



Elsie M. Bennett Composition Competition
Sponsored by the American Accordionists' Association
2026 Entry Form

NAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ COUNTRY: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: Home: _____ Mobile: _____

TITLE OF COMPOSITION: _____

DURATION OF COMPOSITION in minutes and any remaining seconds: _____

CATEGORY of ENTRY (pick only one): () Junior (up to age 18) or () Open Division (any age)

This is to confirm that the composition I am submitting for this contest has 1) not received any prize of any description or level in any past music composition contest (AAA or other) of any sort, 2) is not a resubmission of a past AAA composition contest, and 3) is not presently posted on any social media platform that might be accidentally encountered by the contest judges (and thus be disqualified because names and images of contestants are barred from the judges during judging period).

Signed (name of contestant) _____ Date _____

Send the following items to the address below:

1) Completed Entry Form

2) **\$25 Fee** (payable, if preferred, via the AAA webpage store, <http://www.ameraccord.com/cart.aspx> ; see under "Competition Entry" heading)

3) **2 hard copies of your composition if by post; or just 1 copy as a PDF via email.** Remove your name, age, or any other personal information from your music manuscript since judges are not allowed to know who the contestants are or anything else about them during the adjudication period.

4) **2 USB sound recordings** of your piece if by mail; **or**, if via email, just **1 mp3 sound recording**. Playback tracks from electronic notation programs such as Finale or Sibelius are also acceptable if a live performance is not possible. **Do NOT send mp4s or any other form of video** since judges are barred from names or images of contestants before or during judging period.

Send to: Elsie M. Bennett Composition Competition
Joanna Darrow, c/o Acme Accordion School
322 Haddon Ave.
Haddon Township, NJ 08108, USA; or
E-Mail: acmeaccordion@gmail.com

DEADLINE: Entries must be received by **May 12, 2026**. Entries from outside the USA should allow at least two weeks for delivery. Be sure to read and follow all rules of the contest (next page) prior to entering.

SIGNATURE of Contestant: _____ DATE: _____



Elsie M. Bennett Composition Competition

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Purpose: The general purpose of this competition is to add to the contemporary concert repertoire of the accordion.

The composition may be a solo or a chamber work with other instruments of the composer's choosing. The contestant will find it helpful to study *The Composer's Guide to the Piano Accordion* on our website at <http://www.ameraccord.com/commissions/ComposersGuide.pdf>; hear some performances of AAA commissioned works at www.ameraccord.com/aaacommissions.php; read special articles about these works at <http://www.ameraccord.com/aaacommissions2.php>; and listen to some of our past composition winners at <http://www.ameraccord.com/bennett.php>

Awards: There will be a first-place award available in both the Open and the Junior Categories. A second-place award is sometimes possible in the Open category based on merit and available funding for any given year. The AAA reserves the right to grant **no** awards based on the quality of submitted entries and the number of competitors for either category. A cash award in the amount of \$500 will be presented to the first-place winner in the Open Division, and a cash award in the amount of \$250 will be presented to the first-place winner in the Junior Division or the second-place winner of the Open Division (again, based on quality and available funding).

Judging: A panel of prominent accordionists and composers will be assembled by the AAA to judge all submissions. The decision of the judges will be final.

Competition Rules:

1. Entry fee of \$25 must accompany each submission.
2. Open to composers as follows:
 - Junior Category - up to the age of 18. The length of the submission must be a minimum of 32 measures and a maximum of 3 minutes in length of performance.
 - Open Category – all ages. The length of the submission must be a minimum of 1 ½ minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes.
3. All levels must be notated either in hard copy or computer-generated form by the entrant. Entrant **MUST** send 2 copies of the score if in hard copy, and 2 copies of a recording of the music if either or both are sent by post, specified as follows:
 - (USB drive, or mp3). If the submitted score is a notation program file (such as Finale or Sibelius), an mp3 conversion of the file may be submitted online or on USB drive (2 copies) if by post in lieu of a recording of a live performance if such is not possible.

DO NOT SUBMIT A VIDEO OF A LIVE PERFORMACE BY OR INCLUDING THE CONTESTANT. For the sake of objectivity, neither names nor visual images of contestants are revealed to judges prior to their submission of final contest scorings and placements.
4. 1st place winners from the previous AAA competitions are not eligible to submit entries.
5. If there is only one (1) entry received in either division that competition will be postponed until the next year and the entry will automatically be placed in the following year's competition free of entry charges.

Winning Compositions will receive:

1. The opportunity to have the music performed at the AAA Festival. Some accommodations may be provided by the AAA for visiting composers or performers of winning works. If any catastrophic condition, such as the recent COVID pandemic, pre-emps a live gathering for the annual AAA Festival in the future, a virtual event may be set instead to serve the purpose of publicizing the winners and hearing their works, as was done between 2021 and 2022. The composer, if an accordionist, may elect to personally perform the work, select someone else who can do so, or request the AAA to select a performer, be it live at a Festival or just recorded and made available to hear on the AAA website.
2. Announcements in various AAA publications and the Accordions Worldwide website. In addition, the mp3 or mp4 of the music as well as the first page of the score for viewing will be posted on the AAA website. Composers' contact information will be included so that those who are interested in playing the music may purchase copies from them personally.

Submission requirements in addition to those listed on the Entry Form:

1. Each composer may enter only ONE category.
2. No more than one composition may be submitted by one composer.
3. The submitted composition must NOT have won any prize of any description or placement in any other composition contest of any type anywhere in the world at any time and, if so, would therefore not be submissible in either of the AAA composition contest categories.
4. Handwritten scores must be legible. Convert scores done on a music publishing program such as Finale or Sibelius to a PDF file.
5. Composer's name, age, or image must **NOT** appear on the score or any form of recording that is submitted. Supply only the name of the composition and the category entered.

DEADLINE for entries: May 12, 2026 -- Winners will be notified by email on or about **August 1, 2026**.