

Press release, 14 May, 2026, Prague

The finalists of the 60th Concertino Praga Competition have been announced. They will perform at Dvořák Prague Festival concerts in September.

The Concertino Praga – the Antonín Dvořák International Radio Competition for Young Musicians, which is jointly organised by Czech Radio and the Academy of Classical Music, will culminate with two finals evenings on 17 and 18 September, 2026, which are part of the Dvořák Prague Festival. An international expert jury carefully evaluated competitors' anonymous recordings and selected the most outstanding performances.

Competitors began their journey towards the finals by submitting recordings. *“An international expert jury evaluates the recordings anonymously, which guarantees that the Concertino Praga competition is as fair and objective as possible,”* says Kateřina Konopásková, Director of Corporate Support and External Relations at Czech Radio. František Souček, one of this year's jury members, also assessed the competition process positively: *“I was pleased to see that we received so many competition entries and that the competition's prestige continues to grow both in the Czech Republic and abroad. The level of the competitors was excellent. As a jury member, I truly appreciate the tremendous amount of work that goes into each performance.”* Four finalists from each category will advance to the finals.

Finals concerts at the Dvořák Prague Festival open to the public

The finals rounds, where competitors play with outstanding orchestras and conductors, are open to the public. The wind instruments finals take place on 17 September in the Prague Conservatoire Concert Hall. The soloists will be accompanied by the Prague Philharmonia, led by conductor Marko Ivanović. The keyboard/string instruments finals will take place on 18 September in the Dvořák Hall in the Rudolfinum. The young musicians will perform alongside the Czech Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Marek Šedivý. Both concerts will be broadcast live by Czech Radio Vltava.

“Since the final rounds are open to the public, competitors can show, in addition to their instrumental skills, their charisma and ability to communicate with the audience, which are important factors for their future stage careers,” added Jan Simon, Programme Director of the Academy of Classical Music. The programmes of the finals concerts will be determined by the finalists' competition repertoire, which the organisers will select by 31 May, 2026.

Competitors who have advanced to the finals rounds, in alphabetical order:

Wind instruments:

Sebastian Cretan, Czech Republic, trombone
Alina Lamziuk, Ukraine, oboe
Vojtěch Stejskal, Czech Republic, trumpet
Elen Virabyan, Armenia, flute

Keyboard and string instruments:

Xuyao Bai, New Zealand, piano
Tobiáš Balkovský, Czech Republic, cello
Valentýna Ibriqi, Czech Republic, piano
Lin Tokura, Japan, violin

The organisers were pleased that a large number of Czech competitors made it to the finalists in both categories, and also that the competition's significance appeals to young performing artists of the highest calibre all over the world, from Europe to America to New Zealand. This is the first year that the trombone will be parts of the finals as a solo instrument.

Exceptional anniversary year

Although the original plan for this year was to focus solely on the keyboard and string instruments category, the co-organisers, Czech Radio and the Academy of Classical Music, decided to open the competition to wind instrument players once again. *"We view the competition as an opportunity to highlight the most brilliant talents from the youngest musical generation in the global context. The long-term goal of the co-organisers, Czech Radio and the Academy of Classical Music, is to steadily increase the international prestige of the competition. Including the competition in the programme of the Dvořák Prague Festival, where the competitors perform alongside the world's best soloists and ensembles, is helping us achieve that aim,"* said Robert Kolář, Director of the Academy of Classical Music.

The organisers are commemorating the anniversary of the Concertino Praga competition on a much larger scale: firstly, as an opportunity to promote it internationally and secondly, as a way to support the young musicians who succeed in the competition.

You can find photos of the finalists at this link:

<https://eu.zonerama.com/concertinopraga/Album/15291605?secret=XT6Y732vY11u41c386UwSS40s>

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