

HONENS MEDIA RELEASE

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FIFTY-ONE QUARTERFINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2025 HONENS INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

TO WATCH A VIDEO OF HONENS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JON KIMURA PARKER ANNOUNCING THE QUARTERFINALISTS, CLICK [HERE](#).



Calgary, AB, December 17, 2024— Fifty-one pianists representing 19 countries (country of origin and residence) have been chosen to compete in the Quarterfinals of Canada’s 11th Honens International Piano Competition, one of the world’s most prestigious events of its kind. The Applicant Screening Jury evaluated 149 candidate submissions—a 15 per cent increase from the most recent Competition in 2022—based on proposed Competition programming, experience relative to age, and confidential reference letters. There were 29 countries represented among the 149 applicants. The 51 talented pianists who have been selected as Quarterfinalists—one more than the usual 50, owing to a tie—will participate in the Quarterfinal (International Audition) Round in 2025, in either Berlin (March 2 to 4), or New York (March 17 to 19).

“It’s both challenging and rewarding to pick the Quarterfinalists,” says Honens Artistic Director Jon Kimura Parker. “The Applicant Screening Jury has arrived at this list of 51 highly accomplished young pianists, who we believe will have promising careers in music, no matter the outcome of the Competition,” he adds. “We’re confident all of them have the potential to fully embody the philosophy of the Complete Artist—a consummate collaborator, an inspiring virtuoso, a communicator, and a risk-taking explorer. We wish them the best in their performances in March!”

The Applicant Screening Jury for the 11th Honens International Piano Competition consisted of acclaimed pianists Tanya Bannister (United States), Tema Blackstone (Canada), Karim Said (Jordan), and Micah Yui (Japan).

For the upcoming Quarterfinals, each pianist performs a 40-minute solo recital and participates in a 10-minute English-language interview with an arts journalist. The First Jury then selects 10 pianists to advance to the Semifinals in Calgary. All performances are recorded on video for review by the First Jury, which consists of both pianists and arts professionals: Sara Davis Buechner (Bronze Medalist of the 1986 Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and Gold Medalist of the 1984 Gina

Bachauer International Piano Competition), Nicolas Namoradze (2018 Honens Prize Laureate), Marianne Perron (Senior Director, Artistic Sector, Montreal Symphony Orchestra), and Robert Roux (Chair of Keyboard Department at Shepherd School of Music, Rice University).

The Semifinalists will be announced in spring 2025. The Competition culminates with the Semifinal and Final live performances in Calgary, Canada, from October 16 to 24, 2025, with the collaborating musicians Rachel Mercer, on cello, Isidore String Quartet, and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Elias Grandy.

The triennial Honens International Piano Competition will this year award its Gold, Silver, and Bronze Laureates a cash prize of \$100,000 CAD, \$40,000 CAD, and \$20,000 CAD, respectively, and a comprehensive three-year artistic and career development program, tailored to each Laureate. The Gold prize, awarded to the pianist who most embodies Honens' philosophy of the Complete Artist, is one of the largest of its kind in the world.

For additional information about the 2025 Honens International Piano Competition, please visit, honens.com/2025.

2025 HONENS INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION QUARTERFINALISTS

Pianist	Age*	Country of Origin / Residence	Pianist	Age*	Country of Origin / Residence
Piotr Alexewicz	25	Poland / Switzerland	Maxim Lando	23	United States
Jonas Aumiller +	24	Germany	Giorgio Lazzari	25	Italy
August Baik	20	United States	Henry Lewis	26	United Kingdom
Adam Balogh	28	Hungary	Daumants Liepiņš	30	Latvia / Spain
Dmitry Batalov	27	Russia / Switzerland	Hao-Wei Lin	21	Taiwan / United States
William Bracken	26	United Kingdom	Philipp Lynov	26	Russia / Germany
A Bu	26	China / United States	Joshua August Mhoon	22	United States
JJ Bui	21	Canada / Switzerland	Sandro Nebieridze	24	Georgia / Germany
Alice Burla	29	Canada / Switzerland	Jan Nikovich	24	Croatia
Elia Cecino	24	Italy	Evren Ozel	26	United States
Dominic Chamot	30	Switzerland	Kamil Pacholec	26	Poland / United States
Eden Chen	26	United States	Chaeyoung Park	28	South Korea / United States
Federico Gad Crema	26	Italy	Élisabeth Pion	29	Canada
Dominic Doutney	29	United Kingdom	Amir Ron	24	Israel / United States
Chloé Dumoulin	26	Canada / United Kingdom	Linda Ruan	28	Canada
Yi-Chen Feng	28	Taiwan / United States	Jonathan Senik	25	Israel / United States
Alberto Ferro	29	Italy	Vitaly Starikov	30	Israel / United States
Sandro Gegechkori	25	Georgia	Yutong Sun	30	China / United States
Samuel Glicklich	25	United States	Julian Trevelyan	27	United States / France
Yungyung Guo	22	China	Anastasia Vorotnaya	30	Russia / Spain
Anna Han	29	United States / Germany	Derek Wang	27	United States
Amiri Harewood	23	United Kingdom	Zhu Wang	28	China / United States
Curtis Hsu	20	United States / Austria	Yuanfan Yang	28	United Kingdom
Carter Johnson	29	Canada / United States	Ido Zeev	26	Israel / Germany
Salome Jordania	29	Georgia	Zhiqiao Zhang	27	China / Switzerland
Thomas Kelly	26	United Kingdom			

* Age as of 24 October 2025

+ Withdrawn

Backgrounder Attached

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BACKGROUND

2025 HONENS INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

The Complete Artist

The Complete Artist is:

- a thoughtful interpreter, a consummate collaborator, an awe-inspiring virtuoso, a communicator, a risk-taking explorer.
- a pianist who expresses and interprets ideas from a wide cultural context and keen imagination through performances and programming choices that are informed and seasoned by a fascination for life outside the practice studio.
- an emerging artist whose distinctive voice, versatility, and ease clearly demonstrate the level of preparedness and mastery necessary to embark upon a professional career.
- a leader, teacher, advocate, and citizen artist who is skilled in the business of music, able to recognize and seize opportunities, knowledgeable about self-care, influential in communications, and socially conscious.

The Complete Artist's interpretations are founded upon the intellectual and emotional understanding of musical text and the ability to synthesize and express such understanding to challenge and stir the listener on multiple levels. This creative awareness stems not only from knowledge of a particular composition itself but from a wider knowledge of related music, of musical literature, and of the arts in general. If the resulting interpretation appears unusual and unconventional, it still appears fresh and natural. Artists taking part in the Honens International Piano Competition must also express—through stage deportment, program design, and interviews—a sensitivity to cultures and a willingness and finesse to communicate effectively with audiences regardless of age, location, background, or degree of musical sophistication.

Competition Rounds

The Applicant Screening Jury selects 50 pianists to advance to the Quarterfinals. Owing to a tie, the 2025 Applicant Screening Jury selected 51 pianists.

QUARTERFINALS

Each Quarterfinalist performs a 40-minute recital and participates in a 10-minute English-language interview in either New York or Berlin in March 2025. The First Jury selects ten pianists to advance to the Semifinals in Calgary.

SEMIFINALS

Semifinals I

Each Semifinalist performs a 60-minute solo recital that must include at least one work from an underrepresented* composer.

* Honens does not have a specified definition for under-represented composer. Instead, each applicant must provide their own explanation and rationale for their choice.

Semifinals II

Each Semifinalist performs a 65-minute solo / collaborative recital that must include two works for cello and piano (from a prescribed list) with Rachel Mercer, the eight-minute newly commissioned work by Iman Habibi, and additional solo repertoire to round out the program. The Second Jury selects three pianists to advance to the Finals in Calgary.

FINALS

Finals I

Each Finalist performs a piano quintet (from a prescribed list) with the Isidore String Quartet, and an encore of up to four minutes announced from the stage.

Finals II

Each Finalist performs any concerto composed after 1791 with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Elias Grandy. Each Finalist also participates in a 30-minute English-language interview.

Cash Awards

Honens Gold Laureate (one)
\$100,000 CAD

Semifinalists (seven)
\$2,500 CAD each

Honens Silver Laureate (one)
\$40,000 CAD

Audience Award (one)
\$2,500 CAD

Honens Bronze Laureate (one)
\$20,000 CAD

Best Performance of Commissioned Work (one)
\$2,500 CAD

Artist Development Program

Aside from the cash portion of the award, Honens Laureates receive one of the most comprehensive artistic development and career accelerator programs in the world.

Based on a needs assessment and tailored to each Laureate, the program may include debut recitals in career-building markets (i.e. Berlin, London, New York, Toronto, etc.); introductions to artist managers; coaching and mentorship; media training; language skills and the business of music; seminars in well-being; opportunities to experiment with programming and collaborations for specific audiences; residencies and special projects; and the production, release, and distribution of professional recordings.

Incubator Award

Apart from the prizes at the Honens International Piano Competition, Honens has launched the Incubator Award. The award may provide one competitor, who has the passion and the courage to be a change agent, up to three years of support for one special project. Whether it sheds a light with performance anxiety, brings awareness to a social issue, or creates a program to serve a community, Honens may assist the artist in further developing and launching the project. It may be transferable to other disciplines, but first and foremost, must increase the relevance of art music in today's world.

The successful project may be identified through a competitor's application, Quarterfinal round, and a separate discovery process, which may include a second interview and additional documentation.

Juries

All jurors have extensive knowledge of piano literature and the qualities an artist must possess to build and sustain a career in today's musical world. Biographies of all jurors can be found at www.honens.com/juries.

APPLICANT SCREENING JURY

Tanya Bannister (United States / United States)*

**indicates country of origin / country of residence*

Tema Blackstone (Canada / United States)

Karim Said (Jordan / United Kingdom)

Micah Yui (Japan / United States)

FIRST JURY (QUARTERFINALS)

Sara Davis Buechner (United States / United States)

Nicolas Namoradze (Georgia / United States)

Marianne Perron (Canada / Canada)

Robert Roux (United States / United States)

SECOND JURY (SEMIFINALS AND FINALS)

Philippe Bianconi (France / France)

Jenny Bilfield (United States / United States)

Janina Fialkowska (Canada / Germany)

Anne-Marie McDermott (United States / United States)

Awadagin Pratt (United States / United States)

Joyce Yang (South Korea / United States)

Mentor-in-Residence

In addition to feedback meetings with members of the Second Jury—required for all Semifinalists and Finalists to discuss their technique, musicianship, and artistry—Honens chooses an internationally-renowned, actively touring pianist to serve as Mentor-in-Residence. Each Semifinalist who does not advance to the Finals will meet with the Mentor-in-Residence for a one-hour meeting on the days following the Semifinals. The Mentor-in-Residence also attends the Finals and later meets with the Gold, Silver, and Bronze Laureates.

The 2025 Mentor-in-Residence is Sir Stephen Hough.

Collaborating Artists

Rachel Mercer cello

Iman Habibi composer

Isidore String Quartet

Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra

Elias Grandy conductor

Important Dates

March 2 to 4, 2025	Quarterfinals: Berlin
March 17 to 19, 2025	Quarterfinals: New York
October 16 to 20, 2025	Semifinals I / Semifinals II
October 20, 2025	Announcement of the three Finalists
October 23, 2025	Finals I
October 24, 2025	Finals II & Announcement of the Honens Laureates

ABOUT HONENS

Honens, home of Canada's international piano competition, fosters the art of piano performance, identifies and supports outstanding young artists, and sparks and enhances appreciation and understanding of the piano and piano music.

Esther Honens created a legacy of musical excellence to be enjoyed for generations. In 1991, Mrs. Honens gave \$5 million to endow an international piano competition in her hometown of Calgary, Canada. Today, the triennial Honens International Piano Competition is considered one of the world's most prestigious events of its kind. Honens prepares its Laureates, who embody the philosophy of the Complete Artist, for professional careers in music, through a comprehensive and customizable three-year artistic development and career accelerator program which creates opportunities for exposure and holistic growth. Driven by its commitment to responsibility to competitors, the community, and the art music ecosphere, Honens provides a runway for Laureates to set themselves apart from other artists as skilled performers who are also leaders, educators, advocates, and citizen artists.

The annual Honens Festival as well as community events and initiatives are intended to share Mrs. Honens' love of world-renowned music, and provide every Calgarian access to barrier free, enriching musical experiences. Her generosity, vision, and love of music continue to touch the lives of musicians and music-lovers at home and around the world.

Honens Legacy Partners support the ongoing growth and development of Esther Honens' vision by securing the organization's future. The Legacy Partners Endowment Fund enables Honens to provide wide-reaching programming through its annual festival and other enriching community education and outreach initiatives.