

On behalf of the team of the **International Competition for Young Pianists «Merci, Maestro!»**, we would like to invite students to attend the third edition of our Competition that will take place **from 20th to 21th April 2018 in Brussels** and will be closed with the **Gala Concert that will be held on April 22th, 2018**.

This competition set itself the objective of becoming a new cultural exchange platform, to help young international talents make themselves known throughout the world and also to give them the opportunity to meet and build relationships with other musicians from all over the world.

The second edition of this competition, which was held in April 2017, had a great success and helped us to discover **98 young talents** from over **20 different countries**. There have been **15 winners** from Belarus, Belgium, China, Chroatie, Hollande, Kazakhstan, Portugal, Spain, Romania and Russia. The participants of the third edition will have the opportunity to perform on a *Steinway & Sons* piano in front of a large audience and such influential personalities in the world of music as: François Thiry, Olivier Roberti, Nataliya Chepurenko, Lubov Aroutiounian ,Alexandre Eggericx, Milana Chernyavska, Eliane Reyers.

The winners will receive a unique opportunity to **perform** at the Gala Concert on the VILLE DE BRUXELLES on the main square –Grande Place. Some of the winners will be awarded with **scholarships to take part in master classes** with famous pianists.

There are several **categories**:

- **CAT A:** for candidates 10 years old and younger at the time of the Competition;
- **CAT B:** for candidates from 11 to 14 years old at the time of the Competition;
- **CAT C:** for candidates from 15 to 20 years old for the time of the Competition.

If needed, foreign participants may use this letter as a support for entrance visa application. However, the Competition organizer will not be responsible for obtaining visas and the costs related to this application.

The organizer will provide all possible information and assistance for accommodation of participants and accompanying persons in hotels with favourable rates or in carefully selected host families.

The application deadlines are before the 1st February 2018 for non-European Union citizens and before the 1st March 2018 for citizens of the European Union.

Additional required information (more in the Practical information section on our web site):

- Possibility to arrange transfers: airport – hotel (or secretary office of the competition) - airport;
- Discounts for accommodation in the hotel "Ramada";
- The possibility to stay in host family (free);
- Excursions in Brussels (for all participants);
- Excursions to Bruges (Belgium), Amsterdam, Paris, in English or Russian languages.

For further information, please visit the competition website: <http://www.mercimaestro.be/en/> or contact us by email: info@mercimaestro.be or by phone: +32 (0)496 48 87 80.

Please check our movie "Welcome to "Merci, Maestro!" 2018": <https://youtu.be/6bv-EVGYJP0>

Here are the movies from previous years of the competition:

- "Merci, Maestro!" 2017: <https://youtu.be/z0k1OeoU0A0>
- "Merci, Maestro!" 2016: <https://youtu.be/gsyncui-bUU>