

**THE CONCOURS MUSICAL INTERNATIONAL DE MONTRÉAL ANNOUNCES
ITS FIVE FINALISTS!**



Sara Watanabe, Bade Dastan, Koshiro Takeuchi, Laurel Gagnon, Aozhe Zhang | @Tam Photography

Montréal, Sunday May 31, 2026 – Following a Semifinal that captivated the audience, the International Jury presided by Lucie Robert selected the five finalists of the Concours 2026. The announcement was made following the jury's deliberations after the last session of the Semifinal, during which the competitors dazzled the audience with a program comprising at least one full sonata, a Canadian work and another piece of their choice.

HERE ARE THE FIVE FINALISTS WHO ARE ADVANCING TO THE FINAL – MOZART ROUND

(by order of performance)

- Koshiro Takeuchi, Japan
- Laurel Gagnon, United States
- Sara Watanabe, Japan
- Aozhe Zhang, China
- Bade Dastan, Belgium and Turkey

ANNOUNCING THE RECIPIENTS OF TWO SPECIAL PRIZES

The evening of Sunday, May 31 also provided an opportunity to award two special prizes.

Canadian Work Prize

Presented in partnership with the Lupien Family Foundation, this prize recognizes the best performance of a Canadian work in the Semifinal. This year, it was awarded to Laurel Gagnon for her performance of the *Suite pour violon seul* by Jean Papineau-Couture.

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Laurel Gagnon and the President of the International Jury, Lucie Robert
@Tam Photography

Sonata Prize

Presented in partnership with Dixi Lambert, this prize recognizes the best performance of a sonata in the Semifinal. This year, it was awarded to Laurel Gagnon for her performance of the *Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2* by Ludwig van Beethoven.



Laurel Gagnon and Dixi Lambert
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THE FINAL

June 3-4 at 7:30 p.m.

Maison symphonique

1600, Saint-Urbain Street

Experience the excitement of a major international music competition, as five finalists perform with the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, the Concours' official orchestra, led by Sascha Goetzel.

Final – Mozart Round

June 3 at 7:30 p.m.: Five finalists will perform a Mozart concerto from his first 4 violin concertos.

Grand Final

June 4 at 7:30 p.m.: This decisive evening promises to be absolutely riveting. Three grand finalists will perform some of the finest concertos of the repertoire in a thrilling evening that will determine who will be crowned the Grand Laureate of the Concours 2026.

ICI Musique Audience Choice Award – The vote is open!

The public can now vote for their favourite competitor, either in person or via the [Concours website](#), until 15 minutes after the Grand Final. The winner of the ICI Musique Audience Choice Award will be announced on June 4 during the closing ceremony following the Grand Final.

The Concours, in person and online

The public is invited to live the excitement of the Concours in person by [purchasing tickets online](#).

All sessions can also be streamed online, directly on the [Concours website](#).

[INFORMATION AND TICKETS](#)



[Consult the press kit](#)

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.

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Source

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