

34th ORGAN COMPETITIONS, 2027

Jury: David Franke Germany | David Higgs USA
Kimberly Marshall USA | Monica Melcova Slovakia
Joonho Park Republic of Korea | Patrick Russill UK | Johann Vexo France

INTERPRETATION

First Prize and Gold Medal £12,000 plus recital engagements
sponsored by the Williams Church Music Trust

Second Prize £5,000
sponsored by the Amphion Fund

Peter Hurford Bach Prize £2,000
sponsored by the RCO Foundation

Audience Prize £1,000
sponsored by Mr Andrei Lussmann

Douglas May Award £1,000
for the best performance of a single work in the Quarter or Semi-final round of either competition
sponsored by the Douglas May Fund

Nico Muhly Prize £1,000
for the best performance of the commissioned work, sponsored by Mr Richard Hobson

Pre-selection: Recorded Round

JS Bach	Trio Sonata no.2 in C minor BWV 526 (either movements 1 & 2 or movements 2 & 3) OR Trio Sonata no. 4 in E minor BWV 528 (either movements 1 & 2 or movements 2 & 3)
du Mage	Tierce en taille, Récit & Grand Jeu [Livre d'Orgue]
Messiaen	Joie et clarté [Les Corps Glorieux] OR
Thierry Escaich	Évocation no.2

Strictly anonymous recorded round – closing date for applications 5 March 2027.

Pre-selection round jury: Robert Quinney, David Titterington, Johann Vexo.

Quarter-Final Rounds 1 & 2

QF1: On the Mander organ, St Peter's Church, St Albans

The Peter Hurford Bach Prize

J S Bach Prelude and Fugue in G BWV 541 or Prelude and Fugue in C BWV 545
 Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten BWV 647
 Concerto in A minor BWV 593 or Concerto in D minor BWV 596

QF2: On the Harrison & Harrison organ, St Albans Cathedral

Nico Muhly *Commissioned work, 2027 (5'30")*
 Robert Schumann Study in Canon Form no.4 in A-flat major Op.56

plus free choice of contrasting work(s)

(total timing of round not to exceed 25')

A copy of the commissioned work will be sent to the selected Quarter-Finalists in mid-April 2027

Semi-Final Rounds 1 & 2

SF1: On the 1735 Richard Bridge organ, Christ Church, Spitalfields, London
 NB Tuning fifth-comma meantone

CPE Bach Sonata in A minor Wq 70/4 or Sonata in D major Wq70/5

Plus free choice of contrasting work(s)

Total timing of round not to exceed 25'

SF2: On the Mander organ, St Peter's Church, St Albans

Petr Eben Okna Mvts 1,2 & 3 [for trumpet and organ]

Plus free choice contrasting solo work(s)

Total timing of round not to exceed 30'

Final Round

On the Harrison & Harrison organ, St Albans Cathedral

A balanced programme to include:

Sally Beamish Chaconne [2015, Edition Peters, Wise Music Classical, publisher] OR
 Francis Jackson Toccata, Choral & Fugue Op.16 [1955, Novello] OR
 John McCabe Dies Resurrectionis [1963, Novello, Wise Music Classical, publisher] ***

Plus free choice contrasting work(s)

Total timing of round not to exceed 40'

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IMPROVISATION

Tournemire Prize £8,000 plus recital engagements

Second Prize £3,000

Introduction

The Tournemire Prize for Improvisation seeks to encourage and support organists who are developing a distinctive and personal musical voice. We welcome a wide range of artistic approaches, aesthetic perspectives and forms of expression, reflecting the richness and diversity of contemporary organ music.

Rather than promoting a single stylistic model, the competition aims to provide a framework within which different musical identities can emerge. The emphasis lies on artistic personality, imagination and the ability to communicate through music.

The programme combines different dimensions of improvisational practice: prepared and spontaneous creativity, interaction with historical and contemporary materials, responsiveness to external stimuli and communication with fellow performers.

I am grateful to Professor Franz Dangsagmüller (University of Music, Lübeck), for his expert guidance and inspiration in the modelling of this Tournemire Prize programme.

David Titterington, Artistic Director

Preliminary Recorded Round

Strictly anonymous recorded round – closing date for applications 5 March 2027.

Pre-selection round jury: Franz Danksagmüller, Robert Quinney, David Titterington, Johann Vexo.

1) An improvisation (c.8') based on the following material (abstractions from Tournemire "Sei Fioretti"):



2) Improvisation (c.8') in at least three Movements on the Gregorian Chant Media Vita:

Resp.
4.
M E-di- a vi-ta * in morte su- mus : quem quaéri-
mus ad-ju- tó-rem, ni- si te Dó-mi- ne? qui pro peccá-tis
no- stris ju- ste i-rá- sce- ris : * Sancte De- us,
Sancte for- tis, Sancte mi- sé- ri- cors Salvá- tor,
amárae morti ne tra- das nos. ♪. 1. In te spe- ra- vé-
runt patres no- stri; spe- ravé- runt, et li- be- rá- sti
e- os. * Sancte. ♪. 2. Ad te clama- vé- runt
patres no- stri; cla- mavé- runt, et non sunt con- fú- si.
* Sancte. Gló- ri- a Pa- tri, et Fí- li- o, et
Spi- rí- tu- i San- cto. * Sancte.

Quarter-Final

1) Image and Text Improvisation (10')

The basis for this improvisation would be one of the image-text pairs from *Transformationsmanualen* by Sophia Kalkau and Ursula Andkjær Olsen:

www.gyldendal.dk/produkter/transformationsmanualen-og-asken-med-forvandlinger-9788702431872

Immediately before the performance, a member of the audience will be asked to select one of the twelve preselected cards at random. The competitors will be handed the card and the corresponding text will be read directly before their performance.

2) Improvisation on Krivo Horo (10')

Krivo Horo ("uneven dance") is a traditional dance form from the Balkans. The theme provided consists of several sections (A-I). Contestants are free to combine and develop these sections as they wish.

A possible formal design might be:

A – B – A – B – C – D – E – F – G – H – I – A – B

The given material may be treated freely, provided that its rhythmic identity and melodic character remain perceptible. Contestants are encouraged to vary, ornament, transform, and develop the material, and may add introductions, interludes, transitions, or other sections.

The objective is not an "authentic" recreation of a Bulgarian folk dance. Rather, the theme should serve as a source of inspiration for the creation of an original and convincing musical work.

The jury will particularly value originality, imagination, and the ability to transform the given material into a coherent artistic statement.

The theme is on the following page:

Quarter-Final (continued): Krivo Horo

A

7

12 B

17 C

22 D

27 E

32 F

37 G

42 1. 2. H

47

Semi-Finals

Semi-Final 1: Trumpet and Organ (10-12')

Competitors improvise together with a trumpet player based on the concept of the Trumpet Voluntary by Jeremiah Clarke ("The Prince of Denmark's March").

The jury will not expect a historical reconstruction, but rather an imaginative rethinking of the genre through the competitor's own musical language.

Possible points of reference include Petr Eben's *Hommage à Buxtehude* and *Hommage à Henry Purcell*, Alfred Schnittke's engagement with historical styles, Emerson, Lake & Palmer's adaptation of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the collaboration between Jan Garbarek and the Hilliard Ensemble, Hans Zender's *Winterreise*, Igor Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, and Georg Friedrich Haas's *Tria ex Uno* after Josquin des Prez. All of these works demonstrate different ways of entering into a creative dialogue with historical material while transforming it into a contemporary artistic statement.

Semi-Final 2:

- 1) **Bengt Hambraeus “Nebulosa”** *Duration: 8’* [Published by Nordiska Musikförlaget]
- 2) A short silent film excerpt will be provided to the contestants one day before the performance
Duration: 12’

Final Round

- 1) A three-movement Improvisation (20') on given material.

The material will be abstracted from organ works by Charles Tournemire and given to the finalists one day before the final round.

- 2) An improvisation of 10' on following theme (free form):

from "Tarkus"
by Keith Emerson and Greg Lake

