ATTENTION OF THE MUSIC WORLD will be focused on the University and Fort Worth in September when the first Van Cliburn Piano Competition will be held here.

Pianists between the ages of 17 and 28 from all corners of the earth will compete for prizes totaling $17,250. The $10,000 first prize, the largest ever offered in such a competition, is being given by the National Guild of Piano Teachers.

Sponsoring the Competition with the University and the Guild are the Fort Worth Piano Teachers Forum and Chamber of Commerce.

International contest chairman is Mrs. Grace Ward Lankford, co-founder and president of the Piano Teachers Forum.

Entries have been received by Mrs. Lankford from North and South America, Europe and Asia. In several countries cultural foundations have assumed the job of choosing and sponsoring their country's entries by means of national competitions.

Although they must assume their own financial responsibility for the trip to and from Fort Worth, foreign contestants will be met at east and west coast ports of entry by qualified interpreters and guides.

Once they are in Fort Worth, housing and entertainment will be arranged for the candidates by the International Women's Club.

In addition to the monetary rewards, the winning artists will receive other prizes. Several symphony orchestras have agreed to present the first prize winner in concert and he is assured of professional concert management to be arranged by Sol Hurok of Hurok Attractions. This management will cover performances in Latin America, Canada, the United States and her possessions.

Concert engagements will take an international tone as Wilfrid Van Wyck, a London concert agent, will present the first place winner in a concert with a major symphony orchestra in Royal Festival Hall, London, and will also manage a European concert tour.

Also Senator Louis Sandi, minister of music of the Republic of Mexico, has advised the competition sponsors that the winner will be presented with the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico in the autumn of 1962 or spring, 1963, at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico. That country chose their representative in late April by means of a national competition.

A jury composed of nine of the world's most eminent performing artists will judge the competition. Serge Saxe, composer, critic and president of the Fort Worth Opera Association, will serve as chairman.

The competition will consist of preliminary tests, semifinal round and the finals. All playing sessions will be held in Ed Landreth Auditorium and will be public. The prize winners will present a concert at the end of the final judging.

Milton Katims, conductor of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra since 1954, will direct the Fort Worth Symphony during the finals of the Competition. An orchestral instrumentalist and one of America's finest violinists, he was invited by Arturo Toscanini to be first desk player and assistant conductor of the NBC Symphony Orchestra. At Toscanini's retirement, Katims conducted the orchestra for seven years. He has often appeared as violinist with the Budapest and New York quartets.

The executive committee of the Competition includes Chancellor M. E. Sadler, Dr. Irl Allison, founder and president, the National Guild of Piano Teachers; Raymond Buck, president, the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce; Saxe; and Mrs. Lankford. Lorin Boswell is chairman of the planning committee.

Founders of the Competition foresee that it will become a permanent landmark in the world of culture to be held in Fort Worth every four years.

Mrs. Lankford and Van Cliburn