UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Organ Improvisation Competition

Co-sponsors:
Ann Arbor Chapter of the American Guild of Organists,
First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor
American Center of Church Music

First Prize $3,000
Second Prize $2,000
Third Prize $1,000

Deadline for Applications: June 30, 2018
Deadline for Submitted Recordings: July 7, 2018
FINAL ROUND: September 29, 2018

About

The University of Michigan Organ Improvisation Competition seeks to identify and reward superior ability to improvise, particularly as it is relevant to sacred worship services from various traditions.

The competition is open to persons of any age, and is not limited to citizens of the United States. A first-place winner of a U-MOIC is not eligible to compete the following year.

Three persons will be selected to compete in the final round of the competition at the 58th Conference on Organ Music in Ann Arbor on September 29, 2018.

The criteria for judging will be thematic development, musical form, stylistic consistency, control of harmonic language, rhythmic interest and effective use of the instrument.

Contact information: Dr. Kola Owolabi <kolaowo@umich.edu>
**General Rules**

The competition is open to persons of any age, and is not limited to citizens of the United States. A first-place winner of a U-MOIC is not eligible to compete the following year.

In the Preliminary Round the applicant shall submit a recording of the requested improvisation witnessed by a Proctor and a Recording Engineer. The recording must be received by July 7, 2018. (See Preliminary Round below).

In the final round three finalists will be selected and notified by July 25 to compete on Saturday September 29, 2018 at the 58th Conference on Organ Music. The competition will be held on the III/42 Schoenstein organ at the First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor.

The criteria for judging will be thematic development, musical form, stylistic consistency, control of harmonic language, rhythmic interest and effective use of the instrument.

**Preliminary Round**

**Responsibilities of the Applicant**

In the preliminary round the applicant will have 30 minutes of preparation time, without an instrument, to plan an improvisation in two segments, consisting of:

1. A set of variations on a hymn tune
2. A free improvisation on a given theme

Total performance time shall not exceed fifteen minutes.

- The applicant shall select a proctor who will preside at the recording session, and will return one copy of the recording to the competition committee.

- The applicant shall obtain a recording engineer to record the preliminary round. The recording engineer will prepare one continuous and unedited copy of the recording, which may be submitted either in CD format, or electronically via e-mail.

- The applicant may use an organ of his/her choice, but the instrument must be a pipe organ.

- The applicant will be responsible for any recording fees and postage.

**Responsibilities of the Proctor**

- The proctor will receive the improvisation themes from the Competition Committee and will not share any information about the themes with the applicant or with anyone else before the recording session.
The proctor will present the themes for improvisation to the applicant. The applicant will have 30 minutes of preparation time, without an instrument.

The proctor and the recording engineer shall both be in attendance for the entire recording session. No other persons beside the applicant, proctor and recording engineer are permitted in the room.

The proctor will return one copy of the recording to: Kola Owolabi, Associate Professor of Organ, University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance, E. V. Moore Building, 1100 Baits Drive, Ann Arbor, MI, 48109.

Recordings may also be submitted electronically via e-mail to kolaowo@umich.edu
The recording must be received by July 7, 2018.

The proctor will affirm that these instructions have been followed.

Responsibilities of the Recording Engineer

The recording engineer shall record the applicant’s performance and shall either prepare one copy in CD format properly labeled and playable on standard equipment, or a digital recording that can be submitted by e-mail and played on a PC or Mac computer.

The recording engineer and the proctor shall both be in attendance for the entire recording session. No other persons beside the applicant, proctor and recording engineer are permitted in the room.

The recording engineer must ensure that the recording is of high quality, continuous, unedited and free from background noise.

Final Round

The final round will be held on Saturday, September 29 in a public session on the III/42 Schoenstein organ at the First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor. Each finalist will have thirty minutes alone in a room without an instrument to prepare an improvisation in two segments, consisting of:

1. A set of variations on a hymn tune
2. A free improvisation on a given theme

Total performance time shall not exceed twenty minutes.

The winners will be announced at the conclusion of the public competition.

Contact information: Dr. Kola Owolabi <kolaowo@umich.edu>