

**THE CONCOURS MUSICAL INTERNATIONAL DE MONTRÉAL  
ANNOUNCES THE 24 VIOLINISTS SELECTED FOR ITS 24<sup>TH</sup> EDITION**

**May 27 to June 4, 2026**



**Montreal, February 4, 2026** – The Concours musical international de Montréal announces the **24 violinists** selected for its 24th edition, which will take place from **May 27 to June 4, 2026**, at Bourgie Hall and the Maison symphonique. Before a prestigious international jury, the selected artists will converge in Montreal to live an exceptional experience and the chance to distinguish themselves on the international stage.

The 2026 edition brings together some of the most remarkable violinists of the new generation. This year, the Concours once again garnered considerable international interest, with **250 applications of outstanding quality received from 37 countries**, a testimony to both its reputation for artistic excellence and global reach. The winners will share prizes and grants worth over \$150,000. These prizes are essential stepping stones that pave the way for successful and distinguished careers on the international stage.

From among these applications, a [preliminary jury](#) was tasked with selecting the violinists invited to compete this spring. These **24 competitors** hail from **18 different countries**, including three from Canada, one of whom is from Montreal.

“The Concours musical international de Montréal is a truly great musical and human adventure. Each edition offers an opportunity to meet the most promising artists of the new generation, while confirming Montreal as a major hub for classical music on the world stage. We are delighted to present this rendezvous, acclaimed for its artistic excellence, rich in emotion and discovery, and invite the public to join us in experiencing virtuosity without borders.”

**Chantal Poulin** and **Shira Gilbert**, Executive and Artistic Directors of the Concours.

## THE 24 COMPETITORS OF THE CONCOURS 2026

- **Seoyeon Baik**

Country of origin: South Korea – City of residence: Seoul

- **Thomas Briant**

Country of origin: France – City of residence: Paris

- **Bade Dastan**

Country of origin: Turkey and Belgium – City of residence: Philadelphia

- **Laurel Gagnon**

Country of origin: United States – City of residence: New York

- **Michael Germer**

Country of origin: Denmark – City of residence: Copenhagen

- **Yuki Hirano**

Country of origin: Japan – City of residence: Vienna

- **Sara Isabelle Ispas**

Country of origin: Australia and Romania – City of residence: Berlin

- **Amia Janicki**

Country of origin: Austria and Switzerland – City of residence: Geneva

- **Lorenz Karls**

Country of origin: Sweden – City of residence: Vienna

- **Sijun Kim**

Country of origin: South Korea – City of residence: Berlin

- **Hyun Jae Lim**

Country of origin: South Korea – City of residence: Philadelphia

- **Chiara Sannicandro**

Country of origin: Germany and Italy – City of residence: Berlin

- **Tsukushi Sasaki**

Country of origin: Japan – City of residence: Lübeck

- **Justin Saulnier**

Country of origin: Canada – City of residence: Montreal

- **Paloma So**

Country of origin: Canada and Hong Kong RAS / SAR – City of residence: Vancouver

- **Charlotte Spruit**

Country of origin: Netherlands – City of residence: London

- **Koshiro Takeuchi**

Country of origin: Japan – City of residence: New York

- **Hannah Tam**

Country of origin: Hong Kong RAS / SAR – City of residence: Philadelphia

- **Belle Ting**

Country of origin: Canada – City of residence: Antwerp

- **Sara Watanabe**

Country of origin: Japan – City of residence: Nishinomiya

- **Dayoon You**

Country of origin: South Korea – City of residence: Berlin

- **Yume Zamponi**

Country of origin: Italy and Japan – City of residence: Berlin

- **Aozhe Zhang**

Country of origin: China – City of residence: Shanghai

- **Shaoheng Zhong**

Country of origin: China – City of residence: Dongguan

[Read the biographies of the competitors](#)

## MEET THE JURY OF THE CONCOURS MUSICAL INTERNATIONAL DE MONTRÉAL 2026

The **International Jury** of the Concours 2026 is chaired by world-renowned Canadian violinist **Lucie Robert**. It brings together performers and influential figures from the classical music world: **Ju-Young Baek, Glenn Dicterow, Simin Ganatra, Yuzuko Horigome, Régis Pasquier, Barry Shiffman, and Pavel Vernikov**. Throughout the Concours, this jury will evaluate the performances of the competitors and select the winners of the various prizes. This is a unique opportunity for young artists to be heard by this prestigious international panel. Beyond the various rounds, the Concours is also a unique opportunity for exchange and learning from these experienced musicians.

Learn more about the [Jury of the Concours](#)

## A RENOWNED GUEST CONDUCTOR: SASCHA GOETZEL

The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM), the official orchestra of the Concours musical international de Montréal, will be under the direction of Guest Conductor **Sascha Goetzel** for the Final round on June 3-4, 2026. The Viennese conductor's dynamism and musical sensitivity make him a valued partner for the young finalists in their concerto performances during these decisive moments of the Concours.

Learn more about [Sascha Goetzel](#)

## THE ROUNDS OF THE CONCOURS 2026

### First Round

*May 27 to 29, 2026 – Bourgie Hall*

The First Round of the Concours 2026 will take place from **May 27 to 29 at Bourgie Hall**. During this initial programme of 25 to 30 minutes, competitors will showcase their musical personality and technical mastery through a demanding and contrasting program. Each competitor will present a work by J.S. Bach, Telemann, or another Baroque composer, a virtuoso piece, and a work of their choice from a third musical period. This First Round will allow both the audience and the jury to discover a diversity of styles, sensibilities, and artistic backgrounds.

### Semifinal

*May 30 and 31, 2026 – Bourgie Hall*

10 competitors will be invited to continue the adventure in the Semifinal, on **May 30 and 31 at Bourgie Hall**. At this exciting stage of the Concours, competitors will present a 55 to 50-minute program including a complete sonata by Bartók, Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy, Enescu, Fauré, Franck, Janáček, Prokofiev, Ravel, Schnittke, Schumann, Schubert or R. Strauss, a work of the competitor's choice, and a work by a Canadian composer. This round highlights the artistic maturity and ability of the competitors to build a coherent program, driven by a clear and assertive musical vision.

### Final

*June 3-4, 2026 – Maison symphonique*

The highlight of the Concours, the Final will take place on **June 3 and 4, at the Maison symphonique de Montréal**. The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal – the Concours' official orchestra – under the baton of Guest Conductor Sascha Goetzel.

For the first time at the Concours, the Final round will take place over the course of two evenings, allowing the jury members and the audience to appreciate the technical mastery and artistic expression of each competitor in different musical styles

#### June 3, 2026 – Mozart Round

During this first stage of the Final, on **June 3**, five finalists compete with elegance and virtuosity by performing one of Mozart's first four concertos. A moment of finesse and pure emotion that will determine the three finalists for the Grand Final of the Concours 2026. Experience this Mozart Round of the Concours with some of the new generation's finest violinists!

#### June 4, 2026 – Grand final

The Grand Final, on **June 4**, will bring the Concours 2026 to a brilliant close. Three finalists will perform once again with the OSM, playing a violin concerto of their choice. In an atmosphere of high emotion and tension, these violinists will offer the audience performances of exceptional virtuosity and intensity. At the end of a demanding journey, this evening will crown the Grand Laureate of the Concours 2026.

## PARALLEL EVENTS TO THE CONCOURS

### Mini Violini

*May 30, 2026 – Bourgie Hall*

Discover talented and virtuosic young prodigies! **Mini Violini** offers a memorable encounter with four astonishing young violinists between the ages of 10 and 14. The concert will take place on **May 30 at Bourgie Hall** and will showcase their rare talent and moving musical sensitivity. The first half of the program features each violinist in a short recital, accompanied by pianist Claire Ouellet. In the second half, the four prodigies come together to each perform one movement of Vivaldi's famous *Four Seasons*, alongside the Orchestre de l'Agora, conducted by Benoit Gauthier.

The selected violinists are: **Laura Jin** (Australia), **Sacha Jorba-Wu** (Canada), **Iza Kamnitzer** (Canada), and **Ria Kang** (United-States / South Korea).

### The Concours On the Road

*May 31, 2026*

For a 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row, the Concours ventures beyond the competition itself and collaborates with presenting partners outside of Montreal. The **Concours On the Road** offers competitors who have not been selected for the Semifinal the opportunity to present their program to new audiences across Quebec. On Sunday, **May 31**, they will perform at the **Centre d'art de Richmond** (Richmond), as part of the **Concerts sur le fleuve** (Île-des-Sœurs), and at the **Vaisseau d'art** (Farnham).

### The Junior Jury

Now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, the **Junior Jury** is chaired this year by violinist and professor **Ana Drobac**. Made up of violin students from Montreal's leading music training institutions – the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal, the Schulich School of Music at McGill University, and the Faculty of Music at the Université de Montréal – the jury will assess the performances of the 24 competitors over the course of the First Round, in parallel to the work of the International Jury. At the end of the round, on May 29, the jury will award the Robert Trempe Junior Jury Prize, valued at \$1,500 and offered in partnership with Richard Tremblay.

**Learn more about the Concours 2026.**

## ABOUT THE CONCOURS

The Concours musical international de Montréal enjoys an undeniable reputation as one of the most prestigious and welcoming international music competitions around the world. A multidisciplinary event, the Concours has welcomed annually since 2002, in turn, singers, violinists, and pianists. Well over 5,000 musicians of the new generation from more than 90 countries and trained at the world's most important musical schools have entered the competition.

A major event on Montréal's cultural calendar, the Concours musical international de Montréal is a high-profile showcase that shapes the future of the classical music scene by offering its laureates invaluable visibility and professional opportunities. The competitors measure themselves against their peers, performing before a jury of classical music luminaries and music lovers in Montréal. Events of the Concours musical international de Montréal are viewed by more than 3 million people annually worldwide.

More info: **[concoursmontreal.ca](http://concoursmontreal.ca)**



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