition for the Youth in Europe (AAF)

Competition	Remarks	Jan. 2020	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June --	-- June --	-- June	July --	-- July --	-- July	
<i>EUPLAYY (Germany) (AAF)</i>	Dates of video rec. specified					..... Appl. period	... < 3 Appl. DL Cat. FGH	..... < 10 Appl. DL Cat. DE	..... < 17 Appl. DL Cat. ABC				
Ages 3 ... 18	8 age categories					> 25 ... upload period Cat. FGH	... < 7 upload DL Cat. FGH 1 st round	1 - 14 upload Cat. DE 1 st round	8 - 21 upload Cat. ABC	... < 5 upload DL Cat. FGH 3 rd round	... < 5 adjud. Cat. DE 2 nd round	... < 1 Public Voting Cat. ABC	
<i>Website</i>	Jury (18) names published 3 per cat.						8 - 14 adjud. Cat. FGH 1 st round	15 - 21 adjud. Cat. DE 1 st round	22 - 28 adjud. Cat. ABC	6 - 12 adjud. Cat. FGH 3 rd round	6 Results Cat. DE 2 nd round	2 Final results Cat. ABC	
							15 Results Cat. FGH 1 st round	22 Results Cat. DE 1 st round	29 Results Cat. ABC	13 Results Cat. FGH 3 rd round	6 - 8 Public voting Cat. DE		
							8 - 21 upload Cat. FGH 2 nd round	15 - 28 upload Cat. DE 2 nd round	> 29 ... Public voting Cat. ABC	13 - 15 Public voting Cat. FGH	9 Final results Cat. DE		
							22 - 28 adjud. Cat. FGH 2 nd round	> 29 ... adjud. Cat. DE 2 nd round		16 Final results Cat. FGH			
							29 Results Cat. FGH 2 nd round						
							> 22 upload Cat. FGH 3 rd round						

