



## **Fingerstyle Collective Guitar LIVE Competition Rules**

Effective January 1, 2020

**NO PURCHASE OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. A PURCHASE OF SPONSOR PRODUCTS WILL NOT IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING**

**SPONSORS:** The Fingerstyle Collective Music Competition (the “Competition”) is sponsored by: Fretmonkey, Candyrat Records, Mayson Guitars, University of Arkansas, Stonebridge Guitars International, Tonewood Amp, Elite Acoustics Amplifiers, D’Addario, and others noted on the event website and is subject to the following terms and conditions.

The Fingerstyle Collective Guitar Festival is partially funded by the Fingerstyle Collective International Foundation, a nonprofit public charity which promotes, supports, and encourages the sharing of world music culture in the fingerstyle guitar artform by way of live performances and teaching workshops.

**Contestants can apply for either the Fingerstyle Collective LIVE Competition or the Fingerstyle Collective ONLINE Competition, but cannot apply for both competitions during the same year. If an applicant submits to both competitions during the same year, by default the submission will only be considered in the Online Competition category and no refund will be given for additional submission categories. Previous Fingerstyle Collective LIVE Competition Grand Prize Winners (1<sup>st</sup> Place) cannot re-apply, however previous Semi-finalists (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winners) in the LIVE Competition, as well as previous Fingerstyle Collective applicants may re-apply. LIVE Competition Grand Prize Winners (1<sup>st</sup> Place) are eligible to apply for the ONLINE Competition in subsequent years.**

**TIMING:** LIVE contest begins on January 1, 2020, Entries must be received by 11:59am (PST) on June 5, 2020 to be eligible. Winners will be announced at the LIVE competition taking place on September 12, 2020 at Camp Mitchell in Morrilton, Arkansas. Online competition registration is \$50 USD.



## **I. Rules and Restrictions**

### **A. Eligibility**

1. The Fingerstyle Collective Guitar Competition is open to any member of the worldwide guitar community with the few exceptions listed below.
  - a) *Staff members or founding artists of FRETMONKEY RECORDS*
  - b) *Staff members or labeled artists of CandyRat Records*
  - c) *Sponsors of the festival*
  - d) *Performing as a billed or paid entertainer or workshop leader at the same event*
  - e) *An Entrant (Individual) must be sixteen (16) years of age or older at the time of entry, and possess a valid form of identification (no top age limit). An Entrant under the age of eighteen (18) shall require parental consent to participate due to international travel involved in prize winnings. The Contest is open to Non-Professional & Semi-Professional Musicians of all nationalities. An Entrant may not be a Professional Musician and may not be signed to any major label with world-wide distribution. Professional Musicians are defined as a musician who is making 100% of his/her living from professional music endeavors such as teaching music lessons (i.e. 30-60 full time students); touring full-time with a band; doing session work full-time (records, t.v., film, commercials, pit orchestras, etc). For example, if an applicant teaches a few students or does some gigs, shows and sessions, they would not be considered a Professional Musician. We realize it is subjective defining what a Non-Professional or Semi-Professional is but we are providing some general definitions for guidance. The qualifications of a Non-Professional Musician will ultimately be at the discretion of the Fingerstyle Collective Management Team.*

## **B. Instruments and Gear**

1. Contestants must bring their own guitar(s) for their performances and remain solely responsible for their instruments.
2. Contestants **MUST** use a steel string or nylon string acoustic guitar.
3. Any number of strings and string configurations will be accepted. *(6-string, 7-string, 8-string, 12-string, baritone, harp guitar, etc. are all allowed.)*
4. Contestants **MUST NOT** use anything except their fingers to play their guitar. The only exceptions are a thumbpick that is attached to the player's thumb, or a slide placed over a player's finger. *Flat picks, E-Bows, violin bows, chopsticks, etc. are not allowed.*
5. Contestants **MUST NOT** use any non-stringed instrument that attaches to their guitar. *Kalimbas, harmonicas, MIDI devices, etc. are not allowed.*
6. Contestants **MUST NOT** use any amplification, or outboard effects to enhance their performances. *Looping, digital delay, overdrive, modulation, etc. are not allowed.*

## **C. Repertoire**

1. Competitors must come prepared to perform three different pieces of music. (Two for the semi-final live round, and one for the finals.) You may use the same piece from your audition video during the live performance part of the competition.
2. The pieces may be original compositions, arrangements, and/or covers.

## **II. Registration – Ends June 5, 2020 @ 11:59 PM (Pacific Standard Time).**

### **A. Application**

1. Visit [www.fingerstylecollective.com](http://www.fingerstylecollective.com) to complete the application form.
2. Submit your audition video by entering the URL within the application form. See "Preliminary Round" section for information on video requirements.
3. Submit \$50 registration fee.
  - a) *The registration fee is non-refundable, without exception.*
  - b) *Registration will only be considered complete once payment has been made and accepted, and the online application form has been completed. After your registration is complete, you will receive an email confirmation.*

- c) *Please note that if you are selected to participate in the live Guitar Competition, you are required to purchase a concert festival ticket or be registered for the instructional guitar camp. You do not have to attend the entire festival to participate in the competition nor do you have to register for the instructional guitar camp. You are only required to have a concert festival ticket and be present in person on Saturday, September 12, 2020 (the day of the competition).*
  - d) *If you are an international competitor and your form of payment is not accepted on the registration website, please contact us by email at [festival@fretmonkeyrecords.com](mailto:festival@fretmonkeyrecords.com) to arrange an alternate form of payment.*
4. Await confirmation email ensuring that your application has been received and payment is complete.

### **III. Preliminary Round Judging**

#### **A. Audition Video Submission**

1. Only one video may be submitted for consideration of Semi-Final participation.
2. The description in the video must contain the applicant's name.
3. The performance in your video may be an original composition, an arrangement, or a cover.
4. The performance in your video may be live or static.
5. The length of the video must not exceed five minutes. Any submission over five minutes will not be considered.
6. The video and audio should be of the highest quality possible, but it need not be at a professional-level production value.
7. The video must not contain product placements or other commercial intent.
8. If submitting your video via a hosting service like YouTube, please ensure that your video's privacy is not set to "Private". We will not be able to see your video and your entry will be invalid.

#### **B. Competitor Selection**

1. All entries will be viewed and evaluated by a panel of independent and credible judges. Semi-Finalists will be selected and notified via email by June 15, 2020 to ensure selected competitors have ample time to secure visas and make travel arrangements.
2. To ensure a competitive and highly diverse competition showcasing the world's best talent, up to 50 competitors may be selected to compete at the Live Competition.

**C. Competitor Notification**

1. Semi-Finalists will be notified of their selection and invited to participate in the live competition taking place on September 12, 2020 at Camp Mitchell in Morrilton, Arkansas.

**IV. Live Semi-Final Round - September 14, 2020 @ 8:30 AM (Central Standard Time)**

**A. Registration**

1. If you are selected to participate in the live Guitar Competition as a Semi-Finalist, you are required to purchase a festival ticket.
  - a) *Tickets can be purchased at on the home page of the festival website.*
  - b) *An instructional guitar camp registration, which includes festival admission, will also qualify you for admission into the festival.*
  - c) *You do not have to attend the entire festival to participate in the competition, nor do you have to register for the instructional guitar camp. You are only required to have a festival ticket and be present on the day of the live competition.*

**B. Orientation**

1. Semi-Finalists must be present at the contest stage at 8:30 AM to draw competitor numbers for their order of appearance and receive final instructions.
2. If you are not present at the 8:30 AM orientation, you are subject to disqualification.
3. Semi-Finalists will be given a refresher on the rules and allowed to ask the competition organizer any questions they may have about the competition rules at this time.

**C. Semi-Final Round Competition**

1. The live competition will begin at 9:00 AM (CST). Competitors will perform in front of a public audience.
2. If more than 30 semi-finalists are selected to compete at the live competition, competitors will be divided into two groups and will compete in two separate rooms by two different sets of judges. The top five competitors will be announced in each room and will form the top 10 who will compete against one another in the final round.
3. We will begin the competition performances with the competitor who drew the number 1 at the orientation.

4. It is the responsibility of the competitor to be stage-side when their number is called. The Competition Host will not be able to search out and locate competitors who are not where they need to be and as such could risk potential disqualification.
5. To minimize potential bias, competitors will not be referred to by their names. They will be referred to by the number they drew at the orientation. (Competitor #1, Competitor #2, etc.)
6. All contestants will perform acoustically into the same condenser microphone. The microphone will be set up by a qualified in-house audio engineer for each contestant who can chose to perform sitting on a chair, sitting on a stool, or standing up with a strap.
7. Competitors will not be allowed to speak into the microphone.
8. Only one instrument can be used in the Semi-Final round performances. In the interest of time, we ask that contestants come to the stage with their guitar tuned up and ready to play the first song. Retuning between songs is allowed.
9. Competitors must perform two separate instrumental pieces in the Live Semi-Final round. They must be performed with a break in between, not as a continuous medley, so the judges know to view them as separate pieces.
10. Total recommended playing time is approximately 5-6 minutes. This is a soft rule that serves as guidance for an efficient competition. We ask that you stay within this timeframe as best you can without compromising the integrity of your arrangement. Competitors will not be disqualified or penalized for going slightly over.
11. After finishing their performances, players must exit the stage, again without speaking.
12. Finalists will be notified of their selection verbally by the competition host.

**D. Judging**

1. Competitors' performances will be judged by a different panel of experts and/or renowned artists who do not have access to scores from the preliminary round.
2. Closed-circuit audio from the stage microphone will be sent to a secluded area where the judging panel is located. The judges will only be able to hear the competitors' performances. They will not be able to see them, or even know their names.
3. So that we may judge the contest objectively and equally, the criteria with assigned weight values is suggested to be considered by the judges:

- a) **ARRANGEMENT** (40 Points) – Contestant’s version of the tune selected. Difficulty and originality will be considered.
- b) **EXECUTION, TUNING** (40 Points) – Fingering, picking, and dynamics will be considered.
- c) **SHOW VALUE** (10 Points) – Would the music resonate with an audience (appeal)? Contribute to the genre of fingerstyle guitar?
- d) **OVERALL IMPRESSION** (10 Points) – Is it innovative? Progressive? Modern? Well executed? (In other words; Does it stand out in some way?)

**V. Final Round - Begins as soon as Finalists have been selected**

**A. Notification**

Finalists will be notified of their selection for the final round of competition immediately after the judges have made their decisions as to who the top ten competitors in the semi-final round are.

**B. Final Round Competition**

1. Final round start time is subjective, depending on how long the semi-final round takes to complete. The final round will begin shortly after the semi-final round ends (approximately around 3 PM).
2. The procedure for performances will be the same as the semi-final round with the following exceptions:
  - a) Final round performances will begin with the chosen finalist that has the lowest number as selected at the orientation and the performance order will be determined sequentially.
  - b) Only one piece will be performed in the final round, not two. It must be a piece that was not performed in the semi-final round. It may also be performed on a different qualifying instrument, if desired.

**C. Judging**

1. The procedure for judging will be the same as the semi-final round. Once the judges have made their decisions, the results will be announced in the awards ceremony immediately following the competition.
2. The top five places will be awarded prizes according to the prize allocation schedule.

**VI. Legal**

**A. Consent**

1. Participation in the Fingerstyle Collective Guitar Competition implies the full and clear adherence to these rules, the waiver of all rights and recourse in respect of the submission procedures, their results and the awarding of prizes, and in respect of any physical or material damage sustained by the candidate either during the performances or when traveling to said performances.
2. By entering this competition, you agree that the notification methods stated herein are sufficient to give you notice in the event that you are chosen to advance.
3. If any semi-finalist fails to respond by agreeing via email to participate in the next level of the competition within seven (7) days of notification, then that competitor forfeits their right to participate further in this competition. Any runners-up will be notified via email within two (2) business days of the day that any candidate fails to respond or declines the invitation to compete in the next level of competition. If a semi-finalist declines the invitation to compete, then the candidate who received the next-highest final score in the video submission will be invited to compete.
4. The Organizer reserves the exclusive right to record, photograph, or disseminate in any manner whatsoever.

**B. Disclaimers**

1. Contestants are responsible for their own travel, visas, hotel accommodations, and expenses for the competition taking place at the Fingerstyle Collective Guitar Festival. Transportation options to and from the airport are available and are listed on the festival's registration website (under camp registration).
2. Any candidate who fails to abide by the Fingerstyle Collective Guitar Competition Rules & Regulations may be disqualified.
3. Any application form found to contain false or inaccurate information may result in the candidate's disqualification.
4. Although unlikely, should any **prize** be unavailable, a prize of similar value or specification will be substituted. Supplementary non-cash prizes may be announced at a later date.
5. Any applicable fees, tax, and assessment liabilities incurred by prize winners including Value Added Tax (VAT) imposed by prize winner's country of residence, shipping of prizes, visa fees to participate in a prize associated with travel, or any related expense not included in the prize is the responsibility of the prize winner.

### C. **ESTA and Visas for International Travelers**

1. It is the responsibility of the competitor to obtain any required travel documentation and/or travel visa to enter the United States. Please note: If you are traveling from a country that is part of the Visa Waiver Program, you are not required to request a letter of invitation from us. Instead, [register for your Electronic System for Travel Authorization \(ESTA\)](#) approval prior to travel. If your country of residence is not part of the ESTA program, you will need to apply for a USA **B2 Tourist Visa**.
2. Only competitors and those attending the instructional guitar camp can request a Fingerstyle Collective Guitar Festival letter of invitation.
3. If selected to compete in the live competition, you may request your letter of invitation from Fingerstyle Collective Guitar Festival no later than June 30, 2020 when confirming your attendance at the live competition since the visa application process can take longer than expected. Requests made after this date will still be accepted. Please note that it can take from 3 to 90 days to get an appointment at a US Embassy, depending on your country of residence. We strongly encourage you to secure your appointment at your local US Embassy as soon as possible.
4. Applicants may email [mark@fretmonkeyrecords.com](mailto:mark@fretmonkeyrecords.com) for any questions related to visas, entry into the United States, or the competition rules.

### **Other**

Sponsors reserve the right to reject any entry that they deem in their sole discretion to be vulgar, profane, offensive, or inappropriate. All decisions of the judges are final. Sponsors reserve the right to modify these Official Rules for clarification purposes without materially affecting the term and conditions of the Contest. Failure to enforce any term of these Official Rules shall not constitute a waiver of that provision.

CONDITIONS: Neither the Sponsors nor their respective agencies or affiliates are responsible for lost, late, damaged, destroyed, delayed, stolen, misdirected, incomplete entries, or for lost, interrupted or unavailable network, server or other connections, miscommunications, failed telephone or computer hardware or software or other technical failures, unauthorized human intervention, garbled or jumbled transmissions or other errors of any kind, whether human, mechanical or electronic, including without limitation, the incorrect or inaccurate capture of entry information online regardless of cause. Sponsors reserve the right, at their sole discretion, to cancel, suspend, or modify the Contest if it becomes corrupted in any manner such that it cannot be conducted as originally planned and, in such event, to select winners from all eligible entries received prior to and/or after (if appropriate) the action taken by Sponsors. In such event, Sponsors shall have no liability to any Entrant who is disqualified due to such an action. **ANY ATTEMPT BY ANY PERSON TO DELIBERATELY DAMAGE THE WEBSITE OR**

ONLINE ENTRY SYSTEM, OR UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMATE OPERATION OF THE CONTEST IS IN VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS AND IF SUCH AN ATTEMPT BE MADE, SPONSORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO SEEK REMEDIES AND DAMAGES FROM ANY SUCH PERSON TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW, INCLUDING CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.

LAW: The Contest is subject to all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Void where prohibited or restricted. All issues and questions concerning the construction, validity, interpretation, and enforceability of these Official Rules, or the rights and obligations of Entrants or Sponsor in connection with any award, shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with the laws of, the State of Arkansas, without regard to conflict of law principles. Any cause of action by you with respect to the offer (and/or any information, products or services related thereto) must be instituted within one (1) year after the cause of action arose or be forever waived and barred. All actions shall be subject to the limitations set forth above. The language in these Official Rules shall be interpreted as in accordance with its fair meaning and not strictly for or against either party. All legal proceedings arising out of or in connection with the Contest or these Official Rules shall be brought solely in Faulkner County, Arkansas. You expressly submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of said courts and consent to extraterritorial service of process.