

Competitions Return to The Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration 2022

After two years of life altered by the pandemic, **in person** Competitions, Artistry Performances and Evaluations will return to the Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration in 2022!

As some may recall, the first Accordion Celebration was a competition only which reflected its deep roots in accordion study throughout the Pacific Northwest. Times have changed for certain and “competition” is less important today than it was sixty or more years ago. Students still gain valuable experience from the focus and discipline required to polish a piece for competition. Because of that, it’s important to keep providing the opportunity to compete for our young (and young-at-heart) accordionists. The Competition will take place at LIAC 2022 just as was planned in 2019 and 2020. The usual categories will remain in place: Leavenworth Open, Classical Open, Old-Time Open, Duets Open, Diatonic Open, and Bands/Ensembles will all be *open* categories with no restrictions on age or professional status. The amateur categories will be Variety 1, 2, 3, and 4, as well as Amateur Classical. Each of the Variety categories will be graded by age.

There are also non-competitive categories along with the more traditional competitive categories. Today’s accordionists want the same opportunities for focus and preparation that comes from preparing a piece for competition. For those players we have the Accordion Artistry categories, one for adults and one for students under 18. The Artistry categories allow musicians to perform publically and get the same focus and preparation as a competitor but *without* the competitive ranking. Additionally for players who are looking for the same kind of critical feedback from adjudicators that normally comes in the competitions but without the stress of competition or public performance, we have the Evaluation category. Participants in that category can sit down and perform in front of a panel of adjudicators just like competitors do but *without* the pressure of being on stage or being ranked against others in their category. The Evaluations provide meaningful, useful, written comments about each participant’s playing. The sessions are much like short, one-on-one lessons with the panel of judges and give students a valuable outside opinion on their playing.

It’s our sincere hope that one of the various Competitive, Artistry, or Evaluation categories will meet the needs of today’s accordionists. Much thought and work has been given to try and put together a festival that will both uplift the public’s image of the accordion as a musical instrument and provide opportunities for accordionists to learn and engage with each other. Please take some time and look at our website, <http://www.accordioncelebration.org> and review the rules of the various categories and find the one in which you can get the most value from participating. Participating in LIAC performance opportunities makes for the best

possible accordion celebration. With all the varied options possible for 2022 there's sure to be a category where you can play and have a fantastic experience. Participate, *for the love of the accordion!*