

Rules of the 9th International Violin Competition Henri Marteau

1. The 9th International Violin Competition Henri Marteau will be held from April 26 until May 9, 2026. The first round and the semi-final will be held at Haus Marteau in Lichtenberg. The District of Upper Franconia serves as government partner and the Hofer Symphoniker as organisers. The finals and the gala concert with the Hofer Symphoniker will take place in the Festsaal of the Freiheitshalle Hof.

I. Candidates

2. The competition is open to violinists of all nationalities, born after May 8, 2001.
3. Students of the jury members are not eligible to participate. A student is someone who either received tuition from a jury member between October 1 2025 and April 26, 2026 or in the past for a period longer than six months. Violinists who participate in a master class held by a jury member between January 1 and April 26, 2026 are also excluded from participating in the competition.
4. Violinists who have been/are related to one of the jury members are excluded from participation.
5. The competition consists of three rounds. The draw decides the order of appearance of the candidates. The competitors must be present or send an authorized representative to the order draw on Monday, April 27, 2026 at 11 a.m. at Haus Marteau in Lichtenberg. The order of appearance as determined by the draw may be changed only for reasons of force majeure or decision by the jury.
6. Prizes and awards: Several cash awards, special prizes and scholarships will be awarded to the prize winners. All participants will receive a certificate. The certificates of the semi-finalists will show the additional specification "semi-finalist", the certificates of the finalists will show the additional specification "finalist".
7. Accommodation: The host organises free accommodation with local families to all competitors depending on availability. Hotel accommodation can be arranged for competitors, pianists and other accompanying persons at the competitor's request at her/his own expense. Travel expenses and catering: Competitors have to bear all expenses for travelling and catering.
8. The competitors agree that their photos that they made available to the competition can be used unconditionally in publications, on the websites and social media sites (Facebook etc.) of the competition, the government partner (District of Upper Franconia) and the organiser (Hofer Symphoniker).
9. By applying to the competition, competitors agree that the government partner and organiser of the competition can produce and broadcast audio- and video recordings. This includes current and/or future use of the recordings in all media (TV, radio, CD, DVD, Facebook, Livestream, Internet etc.). Competitors are not entitled to compensation. All audio and video recordings that are taken during the competition belong to the government partner which has indefinite, unrestricted right of use over these recordings.
10. Professional piano accompanists will be available to the competitor at no cost. Competitors may bring their own accompanists at their own expense. The management assigns each candidate a piano accompanist. Accompanists will be assigned on basis of the chosen repertoire. For all rounds each candidate gets the same amount of time for rehearsals with her/his piano accompanist.

II. Application

11. The application is only possible online (www.violincompetition-marteau.de) from September 15, 2025 to January 31, 2026. Application deadline is January 31, 2026.
12. The application fee is € 120,-. This fee includes the scores and shipping of the commissioned composition and the Marteau compulsory piece. It is to be transferred to the following account for the recipient **free of charge** upon application:

Hofer Symphoniker gGmbH
IBAN: DE85 7805 0000 0380 0233 33
BIC: BYLADEM1HOF
Sparkasse Hochfranken
Please specify: Henri Marteau Competition, *surname, first name*

The candidate's name must be stated on the transfer. The application is only valid if accompanied by proof of payment of the application fee. There will be no refund of the application fee in the event of withdrawal.

13. Please prepare the following documents before your application:
 - a) A passport copy (with translation if necessary)
 - b) A CV with detailed information on your musical education and development, the names of all your teachers, information on participations in competitions, concerts and recitals and prizes awarded.
 - c) Documents which support the information in the CV
 - d) An artist's photo (JPEG or PNG file, at least 300 dpi)
 - e) A copy of the transfer receipt confirming the payment of the application fee
14. With the online application the candidate (in case of an underage applicant his/her legal guardian) accepts the rules of the competition.
15. The choice of programme as indicated on the application is final and may not be changed.
16. After the successful online application, a confirmation will be sent by e-mail.
17. All participants have to register personally at Haus Marteau in Lichtenberg on Sunday, April 26, 2026 by 6 p.m. There each candidate will submit the following, signed, declaration at the competition office:

"I, the undersigned, ..., participant of the 9th International Violin Competition Henri Marteau 2026, hereby declare that I have read and agree to the rules of the competition. I acknowledge that, in the event of a dispute, only the German text of the rules is binding. Furthermore, I declare: No jury member has been/is my teacher (see point 3 of the rules)."
18. Should the declaration be untrue, the candidate will be excluded from the competition.
19. The candidates must send the following scores of their semi-final repertoire to the management: the virtuoso piece and the optional additional pieces.

III. The authorities of the competition

a. The jury

20. The competition management appoints the members of the jury. The jury consists of internationally renowned professionals of the classical music world. It consists of at least five and a maximum of 11 persons.
21. The jury chair presides over the jury.
22. The jury has no other mission than to rank the candidates and to name the prize winners. The jury has no administrative function.
23. A list of the names of all candidates will be handed to the jury members at the beginning of the competition.
24. Each jury member will sign the rules, the list of the candidates and the following declaration:
“I, the undersigned, ..., member of the jury of the 9th International Violin Competition Henri Marteau 2026, hereby declare that I have read and agree to the rules of the Competition. I acknowledge that, in the event of dispute, only the German text of the rules is binding. Furthermore, I declare: No candidate has been/is my pupil (see point 3 of the rules).”
25. Should the declaration be untrue, the signatory will be excluded from the jury or competition.
26. Throughout the competition, jury members shall refrain from having any direct or indirect contact with candidates. Jury members shall also refrain from making any public statements of any kind concerning the candidates, the activities of the jury or the organisation of the competition.
27. The jury reserves the right to end the performances at any time.
28. The jury will vote by secret ballot. Its decisions are legally binding.
29. The principle of the competition is to ask for a personal and individual judgement from each jury member. In this spirit, the jury members shall refrain from any joint deliberation.
30. If a jury member is unable to attend one or more rounds owing to circumstances beyond his or her control, the chair of the jury will award the weighted number of points awarded by the other jury members.

b. Chairman of the jury

31. The role of the chair of the jury is to direct the operations of the jury. He is supported by an assistant. The chair casts his ballot in a closed envelope. This envelope will only be opened and the evaluation considered in case of standoff.
32. It's the chair's task to oversee the three rounds of the competition. To this end, it is incumbent upon him to take the necessary steps to ensure that the jury's work is carried out correctly. If, in his opinion, a jury member has committed a breach, the chair is authorised to suspend that member immediately from his/ her work in the jury.
33. The chair of the jury announces the results of the rounds.
34. If a candidate is prevented for reasons of force majeure to play in the order of appearance as determined by the draw, the chair of the jury will consider the reasons and make a decision if and when the candidate is going to play.
35. If the chair of the jury is ill or unavoidably detained, he will be replaced by the competition management which will take over his administrative functions.

c. Management

36. The management is according to agreement responsible for the administrative, financial and artistic scheduling, the correct development and the post processing of the competition. It is responsible for taking final decisions concerning all matters during the competition.
37. To be able to perform this task, the management is allowed to ban individuals who danger the peaceful and professional course of the competition from the competition venue.
38. For the implementation of its duties, the management can engage external service providers

d. Honorary Committee

39. The Honorary Committee consists of persons of the public musical life, national/international politics and economics. They provide advice and support the competition.

IV. The rounds of the Competition

40. The rounds of the competition are open to the public. It is divided into three stages.
 - a) The aim of the first round is to choose 16 candidates who will be admitted to the semi-finals and to choose the winners of the special prizes for the best interpretation of Bach and the best interpretation of Mozart, among others. The announcement of the semi-finalists and the winners of the special prizes will be carried out directly after the counting of the votes. The special prizes will be awarded at the gala concert. The winners of the special prizes are required to accept their prizes in person.
 - b) The aim of the semi-finals is to choose 6 candidates who will be admitted to the finals and to choose the winners of the special prizes for the best interpretation of Henri Marteau and the best interpretation of Max Reger. The announcement of the finalists and the winners of the special prizes will be carried out directly after the counting of the votes. The special prizes will be awarded at the gala concert. The winners of the special prizes are required to accept the prize in person.
 - c) The aim of the finals is to choose the three prizewinners, the winner of the audience prize and the winner of the youth jury prize.
41. The candidates will play in the order of appearance as determined by the draw in all three rounds of the competition.
42. All works must be performed from memory. As an exception, works composed after 1945, the Henri Marteau compulsory piece and sonatas for violin and piano, original scores or licensed copies may be used. If artistically justifiable all works must be performed without repetition.
43. Due to copyright reasons candidates may only perform with original scores or licensed copies.

a. Preparations for the 1st Round

44. After the drawing of the order of the candidates, a schedule for rehearsals with the piano accompanists will be handed out. Each candidate will get the same amount of time with her/his piano accompanist.

b. 1st Round (Haus Marteau, Lobensteiner Str. 4, 95192 Lichtenberg)

45. For the first round (duration: max. 20 minutes), each candidate will perform the following works:

- a) Johann Sebastian Bach:
3rd and 4th movement of a sonata for solo violin, without repetitions

- b) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart:
1st movement with cadenza by Henri Marteau of the
Concerto in G major, KV 216 or
Concerto in D major, KV 218 or
Concerto in A major, KV 219
(cadenzas to KV 216, KV 218 and KV 219 will be sent to candidates by the competition office)

- d) Niccolò Paganini:
One Capriccio from: 24 Capricci for solo violin, Op. 1

- 46. The order in which the repertoire is performed can be chosen by the competitor.
- 47. At the beginning of the first round on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, the management will hand out a ballot to each member of the jury which he/she will sign and which bears the names of the candidates.
- 48. Jury members tick the 'maybe' box next to the names of those candidates that they believe could pass through to the semi-finals. There is no maximum of 'maybe' votes each jury member can allocate.
- 49. Candidates who should not pass through to the next round receive a 'no' vote.
- 50. After the end of the first round, each jury member chooses a maximum of 16 candidates on his/her list and turns their 'maybe' votes into 'yes' votes.
- 51. At the end of each day, the ballots will be collected by the jury assistant and handed out to the management.
- 52. At the beginning of the following days of the first round, the jury will get the ballots of the past and current day. The rating can be changed in the panel "correction" until the conclusion of the first round.
- 53. The placements of the candidates are assigned in descending order according to the number of 'yes' votes. Where two or more candidates receive the same number of yes-votes, they are assigned the same rank. The number of lower ranks is reduced accordingly.
- 54. The candidates who reach one of the first 16 positions pass through to the semi-finals.
- 55. Should the determination of the ranking of the first 16 candidates remain inconclusive, the 'maybe' votes given to candidates concerned will be included in the weighting of the votes. Should there still be a tie among several candidates, initially the 'yes' and, following that, the 'maybe' votes of the jury chairman will be taken into account. Should the ranking still remain inconclusive, the whole jury will determine which of the candidates concerned will qualify for the semi-final.

56. The jury shall also write the names of the candidates who are to receive the following special prizes on the ballot paper for the first round:

Wolfgang Winkler Memorial Award for the best interpretation of Bach
Special prize for the best interpretation of Mozart
5 scholarships for the participation in a master class at Haus Marteau
Loan for 3 years of a copy of the Maggini violin of Henri Marteau

The candidate nominated most frequently for each special prize will receive that prize. In the event of a tie, the jury chair will have the deciding vote.

57. At the end of the first round, the management evaluates the ballots.

c. Preparations for the semi-finals

58. After the announcement of the results, a schedule for rehearsals with the piano accompanists will be announced. Each candidate will get the same amount of time with her/ his piano accompanist.

d. Semi-finals (Haus Marteau, Lobensteiner Str. 4, 95192 Lichtenberg)

59. In the semi-finals, each candidate will perform a recital (duration: min. 45 to max. 50 minutes). The candidates are expected to approach their performance as a concert recital. The candidate can choose the order of the repertoire freely, which must include the following pieces:

Henri Marteau: Caprice No. 14 "Am Spinnrad" from: 24 Caprices for violin and piano, Op. 25
Ludwig van Beethoven: 1st movement of a sonata for piano and violin
Max Reger: one prelude from: Preludes and Fugues for violin solo, Op. 117
Richard Blackford: the commissioned work for solo violin
A virtuoso piece selected from the list provided by the competition on its website

The recital can be completed with freely chosen pieces. Not allowed are works by J.S. Bach and pieces composed by the competitor. The scores for Marteau and commissioned work will be sent by the competition office.

60. At the beginning of the semi-finals, the management will hand out a ballot to each jury member, which he/she will sign and which bears the names of the candidates.
61. Jury members tick the 'maybe' box next to the names of those candidates that they believe could pass through to the finals. There is no maximum of 'maybe' votes each jury member can allocate.
62. Candidates who should not pass through to the finals receive a 'no' vote.
63. After the end of the semi-finals, each jury member chooses a maximum of 6 candidates on his/her list and turns their 'maybe' votes into 'yes' votes.
64. At the end of each day, the ballots will be collected by the jury assistant and handed out to the management.
65. At the beginning of the following day, the jury will get the ballots of the past and current day. The rating can be changed in the panel "correction" until the conclusion of the semi-final.
66. The placements of the candidates are assigned in descending order according to the number of 'yes' votes. Where two or more candidates receive the same number of yes-votes, they are assigned the same rank. The number of lower ranks is reduced accordingly.

67. The candidates who reach one of the first 6 positions pass through to the finals.
68. Should the determination of the ranking of the first 6 candidates remain inconclusive, the 'maybe' votes given to candidates concerned will be included in the weighting of the votes. Should there still be a tie among several candidates, initially the 'yes' and, following that, the 'maybe' votes of the jury chairman will be taken into account. Should the ranking still remain inconclusive, the whole jury will determine which of the candidates concerned will qualify for the finals.
69. The jury will also write the names of the candidates who are to receive the Dr. Günter Bedorf Memorial Prize for the best interpretation of Henri Marteau and the Mag. Wilfried Schönweiß Prize for the best interpretation of Max Reger on the ballot for the semi-finals. The candidate nominated most frequently for each special prize will receive that prize. In the event of a tie, the jury chair will have the deciding vote
70. At the end of the semi-finals, the management evaluates the ballots.

e. Preparations for the finals

71. In preparation for the final, each candidate will hold a pre-rehearsal meeting with the conductor of the final, Martijn Dendievel (with a piano accompanist) All candidates of the finals will have the same rehearsal time with the Hofer Symphoniker orchestra.

f. Finals (Freiheitshalle Hof, Kulmbacher Str. 4, 95030 Hof)

72. In the finals, each candidate will perform one of the following violin concertos, accompanied by Hofer Symphoniker conducted by Martijn Dendievel:

Ludwig van Beethoven: Concerto in D major, Op. 61
Johannes Brahms: Concerto in D major, Op. 77
Antonín Dvořák: Concerto in A minor, Op. 53
Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64
Niccolò Paganini: Concerto No.1 in D major, Op. 6
Sergei Prokofiev: Concerto No.1 in D major, Op. 19
Camille Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 3 in B minor, Op. 61
Jean Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D major, Op. 35

73. At the beginning of the final round on Thursday, May 7, 2026, each jury member will receive a ballot paper, which they will sign. This ballot paper shall list the names of the participants in the final round. At the end of the final round, the jury members give each finalist a score based on their order of placement.

74. Each place can only be awarded once:

- 1 = 1st place
- 2 = 2nd place
- 3 = 3rd place
- 4 = 4th place
- 5 = 5th place
- 6 = 6th place

75. After the end of the final round on Friday, 8 May 2026, all ballot papers will be collected and evaluated by the management.

76. The scores awarded by each jury member will be added together to give a final score.

77. The participants will be placed according to their final scores. The participant with the lowest total score will be awarded first place. All other places will be awarded according to the total score in ascending order. In the event of a tie, the decision of the jury chair is decisive.

78. Youth Jury Award: At the beginning of the first day of the finals on Thursday, May 7, 2026, the management will give the members of the youth jury a ballot, which they will sign. The procedure of voting for the youth jury is identical to that of the jury.

79. Audience Award: At the beginning of the final rounds, every member of the audience gets a ballot with the names of the candidates which are performing on the current day. Here the audience can vote for a candidate who should win the audience prize. After finishing the final rounds, all ballots will be collected and handed to the management who evaluates them. The candidate with the highest percentage of votes receives the prize. If there is a tie, the vote of the jury chair is decisive.

V. Counting of ballots

80. The jury agrees to refrain from expressing opinions concerning the performance of the candidates until the final vote-count has been completed.

81. The management will be responsible for counting the voting ballots and for tallying the points. The jury shall not be present when the ballots are counted.

82. If the reading of a ballot presents difficulties that could result in errors, the management will ask the jury member concerned to complete a new ballot. Any correction on a ballot must be initialled by the jury member.

83. All votes and calculations are secret. The only results to be communicated are: the names of the candidates (without ranking) who are admitted to the semi-final; the names of the candidates (without ranking) who are admitted to the final round; the final placement of the three main prizes; and the names of the winners of the special prizes.

84. After counting, the ballot papers are stored in sealed envelopes in the competition archive. From this moment on, the envelopes can only be opened and inspected by the management should this be deemed necessary.

VI. Gala Concert

85. The winners are required to perform in the public gala concert on Saturday, May 9, 2026 without any fee. Moreover, they are obligated to perform in a concert of the 10th International Violin Competition Henri Marteau 2029 if asked to do so.

VII. Prizes and Awards

86. Three main prizes will be awarded:

- 1. Prize: € 10,000
- 2. Prize: € 7,500
- 3. Prize: € 5,000

The first prize includes a radio production with Bayerischer Rundfunk, followed by a CD release.

87. Additionally, there will be the following special prizes:

Audience Award: € 1,000

Youth Jury Award: € 1,000

Dr. Günter Bendorf Memorial Award for the best interpretation of Henri Marteau: € 1,000

Mag. Wilfried Schönweiß Award for the best interpretation of Max Reger: € 1,000

Wolfgang Winkler Memorial Award for the best interpretation of Bach: € 1,000

Special Prize for the best interpretation of Mozart: € 1,000

5 scholarships for the participation in a master class at Haus Marteau

The loan of a copy of the Maggini violin of Henri Marteau for three years

The prizewinners are required to attend a formal ceremony during the gala concert on May 9, 2026 where they will receive their prizes, awards and certificates.

VIII. Referencing the Marteau Competition

88. The prizewinners are obliged to incorporate reference to the International Violin Competition Henri Marteau alongside every performance and engagement for a period of five years following the competition.

IX. Sanctions

89. The jury chair is authorised to issue warnings to other jury members in the event of non-compliance with the competition rules and/or to suspend them from participating in the jury. The management and the organisers of the competition may issue warnings to participants and visitors to the competition and/or suspend them from participating in the competition or expel them from the premises.
90. In case of doubt, the German text of the competition rules is legally binding. The place of legal jurisdiction is Hof, Germany.