

# International Student Competition 2026

## REPertoire

The repertoire consists of a free-to-choose part, an obligatory part, and a new composition, commissioned for the occasion of the competition.

All songs have to be sung by heart, with the exception that the Artistic Director may decide that the commissioned composition may be sung from score. We will communicate clearly whether or not this is the case.

Feel free to ask us any questions. However, before doing so, please read the text below carefully, and also make sure that your question has not yet been answered in the FAQ's.

### Free repertoire

Your list of free repertoire should consist of at least 12 (twelve) songs. It should meet the following demands, and please take into account the novel demands for the second round (see below).

- Each of the following style periods are represented: classicism, romanticism, impressionism and 20th/21st century (we take the last one as a single category).
- Each of the following language-cultures are represented: German, French and English. By 'language-culture' we mean a composer writing a song in his/her own language. While it is impossible to be very strict here, it does mean the songs from Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart in Italian, English or French do not count as German here. You can of course list those songs.
- At least one song should be by Franz Schubert.
- To be clear, 'English' includes the American literature, as 'German' includes Austria and Switzerland etc.
- To the utmost 2 songs are from the same song cycle or opus number. You can have multiple cycles in your list, each represented by at most 2 songs.
- The total duration of the songs together must not be less than 25 minutes.
- You may adopt songs in your free repertoire that were also in your demo recordings.

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## In the first round:

- You select a number of songs from your list, with a total length **as close as possible to 10 minutes**. The set needs to be varied in languages and styles. Your *selection is to be submitted at your registration*.
- The artistic director will decide on the song from the compulsory repertoire that will be added to this set, that will be communicated to you shortly before your performance.

## In the second round (semi-finals):

- You have to perform the commissioned composition (see below).
- Since 2020 it is a new element of this competition that in the semifinal you are challenged to achieve thematic consistency in your performance, centered on the text of the compulsory composition "In Circles" by **Catharina Clement** (see below). Keep this in mind when composing your list of free repertoire!
- You select a number of songs from your list, different from the ones you performed in the 1st round, with a total duration **between 14 and 16 minutes**. This selection is to be submitted at your registration.
- The idea is that you introduce and present this programme and yourself. We invite you to be creative, and to be as theatrical as you like! This means that there will not be a moderator or presenter in the second round!

## In the third round (finals):

- You are free to compose a programme of **30 minutes**, choosing from your free list, the compulsory repertoire, and the commissioned composition, songs performed in earlier rounds may be repeated.
- Mind that the programme will be decided together with the artistic director. This means that he may give compelling advice regarding your programme, including one of the compulsory songs.
- There will be a presenter to announce you, and no special requirements are made regarding the presentation (but of course, you are supposed to approach the performance as a full concert).

## Mandatory repertoire

- A short list of *three* compulsory songs will be handed over to the admitted duos some four weeks before the competition (see [timeline](#)). They will be assigned by the artistic director, and may vary between duos (primarily by gender or voicetype).

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- Duos are supposed to prepare their complete list of three songs. In the first round and in the finals, the Artistic Director will decide which of these songs are to be performed.
- *Early registration bonus*: participants completing their registration before the early-bird deadline (August 1st 2026, see timeline) will be allowed to exclude one of these mandatory songs for the first round (that song can thus nevertheless be demanded in the final round and must therefore still be prepared).

## Commissioned composition (mandatory)

- This edition's commissioned composition, "In Circles" will be written by Catharina Clement, the text is published on our website and should be the basis of your programming in the semifinals.
- The commissioned composition will be handed over to the admitted duos some six weeks before the competition (see timeline).
- Duration of the piece is approximately 4-6 minutes.