PEORIA SYMPHONY GUILD

Young Artist Competition 2026

Information packet for students, teachers, and families

Young Artist Competition 2026

Dates
Application Form due - Sunday, January 18, 2026
Video Audition due - Sunday, February 22, 2026
Contest - Saturday, March 21, 2026
Performances - Friday, April 17, 2026 and Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Location
Illinois Central College
1 College Drive
East Peoria, IL, 61635

Fee
$70

Prize
First Place - $1000
Second Place - $750
Third Place - $500
All winners will play at the PSO Guild luncheon on Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 11:30. First Place will perform with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra at the PSO Guild's Annual Student Concert on Friday, April 17, 2026, at 10:00 and 11:45.

Contact
Peggy Reid @ 309.369.3779

Google Form/
Video Submission

PSO Website

Young Artist Competition Information

Dear Music Educator:

The Peoria Symphony Guild is pleased to announce our 68th Annual Concerto/Aria Competition. Our mission is dedicated to giving young artists real-world experiences, encouraging them to continue their musicianship, and motivating them to use their talents to seek a possible musical career.

This is a wonderful opportunity for your students to gain audition experience and potentially play with a professional orchestra! Please share the attached flyer and competition details with your students.

The competition winners will receive monetary awards: $1000 for 1st Place, $750 for 2nd Place, and $500 for 3rd Place. All three winners will be showcased at the Peoria Symphony Guild's Spring Luncheon on **Wednesday, May 6, 2026,** at 11:30 AM in Peoria, IL.

Additionally, the 1st Place winner will have the distinct honor of performing professionally with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra at the Peoria Symphony Guild's Annual Student Concert on **Friday, April 17, 2026.** This concert will be held at the Peoria Civic Center's Prairie Home Alliance Theater, with performances scheduled for 10:00 AM and 11:45 AM. It is absolutely essential that students have these specific dates available before entering the competition.

Applicants are required to submit an unlisted YouTube video recording link of their piece for the preliminary audition round. This link should be submitted using the Google form, and detailed instructions will be emailed once the application has been approved. The deadline to submit applications, along with a $70 non-refundable registration fee, is **Sunday, January 18, 2026.** The fee must be submitted to the payment link provided below, and applicants must include the student's name in the memo line. The final in-person audition round will then take place on **Saturday, March 21, 2026,** at Illinois Central College in Peoria, Illinois.

Thank you for your assistance in providing this valuable information to your students. Applications should be submitted to me using the contact information below.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. We look forward to hearing from your talented students!

Sincerely,

Peggy Reid, *Young Artist Competition Chair*
101 State Street, Peoria, IL 61602
309.369.3779

Google Form/ Video Submission

PSO Website

Young Artist Competition
Rules

ELIGIBILITY

- Must live and attend a school (homeschool included) within a 350-mile radius of Peoria, Illinois, and attend regular music lessons with a private teacher.
- Must be in grades 7 – 12 as of the date of the Young Artist Competition.
- Voice applicants must be at least 14 years of age or exhibit a mature tone.
- May not win 1st place more than once, unless applying with a different instrument.

APPLICATION/ENTRY FEE SUBMISSION

- The application must be submitted by **Sunday, January 18, 2026.** Applicants will be notified of acceptance into the competition and emailed information on how to upload their video.
- Selection must be a standard orchestral piece, from the approved repertoire list found here.
- Other repertoire selections are subject to approval. The selection must be a minimum of 6 minutes with a maximum of 15 minutes and performed from memory.
- Eligible categories of the concerto are piano, voice, brass, woodwind, strings, and percussion.

AUDITIONS

- The preliminary audition is a submission of a **single, uninterrupted, unedited video** of yourself performing the entirety of your concerto/aria selection by memory with an accompanist.
- The deadline to submit video audition and payment is **Sunday, February 22, 2026**, by 11:59 PM.
- The final audition is in person on **Saturday, March 21, 2026** at Illinois Central College. Finalists will receive instructions by email regarding their assigned practice and competition times.
- The performers **must** provide an accompanist.
- Auditions are closed to the public.
- The competition judges reserve the right to select winners of choice, and the decisions of judges are final. Written comments from the judges will be mailed to each contestant following the competition.

COMPETITION WINNERS

- 1st Place - $1000, 2nd place - $750, and 3rd Place - $500. A portion of these awards is made possible by the Donna Wilkinson Schwindenhammer Trust and the Peoria Symphony Guild.
- The winner will be required to perform one selection with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra at the Annual Student Concert on **Friday, April 17, 2026**, at 10:00 AM and 11:45 AM in the Prairie Home Alliance Theater at the Peoria Civic Center. Practice time with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra will be coordinated.
- The top three winners will be required to perform at the Peoria Symphony Guild Spring Luncheon on **Wednesday, May 6, 2026**, at 11:30 AM.