

Updated 7/12/2016

22nd International Competition

Cleveland Renaissance, Cleveland, OH

November 13-19, 2016

Information for Competitors

Competition Entry Information • Competition Rules • Shipping Rules

Deadlines and Confirmation

The entry deadline is October 13, 2016, OR when the maximum number of instruments or bows in any category is reached. No registrations will be accepted after this date. Please register promptly.

Registration is only available through the online system. You will receive a written confirmation immediately after payment. Bring this confirmation with you to the competition or copy it and ship it with your instrument or bow. Instruments and bows hand-carried to the Competition must be delivered to the Check-in Location at the hotel on Sunday, November 13, between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Instruments and bows that are shipped must be received between October 1 and October 31, 2016. **There will be no on-site registration of entries. You must present your confirmation in case of any registration questions.**

Hotel Information

The convention rate for sleeping rooms at the Renaissance Cleveland is \$144 plus taxes and fees per night. The deadline for reserving rooms at the convention rate is October 9, 2016. After that date rooms will be at the prevailing rate depending on availability. To make room reservations at the convention rate, visit www.VSAweb.org/2016Hotel to reserve online or call 1-800-468-3571 and mention "The Violin Society of America".

Membership

All competitors must be individual members of the VSA with an expiration date of 12/31/16 or later. If you are not a member, you may join using the online entry form at www.vsaweb.org/membership

Fees

In addition to the competition fees, there is an additional charge to attend the lectures, instrument exhibit and other activities that occur during the competition week. The competition entry fee does not include entry to any events. These fees are detailed in this packet.

Insurance

Insurance for competition instruments and bows is the responsibility of the competitor. If you would like information about insuring your instrument or bow while it is at the competition, contact:

Heritage Insurance Services, Inc.: 800-289-8837

Letters of Invitation

A letter of invitation to accompany a visa application for entry into the USA will be part of your registration receipt and is emailed to you automatically.

Please check in your own country for any deadlines.

The Violin Society of America

International Competition Rules 2016

COMPETITION OBJECTIVE

The Competition's objective is to inspire the creation of outstanding, artistic, concert-quality instruments and bows. Craftsmanship and tone judges are instructed to identify those instruments and bows having the greatest artistic merit, technical execution, and in the case of instruments, tone quality.

ELIGIBILITY

All competitors must be members of the VSA with an expiration date of 12/31/16 or later. Membership information is available on the web at: www.vsaweb.org/membership or by contacting:

The Violin Society of America
14070 Proton Rd. Suite 100
Dallas, TX 75244

GENERAL RULES

Rules and judging procedures for the International Competition have been designed to ensure fairness to all competitors. Instruments and bows submitted for competition must have been completed after September 2014. **Instruments and bows may not be entered if they have already received awards in other recognized international competitions.** The decision of the judges is final.

Please be aware that although the rules for the Competition have not changed, the scoring for all preliminary rounds will now be scored on a "+", "-" basis and not numerically, as was done in the past. If an instrument does not make the cut to enter the evaluation round it will not be numerically scored.

Hors Concours status is granted to a maker who has been awarded Gold Medals in three different VSA Competitions. Hors Concours status will not be granted for three Gold Medals awarded in one or two Competitions. Makers designated Hors Concours status are not allowed to enter further VSA Competitions. A maker who has been awarded Hors Concours status in the category of instrument making may still compete in the bow making competition, however. Likewise, a person holding Hors Concours status as a bow maker may enter the instrument competition.

LIABILITY

The Violin Society of America will take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of instruments or bows entered into the competition. However, the Violin Society of America is not responsible for any loss, damage or destruction to any instruments or bows during the competition and during the period in which instruments are stored at the host shop.

Competitors are responsible for insuring their own instruments.

ENTRY

Each instrument maker may enter at most one (1) violin, one (1) viola, one (1) cello, and/or one (1) bass in the Competition. Makers may also enter a string quartet for the quartet Competition. If a quartet is entered, one (1) violin (to be designated by the competitor---not necessarily the first violin), along with the viola and cello from the quartet must also be entered into the Competition. In addition, the first and second violins must be clearly identified. If a quartet is entered, the fees for one violin, the viola and the cello will be paid. Bow makers may enter at most one (1) violin bow, one (1) viola bow, one (1) cello bow, and one (1) bass bow in the Competition. Baroque instruments, baroque and pre-modern bows may not be entered in the Competition. Two makers ("co-makers") may enter instruments, bows or a quartet, but if so, none of the co-makers may also enter an instrument or bow of the same type on their own.

COMPETITION ENTRY FEES (per instrument/bow)

First Instrument	\$185
Second Instrument	\$85
Third Instrument	\$85
Quartet	no additional charge
First Bow	\$125
Each Additional Bow	\$75

Other Fees:

Convention Registration	\$220 in advance, \$240 onsite
Banquet Ticket	\$75

All shipping fees and all insurance coverage for instruments and bows to, from and during the competition are completely the responsibility of the competitor.

REGISTRATION and DEADLINES

Complete the online competition entry form and enter your payment information by October 13, 2016. No registrations will be accepted after this date, and no hard-copy registrations will be accepted. Please register promptly since registrations may be rejected when the maximum number of instruments in any category is reached. You will receive a written confirmation immediately after your registration form is completed. **Bring this confirmation with you to the competition or copy it and ship it with your instrument.**

Instruments shipped must be received at the host shop between October 1 and October 31, 2016 (see shipping rules for details). Instruments hand-carried to the Competition must be delivered to the Competition Committee at the hotel on Sunday, November 13, between 5:00 and 10:00 p.m. There will be no on-site registration of instruments and bows. You must present your confirmation in case of any registration questions.

WITHDRAWALS AND REFUNDS

All withdrawals from the competition must be in writing sent by email or fax. Competition fees will be refunded less an \$85.00 processing fee if a refund request is received by October 22.

No refunds will be given for requests received after October 22.

AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHENTICITY

All makers must sign an affidavit on the entry form indicating that the instrument(s) or bow(s) have been made entirely by themselves. Fittings such as pegs, tailpieces and endpins on an instrument may be commercially produced. Bow frogs and buttons may not be commercially produced. Makers are not permitted to sub-contract work on instruments or bows submitted.

(Declaration III)

WHITE RECEIPT REQUIRED TO RETRIEVE INSTRUMENTS/BOWS

A white VSA receipt with a red number on it will be issued to the maker of each instrument/bow at the time it is delivered to the Competition Committee. When the competition is over, this white receipt must be presented to the VSA check-out personnel in order to obtain redelivery of the instrument/bow. **So it is very important that every maker obtain this white receipt and keep it safe until the competition is over.** If an instrument/bow is shipped rather than hand-carried to the competition, the maker must present his/her registration confirmation at the instrument check-in table before 10 p.m. on Sunday, November 13, 2016, to obtain the white receipt. The only exception is if the shipping instructions tell the VSA to ship the instrument/bow directly back to the maker (prepaid) after the competition is over. In that case, a white receipt will not be required for redelivery.

EARLY REMOVAL OF ENTRIES

One of the purposes of the competition is to allow the attendees to examine and play the instruments that have been judged in the competition, through Friday, November 18. To remove an instrument/bow after 4:00 PM but prior to 11:00 PM on Friday, November 18, an \$85 per item early withdrawal fee will be charged. If the competitor must leave early and chooses not to pay the early withdrawal fee, arrangements must be made to have the instrument(s) or bow(s) shipped to him/her after the final day at his/her expense. Instruments and bows may be picked up without penalty on Friday evening, November 18, between 11:00 p.m. and midnight.

ANONYMITY RULES

All instruments and bows must have a LEGIBLE label, brand, or stamped mark. This is so that the maker may be positively identified, if necessary, at the conclusion of the Competition after the judging has taken place. In an effort to insure impartiality, the identity of the makers of the instruments and bows is withheld from the judges during the Competition. To prevent the judges from identifying the maker by looking at the instrument's label, brand, or stamped mark, **it is the responsibility of the contestant to make sure that all such labels, brands, or stamped marks are covered or otherwise concealed at the time of entry.**

Once the instruments and bows have been entered into the contest, each is given a randomly assigned identification number. In the unlikely event of a problem, we want to be able to examine the hidden maker's label, brand, or stamp to insure that the instrument or bow is returned to its rightful owner. **Any violation of these rules will lead to disqualification.** Competitor lists will not be available until the completion of the judging.

RULES COMMITTEE

The responsibility for interpretation of Competition rules, the settling of disputes and dealing with questions arising during the Competition lies with the VSA Rules Committee, Ryan McLaughlin, Chair.

RULES INFRACTIONS

Infractions of rules will be determined by the Rules Committee after consultation with the appropriate judges. Instruments or bows which do not comply with Competition rules will be disqualified. All entry fees for disqualified items will be forfeited. Any person who is caught attempting to commit fraud in the Competition will be disqualified from the Competition and will be banned from all future VSA Competitions.

PHOTOGRAPHING AND MEASURING INSTRUMENTS AND BOWS

By entering this competition you agree to have your instrument(s)/bow(s) photographed by the VSA, and to have these photographs used by the VSA for publication in the VSA Journal, or for any other purpose, without prior permission of the maker. You also agree to have acoustical measurements taken of your instrument(s) for use by the VSA.

RESTRICTIONS ON MATERIALS

Instruments and bows having tortoise-shell, elephant ivory or genuine whalebone (baleen) are banned from the Competition. Mastodon or bone is an acceptable substitute. Under the Endangered Species Act, United States Customs does not permit the importation of elephant ivory, tortoise-shell or whalebone. Items made from these banned materials that cross United States borders may be confiscated by United States Customs.

INSTRUMENT WORKMANSHIP JUDGING

Workmanship judging will be accomplished by three (3) judges for violins and three (3) judges for violas, cellos and basses. Judges assigned to judge violins will have no input into the decisions affecting violas, cellos and basses and vice versa. Judging will be divided into three rounds: preliminary, evaluation and medal. In the preliminary round, each instrument will be evaluated independently by three judges who will then select those instruments that will be given further consideration in the evaluation round. In the evaluation round, each instrument will be evaluated again by each judge independently. Based on the results of the evaluation round, the judges will select those instruments to proceed to the medal round. Instruments in the medal round will receive at least a Certificate of Merit for Workmanship. The instruments in the medal round will be reviewed by the judges working together. Instruments that receive a unanimous vote for superior workmanship will be recommended for Gold Medals. Please read the rules explaining the awarding of Gold Medals, Silver Medals and Certificates of Merit below.

Both antiqued and pristine instruments may be submitted. The judges are instructed to show no preference for either type.

Instrument evaluation will be divided into six categories, totaling 100 points.

1. Setup **16 points**

Includes bridge, post, pegs, tailpiece, fingerboard, nut, saddle, and endpin.

2. Varnish **8 points**

Includes color, transparency, evenness of application, ground, texture, and patina (if present).

3. Modeling **8 points**

Includes arching, surface texture, and f-holes, including positioning and shape relative to arching.

4. Scroll **8 points**

Includes model, flowing lines, pegbox, finish work, and overall character.

5. Construction **20 points**

Includes outline, glue joints, bending and fitting of ribs and purfling, execution of neck, edges, corners, f-holes, scroll, and finish work.

6. Overall Impression **40 points**

Includes originality, choice of materials, elegance and overall consistency of style, and artistry.

INSTRUMENT TONE JUDGING

Tone judging will be divided into three (3) rounds: preliminary, evaluation and medal. In the preliminary round, each instrument will be evaluated independently by three (3) playing judges who will then select those instruments that will be given further consideration in the evaluation round. In the evaluation round, each instrument chosen from the preliminary round will be further evaluated by the judges to determine which should proceed to the medal round. Instruments in the medal round will receive at least a Certificate of Merit for Tone. The instruments in the medal round will be reviewed by the judges working together. Instruments that receive a unanimous vote as being of the highest tone quality will be recommended for Gold Medals. Please read the rules explaining Gold Medals, Silver Medals, and Certificates of Merit below.

QUARTET JUDGING

Following the individual instrument Competitions, quartets will be judged for workmanship and tone. Makers must have previously designated which violin is first and which is second. Makers may enter any combination of models.

QUARTET WORKMANSHIP JUDGING

The violin workmanship judges will not participate in quartet workmanship judging due to their greater workload. The designated viola, cello and bass workmanship judges will evaluate the quartet as a unit in one evaluation round considering the following categories, totaling 100 points:

1. Construction 40 points

Includes technical aspects of making, including the body, neck, scroll, setup and consistency of construction among all four instruments.

2. Varnish 20 points

Includes color, transparency, application, texture, patina (if present), and consistency of varnish among all four instruments

3. Artistic 40 points

Includes sense of taste and artistry, considering stylistic and material similarities within the realm of overall impression.

Quartets that proceed to the medal round will receive at least a Certificate of Merit for Workmanship.

Quartets that receive a unanimous vote as being of superior quality in workmanship will be recommended for Gold Medals. Please read the rules explaining Gold Medals, Silver Medals, and Certificates of Merit below.

QUARTET TONE JUDGING

Tone judging will be divided into two (2) rounds: preliminary and final. During the preliminary round, each quartet will be played and evaluated by four (4) players serving as tone judges and one (1) listening tone judge on a pass/fail basis. Each judge will have an equal vote. Quartets that pass into the final round will be further reviewed by the four (4) playing judges and one (1) listening tone judge to reach a consensus for Certificates of Merit or recommendations for Gold Medals. Please read the rules explaining Gold Medals, Silver Medals, and Certificates of Merit below.

GOLD MEDALS

For an instrument to receive a Gold Medal it must be recommended by all designated judges for such a medal in one category and have at least a Certificate of Merit in the other category. Instruments considered of certificate quality in both categories, but not selected to receive a Gold Medal, will receive a Certificate of Merit in each category. It is possible for an instrument to receive two Certificates of Merit and not receive a Gold Medal.

SILVER MEDALS

A Silver Medal in Workmanship or in Tone is awarded if judges recommend a Gold Medal in one category and award neither medal nor certificate in the other category.

Bows are judged on workmanship only. There are no Silver Medals awarded in the bow making competition.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

An instrument will receive a Certificate of Merit in a category if it reaches the medal round in that category and received neither a Gold Medal nor a Silver Medal in that category.

Bows that proceed to the medal round but do not receive a Gold Medal will receive a Certificate of Merit.

Policy for advertising of medal and certificate recipients

It is the policy of the VSA that all awards granted by the VSA, including medals and certificates of merit, are personal to the award winner. Any advertising, publicity, or promotional materials, in any format or media, that refer or relate to a VSA award shall be accompanied by the award winner's name. Failure to comply with this VSA policy may result in expulsion from VSA membership, forfeiture of VSA awards, or other remedies

Enter on the VSA Website

Competitors may only enter the competition on the VSA website,
www.vsaweb.org/2016competition, using a credit card.

The deadline is midnight, October 13, 2016

With respect to online entries, the VSA is not responsible for lost or delayed entries due to computer system, phone line, hardware, software or program malfunctions or other errors, failures, delayed computer transmissions, network connections or entries sent to wrong addresses.

The Violin Society of America • 22nd International Competition

Shipping and Duty Rules & Guidelines

Host shop for this competition:

Cleveland Violins
2917 Mayfield Rd
Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44118
Tel 216.932.9310
yanbing.chen@clevelandviolins.com

All shipments are to be sent to the host shop, Cleveland Violins, at the above address by October 31, 2016. Instruments hand-carried to the Competition must be delivered to the Check-in Location at the Cleveland Renaissance on Sunday November 13, between 5:00 and 10:00 p.m.

Shipping costs, including return shipping costs, duty fees and insurance are the sole responsibility of the maker. The Violin Society of America will not accept any instrument or bow into the Competition for which incoming shipping costs or duty fees are due.

Competitors from outside the United States are advised to post a carnet, an international customs document that facilitates temporary imports into foreign countries. For more information contact the customs department in your country. The web site www.uscib.org may have information about the issuing agency in your country.

Instruments and bows incorporating endangered or other regulated species, or CITES restricted plant or animal materials, may require licenses, permits and/or other certifications prior to export and import. Some plant and animal species are prohibited from import into and export from the U.S. Violations of U.S. laws may result in seizure and forfeiture of the instrument or bow. It is the competitor's responsibility, and not the VSA's, to obtain all necessary export or import licenses, permits, and/or certificates. <http://www.fws.gov/International/permits/by-activity/musical-instruments.html>

The VSA will not pay for the return shipment of any Instrument/bow. All arrangements for return shipping costs must be made in advance of the Competition. These arrangements are to be included in the box containing the instrument/bow, or made in writing directly with the host, before the beginning of the Competition. You must enclose shipping labels and any special directions for repacking.

To arrange for return shipping, one of the following is suggested: 1. Establish a shipping account with a shipping company and provide your shipper number or the return shipping documents to the host shop. 2. Pay the host shop in advance with a bank check after asking the host shop for an estimate of shipping costs. **All competitors shipping through the host shop must provide a credit card to be kept on file that will cover any unpaid shipping costs.**

If no prior shipping arrangements have been made, instruments and bows returned to destinations within the U.S. will be sent C.O.D. For shipments outside the U.S., the VSA will keep the instrument/bow in its possession at the host shop until the return shipping cost plus a \$50 storage/handling fee, has been paid directly to the host. If after 6 months these costs still have not been paid, the VSA will take possession of the instrument/bow to be disposed of at its discretion. In this case, the competitor is responsible for any import duties owed.

Shipping Guidelines and Suggestions: Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard which will be returned to you upon arrival of the instrument(s) and/or bow(s).

It is the responsibility of the competitor to make sure that each shipped package contains a clearly worded packing slip stating exactly what the package contains. Because of similarities between some violin and viola bows, each viola bow should be tagged "viola." Enclose a copy of your competition registration confirmation as well.

Should an instrument arrive in need of adjustment or minor repair prior to the start of the Competition, the VSA will have an expert luthier on call. In case of any major damage in shipping, you will be notified immediately.

The instruments and bows will be removed from their cases and placed on linen tablecloths during the Competition. They will remain there for the duration of the Competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to be certain that the varnish is dry. Instruments with sticky varnish may be damaged by the tablecloths. The VSA assumes no responsibility for such damage.

Due to the number of instruments and bows anticipated, please allow six (6) weeks for their return.

It is highly recommended that shipments from outside the U.S. be sent by FedEx or UPS. We have had difficulty returning shipments sent by other shipping companies.

Please do not ship in airtight plastic bags unless the instrument(s) and/or bow(s) are protected from contacting the plastic. The plastic may cause damage to the varnish.

Questions concerning shipping should be directed to Cleveland Violins

Do not ship instruments or bows to the Violin Society Office