

Dear Isabelle Xiaoyi Ji,

Congratulations! We are delighted to inform you that you are awarded **Second Place with Special Honours and Distinction** at the Red Maple Keyboard Competition, Junior Category, 13 - 14 years old, for James P. Johnson, Over the Bars.

Here are the comments from our judges:

Congratulations on a wonderful performance of James Johnson's piece. You have great technique, and I can certainly tell that you enjoy playing this piece a lot! There are many good things I would like to highlight in your performance. You did a fantastic job playing big leaps in the left hand clean, maintaining a steady pulse and keeping healthy movement in your hand and wrist. Nice work! There are a few quite challenging sections — melodic lines in octaves, big jumps, dotted and syncopated rhythms — that you easily managed to make sound smooth and seamless for the listener. I have a few things to suggest that might move your performance to the next level and be helpful for further practice. The piece is clearly divided into a few sections; each highlights a slightly different texture. I recommend differentiating each section to find its own character. This will help keep the entertaining character of the whole composition. Keep an eye on transitions between sections; those usually set the next mood. Speaking of transitions, make tempo changes more clear. All ritenuto and accelerando must be thought through and executed with a clear plan. If you want to slow down, make sure to come back to the original tempo right away. The intention and clarity behind ritenuto and accelerando should have a purpose; otherwise it may sound as if you just lost the pulse for a moment. So make sure to keep your intentions in transitions clear. Lastly, make ornaments a part of your melodic line. Even if they are quick, they can add to the character if treated as part of the melody. Don't run them through as just a quick set of notes — make every note in the ornament expressive and significant. Overall, very solid performance and I enjoyed it a lot. Keep up the good work!

Please find your Certificate on the website. If you indicated that you have a teacher and/or an accompanist, their Certificates are also on the website. For your convenience all certificates are in PDF for printing and JPG for posting on social media. Please download the certificates within next two months.

We are thrilled to inform you that you are invited to perform at the Winners' Recital and the Award Ceremony that will be held in Toronto, Canada, in Summer, 2026.

We will send more details regarding the registration, the exact dates, and the venue later. Please, always check your spam/junk email folder to do not miss any important information.

Please register for the recital at the following link by October 30th, 2025:

<https://www.pulsar-music.com/recitals>

Payments after the deadline will not be accepted due to the high volume of participants. Please note that the recital registration fees are not refundable and can not be substituted.

Please find your performance information below:

1. James P. Johnson, Over the Bars (2 minutes 2 seconds) will be listed in the recital program as your performance repertoire. If you need to change your piece please contact us at info@pulsar-music.com no later than one month prior the event date. The repertoire change is available for an extra fee and the duration of the new piece must be no longer than the original piece duration.
2. If you need an official invitation letter from the Competition to apply for the visa, you may provide this letter.

We are looking forward to seeing you in Toronto! In addition, Pulsar Music is happy to invite all Winners' Recital and Award Ceremony participants, their teachers, and family members to join us at other social events after the recital date, such as a trip to Niagara Falls and the Toronto Aquarium.

Sincerely,
Dr. Ekaterina Paniukova, CEO of Pulsar Music

Red Maple Music Competition
Website: <https://www.pulsar-music.com/>
Email: info@pulsar-music.com

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