80e CONCOURS DE GENÈVE
INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION
6 – 13 NOVEMBER 2026
Composition & Conducting

HANURIJ LEE WINS COMPOSITION COMPETITION 2026 AT CONCOURS DE GENÈVE INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION



Hanurij Lee, First Prize winner of Concours de Genève Composition Competition and Unsuk Chin, Chair of the Jury (c) Anne-Laure Lechat

- **Lee (20, South Korea) makes a clean sweep, winning First Prize and CHF 15,000 for his work *Stuff #1* as well all of the the special prizes, including the audience prize, voted for by the public**
- **Rafael Marino Arcaro wins Second Prize, and Sing-Yat Chen Third Prize**
- **Composers' works were performed by the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande under the batons of the Conducting Competition finalists**
- **The second Final Round of the Conducting Competition takes place on Friday 13 November, bringing Concours de Genève to a close**

WATCH the livestream of the COMPOSITION FINAL HERE

IMAGES from Concours de Genève Composition Competition Final HERE.

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South Korean composer **Hanurij Lee** (20) tonight [Wednesday 11 November] swept the board at the Composition Competition at the **Concours de Genève,** winning First Prize and all six special awards.

Chosen by a distinguished jury chaired by renowned composer **Unsuk Chin**, Lee won First Prize and CHF 15,000 for his work *Stuff #1*, which was performed in Geneva's Victoria Hall by the **Orchestre de la Suisse Romande** under the baton of Conducting Competition finalist **Mats Thiersch**.

Hanurij Lee also won special awards presented on the night including the Nicati-de Luze Prize, which includes a commission to compose a new work of between seven and ten minutes for solo instrument or voice; the Basel Sinfonietta Prize, which will see the ensemble perform a work by Lee; and the Primeurs Musicales Prize, which includes a commission to compose a short work for string ensemble for performance at the Primeurs Musicales Festival in autumn 2027. Lee also won the Audience Prize, chosen by public vote, as well as the Young Audience Prize and the Student Prize.

One of the oldest and most prestigious music competitions in the world, the Concours de Genève aims to discover, support and promote exceptional young artists from around the world and is currently celebrating its 80th edition.

Hanurij Lee, winner of the Concours de Genève Composition Competition 2026, said: *"Winning First Prize is an enormous honour, and I am deeply grateful to Unsuk Chin and the jury for their recognition. One of the things that makes the Concours de Genève so special is the opportunity it gives composers to develop their work in such a supportive and collaborative environment. Working with Mats Thiersch has been a real privilege, and I am grateful for the care and commitment he has brought to working with both me and the orchestra. It has been an unforgettable experience."*

Unsuk Chin, Chair of the Jury of the Concours de Genève Composition Competition 2026, said: "*Each of the three works we heard today showed imagination, skill and passion. All were very different in musical style and personality, but outstanding in their own way, making the choice of a winner really challenging. Ultimately, we chose Hanurij Lee because we felt his work represented music for the future: technically brilliant, exceptionally beautiful and capable of bringing colour to any concert programme. He is still so young but already shows remarkable talent and enormous potential*."

Rafael Marino Arcaro (36, Brazil) was awarded Second Prize and CHF 10,000 for his work *invention in language of child, op.22*, and Third Prize and CHF 5,000 was awarded to **Sing-Yat Chen** (26, Hong Kong) for her piece *Shattered sky / remaining land*.

The results were decided by an esteemed international jury which included **Unsuk Chin** (Chair), **Toshio Hosokawa**, **Magnus Lindberg**, **Augusta Read Thomas** and **Katharina Rosenberger**.

The Concours de Genève offers one of the most comprehensive prize packages of any international music competition, with the commissions and performance opportunities

provided by its special awards offering valuable next steps in the development of these young composers' careers.

The Composition Competition received a record 188 applications from composers aged 9 to 39, representing 46 countries. The jury selected three finalists from this field. Entry was open to candidates born after 11 November 1986, who were asked to compose a work lasting between 12 and 16 minutes for a symphony orchestra of at least 40 players, without soloists or electronic systems.

For the first time in the history of the Concours de Genève, the Final Round of the Composition Competition was held in conjunction with the Conducting Competition, with the three conducting finalists – Gabriel Pernet, Jacobus de Jager and Mats Thiersch – each leading the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande through the works by the three composition finalists. The three conductors now progress to their own Final Round on Friday 13 November, where they will conduct works by Prokofiev, Strauss and Stravinsky, with the winner announced at an awards ceremony afterwards.

Concours de Genève supports laureates in launching international careers through an ambitious career development programme. This includes two years of services from the Paris concert agency Sartory Artists, management representation, international concert tours, personal coaching and commissions. One winner also receives the opportunity to record an album with orchestra on the La Dolce Volta label. Previous laureates include some of the world's greatest musicians, among them Martha Argerich, Alan Gilbert, Nelson Goerner, Georg Solti, José Van Dam and Tabea Zimmermann.

The Conducting Competition Final Round takes place on Friday 13 November. Audiences worldwide can watch via the Concours de Genève website and YouTube channel, medici.tv, amadeus.tv, Mezzo TV and The Violin Channel. In Switzerland, coverage is available via RTS – Espace 2 and TV Léman Bleu.

More information on the Concours de Genève can be found on the Competition's website.

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Notes to Editors

IMAGES from Concours de Genève Composition Competition Final HERE.

WATCH the livestream of the COMPOSITION FINAL HERE

The PRESS KIT for the Concours de Genève is available HERE.

About The Concours de Genève

Founded in 1939, the Concours de Genève is one of the world's leading international music competitions. Its mission is to discover, promote and support young talented artists, providing them with the necessary tools to launch an international career.

Within the world of international music competitions, a multi-disciplinary approach is rare and represents one of the Concours de Genève's most distinctive assets. Since its creation in 1939, 26 disciplines have been presented: instrumental, vocal, ensemble music or conducting.

Today, the Competition alternates between eight main disciplines: piano, flute, clarinet, cello, viola, string quartet, voice and percussion. Every second year, it offers the Composition Competition.

The list of Concours de Genève prize-winners is a rollcall of many of the greatest musicians including Martha Argerich, Arturo Benedetti-Michelangeli, Victoria De Los Angeles, Alan Gilbert, Nelson Goerner, Friedrich Gulda, Heinz Holliger, Nobuko Imai, Quatuor Melos, Emmanuel Pahud, Maurizio Pollini, Georg Solti, José Van Dam, Christian Zacharias, Tabea Zimmermann – and many more.

Concours de Genève laureates are offered an ambitious career development programme, providing precious support and advice to help boost their careers. This includes management representation, two years of international concert tours with one winner given the opportunity to record an album, with orchestra, on the La Dolce Volta label.

Hanurij Lee
Hanurij Lee (b. 2006, Seoul) is a composer studying at the Korea National University of Arts. His work focuses on exploring sonic relationships between instruments through their inherent possibilities and restricted gestures rather than conveying explicit concepts. His music has been presented at Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik, Verbier Festival, Daegu International Contemporary Music Festival, and Initiative Neue Musik OWL.

In addition to the **First Prize of CHF 15,000**, he was awarded the following special prizes:

Audience Prize (CHF 1,500) – for receiving the most audience votes in the Final Rounds.

Young Audience Prize (CHF 1,000) – awarded by Geneva school students, following dedicated training, based on both Final Rounds.

Students' Prize (CHF 1,000) – awarded by University of Geneva music and musicology students as part of their curriculum, based on both Finals. Supported by Ms. & Mr. Hervieu-Causse.

Nicati-de Luze Prize (CHF 5,000) – a jury-awarded commission for a 7–10-minute solo instrumental or vocal work, given to the First Prize winner (or, failing that, the Second Prize winner). The Foundation also covers up to CHF 7,000 in production costs for the premiere and/or subsequent performances.

Basel Sinfonietta Prize – awarded by Basel Sinfonietta representatives to a composition finalist, with a commitment to perform a work by the winner within two seasons.

Primeurs Musicales Prize (CHF 3,000) – awarded by festival representatives to a composition finalist: a commission for a short string ensemble work to be premiered at the Festival in autumn 2027.

Rafael Marino Arcaro

Rafael Marino Arcaro is a Brazilian composer now based between Berlin and London. His music emerges from the sensibilities of his rural childhood – fruit trees, insects, nighttime creatures – and his reflections on Brazilian artistic identity. Known for an aesthetic of clarity and restraint, he writes works that carry a flavour of sour mango and cotton candy. His pieces are emotionally direct yet tinged with a kind of serious playfulness and, sometimes, dire violence.

Sing-Yat Chen

Sing-Yat Chen (陳星逸) is a Hong Kong composer-pianist, and 2026 Gaudeamus Award finalist. Praised by Neue Musik Zeitung for her "impressively reflective inner struggle," she integrates literature, science and visual arts into immersive soundscapes. A former Bang on a Can Fellow, she has collaborated with Ensemble Modern and cellist Jeffrey Zeigler. Her works, bridging dualities, have been featured at Festival Mixtur and performed on the historic 1746 Hildebrandt organ.