

# Windham Regional Arts Council

## 38th Annual Young Artist Music Competition

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Saturday, January 25, 2025 at 1:00 pm  
Burton Leavitt Theatre  
779 Main Street, Willimantic, CT

Registration is now open for the 38th Annual Young Artist Music Competition!  
Review the guidelines below and visit the [competition website](#) to register online.  
**The deadline for all entry forms is January 15, 2025.**

### Competition Guidelines

**Eligibility:** Vocalists and instrumentalists enrolled in grades 7-12 in public, private, or home school. This year, the vocal competition has been expanded to include grades 7-9 in addition to grades 10-12.

**Eligible instrument categories:** Piano, string and wind instruments, and voice.

**Judges:** The Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) has assembled a panel of judges for the event, all of whom hold degrees in various musical disciplines and have experience as educators, performers, conductors, and/or composers. The judges reserve the right not to award a winner in a particular category at their discretion.

### Awards

Recipients of the following awards are selected by the judges and receive a cash award. Cash awards are made possible by dedicated individuals, families, and organizations who are passionate about music and committed to supporting and recognizing the achievements of young artists. Cash awards are distributed to winners as checks made payable to the performers.

#### Individual Awards

- 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place are awarded in each instrument category, judged separately by age group (grades 7-9 and grades 10-12). 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place carry cash awards of \$100.00, \$75.00, and \$50.00, respectively.
- Individual entrants may also compete for an ensemble award.
- In the event there are fewer than 4 entries in a category/age group, instrument categories may be combined at the discretion of the competition committee.

#### Ensemble Awards

- 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place are awarded to ensembles, with cash awards of \$100.00, \$75.00, and \$50.00 to each ensemble member, respectively.
- Ensemble entrants may also compete for an individual award.

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### Special Awards

These awards honor distinguished community members and supporters of the arts, and their families, and are given at the judges' discretion.

- Mr. D Scholarship Award: \$300
- Bellingham Piano Award: \$500
- Gerry String Award: \$200
- Gerry Wind Award: \$200
- McDevitt Voice Award: to be announced

### Feather Spearman Honor

The Feather Spearman Honor is a community service-based award in honor of Feather Spearman, who tirelessly served as the competition director for over 20 years. This award recognizes one student who has used their musical talent and passion for music to serve their community, a non-profit organization, school, faith-based organization, health care facility (such as a rehabilitation center, hospital, assisted living facility, or nursing home), or a similar entity.

- Eligibility: students are not required to perform in the general competition but must meet the age category requirement.
- The recipient is chosen by the competition committee and receives a cash award of \$200.
- Qualified candidates will be interviewed by members of the competition committee at a mutually convenient time before the award is granted. If the applicant is under 18, a parent or guardian must be present during the interview. There is no application fee for this award.

### Concerto Competition

The Concerto Competition is keenly competitive, with judges selecting a single winner each year from all entrants, regardless of age or instrument. The winner receives a certificate for outstanding achievement in music performance, and is eligible and MAY receive an invitation to perform their solo with the Willimantic Orchestra in a 2025 concert, solely at the discretion of the judges.

- Eligibility: open to all solo and ensemble entrants. Previous concerto winners are eligible to compete for the award again in a different category.
- Competitors wishing to be considered must indicate this on the registration form and prepare an appropriate piece according to these guidelines:
  - The competition piece must be a piece with orchestral accompaniment.
  - The audition piece must be a concerto movement, concertino, or showpiece with orchestral accompaniment.
  - The piece must not exceed 12 minutes in length.
- It is strongly suggested that the competitor perform with accompaniment during the competition.

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### Vocalist Guidelines

- Vocalists should prepare songs which are developmentally appropriate, including art songs in any language, and selections from musicals, operetta, operas, and oratorios. **Please note: Pop music and original compositions are not allowed.**

### Ensemble Guidelines

- Ensembles must consist of 2-5 performers, all in grades 10-12.
- The ensemble may include players of the same instrument, varying instruments, or any combination of such, including vocalists.
- Each ensemble member may enter both individually and as part of an ensemble.

### Accompaniment

- The theatre has two fully tuned pianos. One is a baby grand, the other is an upright. Generally, the competitor pianist performs on the baby grand. The presence of two pianos allows for piano concertos, if desired.
- Any performer who wishes to have piano accompaniment must secure their own accompanist. Compensation for the accompanist must be arranged between the performer's family and the accompanist. Please keep the accompanist informed of the anticipated time of your performance. We urge each performer to rehearse with the selected accompanist well in advance of the competition date.
- Digital accompaniment (electronic speakers with a digital track) is not permitted.
- Performers are not required to have piano accompaniment.

#### *WRAC-recommended accompanists*

Dr. Priyeshni Peiris Perera 959-929-1392  
Richard Cooper 860-371-0807

### Attire

- Please choose attire that is suitable for performance and does not distract from your presentation as a musician. Do not wear blue jeans, tee shirts, athletic style clothing, or polo shirts.
- For safety reasons, flip-flops and sandals are not permitted.
- Preferred attire includes button-down shirts, ties (optional), dresses and blouses with a conservative neckline/hemline. Leggings are acceptable if they are paired with a tunic or dress of mid-thigh length or longer.
- We appreciate your commitment to these guidelines. Similar or stricter attire requirements will apply at All-State or collegiate-level performances, and this is a great opportunity to become familiar with those standards.

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### Schedule

#### **9:30 am – 12:30 pm**

Practice sessions

10 minutes for individuals; 15 minutes for ensembles and concerto competition entrants

#### **1:00 – 4:00 pm**

Competition

Grades 7-9, followed by grades 10-12, concluding with a reception

#### **4:00 pm**

Awards Ceremony

### Photography and recordings

A professional photographer will capture photos that will be distributed to participants post-event. We ask families and other guests to refrain from taking photos or videos during the competition.

### Registration Instructions and Fees

#### *Registration Fees*

- Individual Entry: \$25 per category; \$20 for a second category. A separate form must be completed for each instrument.
- Ensemble Entry: \$25 per ensemble member. All ensemble members must complete an Ensemble Entry form.
- Feather Spearman Honor: There is no application fee to compete for this community service award.
- Signatures from both the student and a parent/guardian are required on each entry form.

#### *Registration forms*

- To register, visit the [competition website](#) and complete the appropriate entry form(s) for each competition you wish to enter.
- Students may register as soloists, ensemble members, or both, and are also eligible to compete for the Feather Spearman Award.
- Signatures from both the student and a parent/guardian are required on each entry form.

**Deadline for all entry forms: January 15, 2025**

### Communication

- WRAC will communicate with families via email for general announcements and via phone with parents/guardians for specific questions.
- In the event of inclement weather, the competition will be postponed to February 8, 2025.

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### *CONTACT US*

#### **Email**

[contactus@windhamrac.org](mailto:contactus@windhamrac.org)

#### **Phone**

Carol Twardowski-Heap - (860) 933-8015  
Competition Director

Catherine Shires - (860) 617-4951  
WRAC President

### **About WRAC and the Young Artist Music Competition**

The Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) is a non-profit volunteer organization founded in 1983. The Young Artist Music Competition is now in its 38th year. We remain dedicated to hosting this event each year to showcase the superb musical talent of each participant. Our mission for the event is to provide encouragement and build confidence among the performers. We believe that the opportunity to perform in a concert-like setting is a stepping stone to the future for these young individuals, whether they pursue a collegiate path or perform in a community setting.

We look forward to working with you toward a wonderful day of music & fellowship!