

## 2020 BOVICELLI Competition

### International Singers' Competition on the Diminution Practices of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries

In 2020, the Schloss Weißenbrunn Stiftung [Weißenbrunn Castle Foundation] is organising the first competition for singers on the diminution practices of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The focus of this year's competition will be Giovanni Battista Bovicelli, the person after whom the competition is named, who taught a new style of embellishment at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. His treatise, *Regole, passaggi di musica*, gives today's singers a lively insight into the performance practices of the Renaissance and early Baroque periods. The competition aims to challenge singers to engage with these topics.

Great music is waiting to be discovered, and this is where the roots of virtuoso solo singing can be found. Studying and practising diminution will also further a deeper understanding of Baroque coloratura and its execution.

The idea for this competition sprang from the consideration that at the moment musicians have one precious commodity in abundance: time. This topic needs time, and in everyday concert life this is often hard to find. Time for studying the theory, but also time for practising. As Caccini said: "This art admitteth no Mediocrity, and how much the more curiosities are in it, by reason of the excellence thereof, with so much the more labour and love ought we, the Professors thereof to find them out." (Nuove musiche, Florence 1601/2)

As gatherings in person are not currently possible, the competition will be staged virtually, in the form of **video contributions** to be published on the Foundation's website and on YouTube.

**The literature list**, from which each participant may choose **one** work, starts with diminutions for motets and madrigals written out by Bovicelli and his contemporaries. Here, various personal styles may be studied.

For all those who have not previously engaged intensively with this topic, the selection of early Baroque works with diminutions added by their composers will constitute a good introduction, as well as providing a wealth of interesting works worth exploring in depth.

A **Special Award** is offered for a singer's own diminutions. This year this is called the **Bovicelli Award** since the diminutions should be sung in the style of Bovicelli. There is a choice of two works as the basis for singers' own diminutions: a motet by Victoria and a chanson by Lasso. Josué Meléndez, in his video, will explain the approach and the criteria for this Special Award. It is possible to apply for the Special Award in addition to the other Award.

Due to the continued contact ban, this year we have decided to provide **accompaniment recordings** for all works. We are aware of the fact that under normal circumstances a continuo player would follow the singer, and that music only really comes to life in this joint music making. But since currently many singers will lack a continuo player, a recording is a compromise, which might have a silver lining: it is always available for rehearsing.

The free software [www.audacity.de](http://www.audacity.de) offers singers a good possibility to adapt tempo and pitch to their own needs. The mp3 files of our recordings may be individually adjusted and played using this software.

For practising and studying the topic in depth, we recommend the Passaggi App: [www.passaggi.co.uk](http://www.passaggi.co.uk). All accompaniment recordings for the selected works will be uploaded to this app, and may be individually adjusted, both in tempo and in pitch. This app is available for iOS and Android smartphones.

Participants do not have to use the accompaniment recordings which we offer. Competition entries may also be submitted using singers' own accompaniment.

The Musikakademie website provides a wealth of information for theoretical and practical engagement with the topic of diminutions. This may serve as an orientation for preparation. In future, we plan to extend this page to provide a platform where ideas and information about diminution topics may be found and shared.

## LITERATURE SELECTION

The voice types indicated are only intended as an orientation—in the style of the time, they may of course be freely selected. The same applies to the pitch.

### Diminutions from Treatises of the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century

- Palestrina/ Bovicelli: *Io son ferito*
- de Rore/ Rognoni: *Ancor che col partire*
- de Rore/Bovicelli: *Ancor che col partire*
- de Rore/Bassano: *Ancor che col partire*
- de Rore/Dalla Casa: *Ancor che col partire*
- de Rore/Bovicelli: *Angelus ad Pastores*

### Early Baroque Works with Composed Diminutions

Soprano/tenor/mezzo:

- Palestrina/ Giovanni Battista Bovicelli: *Io son ferito*
- Giovanni Felice Sances: *O bone Jesu*
- Horatio Tarditi: *Plaudite cantate* (Please note: bar 91.3 in the original does not have a natural sign)
- Bartolomeo Barbarino: *In te Domine speravi* and *Ave Maria*, embellished versions (since the works are very short, the two count as one competition contribution)

Tenor/soprano:

- Antonio Brunelli: *O quam suavis*
- Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger: *Parce mihi*

Alto:

- Giovanni Antonio Rigatti: *O magnum Sacramentum*

Bass:

# Schloss Weißenbrunn Stiftung

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- Giovanni Felice Sances: *Jesu dulcis memoria*
- Giovanni Antonio Rigatti: *In voluntate tua*
- Giovanni Sances: *Dominus possedit me*

## **Bovicelli Award:**

Singer's own diminution in the style of Bovicelli for:

Tomás Luis de Victoria: *Magi viderunt stellam*

or

Orlando di Lasso: *Susanne un jour*

## **AWARD MONEY**

Frist prize: 3,000 € as well as an invitation to perform in the Schloss Weißenbrunn concert series

Second prize: 1,500 €

Third prize: 750 €

Audience Award: 500 €

## **Bovicelli Award**

3,000 € as well as an invitation to perform in the Schloss Weißenbrunn concert series

## **REGULATIONS**

Singers of any age may apply.

The competition entry comprises one work selected from the above literature list. The only exception: the two works by Barberino must be selected together and only constitute a competition entry together.

Singers may also apply for the Bovicelli Award, either exclusively or in addition to the other award.

The competition entry must be recorded live, unedited and presented as a video recording.

Music and accompaniment recordings are available for download on the website of the Musikakademie. The accompaniment recordings may be used, but singers do not have to use them. If singers want to use their own accompaniment, they may do so.

Recordings which have already been published as well as concert recordings etc. are not admissible as competition entries.

The competition entry must be submitted in video format, unedited, via Wetransfer or similar platforms to the Schloss Weißenbrunn Stiftung:

**info@schloss-weissenbrunn.de**. Reference: Competition Entry Schloss Weißenbrunn Stiftung  
Please provide name, address, work performed, short CV including date of birth, and details of bank account.

**Deadline for submissions is 20 May 2020.**

If your entry is accepted, the Schloss Weißenbrunn Stiftung will publish it as a competition entry on the Musikakademie website and on YouTube.

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The **names of the winners** will be **published** on the Schloss Weißenbrunn Stiftung website on **03 June 2020**. Following this, the award money will be transferred to the bank account named. Winners of the first prizes will in addition get the opportunity to perform in the Schloss Weißenbrunn concert series. Details and conditions for these concerts will be clarified in a personal conversation.

The audience award will go to the video which has most likes. Deadline for this: 02 June, 6 p.m.

## VIDEO RECORDING

We recommend playing the continuo recording via loudspeaker or computer and making the video recording, including sound recording using a mobile phone or similar device. We attach great importance to the live character of the recording, and do not expect professional sound quality. Editing is not permissible. We recommend aiming for a well-balanced, nearly equal mix of singing voice and continuo. This may be achieved by choosing a location for the continuo device in close proximity to the singer, and by adjusting the device volume at a not-too-low level.

The quality of the recording is not an assessment criterion, but it should be such that the recording may be presented in public.

## JURY

Jürgen Banholzer. Organ, harpsichord, singer, musicologist

Thomas Boysen. Lute, theorbo, Baroque guitar. Munich and Würzburg Music Academies

Charles Daniels. Tenor

Josué Meléndez. Cornetto, recorder, diminution. Trossingen Music Academy

Catherine Motuz. Historic trombone. Schola Cantorum Basiliensis

Pia Praetorius. Conductor, music of the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Head of the foundation Schloss Weißenbrunn Stiftung

## CONTINUO RECORDINGS

Jürgen Banholzer, Thomas Boysen, Martin Erhardt and Maria Morózova-Meléndez

## ADVISERS

Ulrike Hofbauer. Singing. Schola Cantorum Basiliensis

Martin Erhardt. Historic improvisation, recorder, harpsichord. Weimar and Leipzig Music Academies

## THANKS

Special thanks to all those who have accompanied and supported the idea with their advice on its content: Josué Meléndez and Catherine Motuz for valuable help in preparing the competition, Ulrike Hofbauer for advice and thoughtful contributions, and Charles Daniels for his cooperation in recording Josué's Bovicelli video.

We would like to thank Dr Helen Roberts and Septenary Editions for all their help, for the generous provision of their Bovicelli edition and for the opportunity to use the Passaggi App for our competition.

Heartfelt thanks to Marco Gemmani and the edition <http://www.cantoressanctimarci.it> for making available free of charge the music used for the competition, comprising works by Sances, Tarditi

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and Rigatti. The website, in addition, boasts a fantastic wealth of works from the archives of San Marco.

Particular thanks to the continuo players, Jürgen Banholzer, Thomas Boysen, Martin Erhardt and Maria Morózova-Meléndez. It was a special challenge to record this music without singers, a process which cost some nerves and time, and which was an extraordinary experience for all involved. Even though joint music making was painfully missed, these recordings in their very varied styles are an inspiring example of the continuo practice *Beispiel für die Continuo Praxis dieser Zeit*.