

International Song Competition 2024

Friday 6 – Thursday 12 September 2024

2024 Repertoire And Selection Process, Rules, Practical Information And Application Process

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The Wigmore Hall/Bollinger International Song Competition has been established with the intention of reflecting, and in the hope of extending, awareness and appreciation of the richness of the song repertoire. German Lied occupies a pre-eminent place in the history of song, and for the purposes of this Competition, the Lieder of Schubert will be a compulsory part of certain rounds.

Every candidate must perform in English, French and German in the Preliminary and Semi-final rounds, and must also be able to show their abilities in a selection of other languages for the Final round.

The Jury will take into consideration the choice and variety of the songs and the balance of the programme.

Repertoire and Selection Process

Stage 1 - Selection Stage

Stage 1 is a pre-recorded audition to be judged by a special Selection Jury. Submissions must consist of three songs and must cover three languages (English, French and German only). The recorded auditions can only be submitted only as an MP3 or WAV file. No other format can be accepted. There is no restriction on the number or position of the microphones used for the audio recording, but the recording must be of professional quality and must not be edited or altered in any way. The recording should consist of ONE audio file containing all three songs, one complete take only for each song, i.e. The Competition advises applicants not to submit recordings made at a concert, as audience and other ambient noise can detract from the quality of the recording.

The programme for Stage 1 must last a maximum of 15 minutes and must consist of three songs only as follows:

- one Schubert Lied chosen from the list below;
- one song in English by a British composer;
- one song in French

Schubert Lieder (please choose ONE Lied):

An die Nachtigall D497

Auf dem See D543

Das Rosenband D280

Der Einsame D800

Der Neugierige (from Die Schöne Müllerin D795)

Der Schmetterling D633

Die Götter Griechenlands D677

Die Stadt (from Schwanengesang D957)

Geheimnis D491

Heimliches Lieben D922

Liebesbotschaft (from Schwanengesang D957)

Lied des gefangenen Jägers D843

Please note that the MP3 or WAV recording is the only part of the application materials that will be accessed by the Selection Jury during the Selection Stage. Members of the Selection Jury will listen 'blind' to all the submitted recordings and will not have access to any personal or biographical information or references. Please therefore ensure that the submitted recording is made under the best possible conditions, taking COVID19 restrictions into account. Applications will be judged solely on the quality of the recorded performance, and this is the only criterion that the Selection Jury will use.

Stages 2, 3 and 4 - Public Rounds

Stage 2 - Preliminary Round must consist of a programme which lasts a maximum of 15 minutes and which must include one song in each of three languages: one song in English written by a British composer, one song in French and one song in German. Songs in any other language will not be accepted. The programme must include at least one Lied by Schubert. You may include more than one song in any of the above three languages to make a programme of 15 minutes, as long as the time limit of 15 minutes is not exceeded.

Stage 3 - Semi-final must consist of a programme which lasts a maximum of 20 minutes and which must include song/s in English written by a British composer, song/s in French and song/s in German. Songs in any other language will not be accepted. The programme must include at least two Lieder by Schubert. You may include more than one song in French or English, or more than two in German, as long as the time limit of 20 minutes is not exceeded.

Stage 4 – Final Four competitors will each give a recital lasting a maximum of 30 minutes. The recital programme can consist of songs in any language but must include at least one song written after 1950. Please note that new commissions are not acceptable for the 'post-1950' category for the Final unless the Competition has commissioned them.

NB: Applicants **MUST NOT** repeat repertoire between any of the 4 stages, **including Stage 1 - Selection Stage.**

Please note that all songs for all Stages of the Competition must be published, i.e., all songs must be available in the public domain.

Please also note rule 15 – timings must be submitted with programmes. The overall timings for each Stage given above are for complete programmes including breaks. The jury reserves the right to penalise competitors who overrun.

Rules

1. The Competition will be held from **Saturday 7 – Wednesday 11 September 2024** inclusive at Wigmore Hall. Rehearsals at Wigmore Hall for the Preliminary Round will start on the afternoon of **Friday 6 September 2024**, after the Welcome Meeting which Competitors must attend.
 2. Applications open on **Monday 23 October 2023**; completed applications and recordings for the Selection Stage must reach the General Manager by **1.00pm UK (GMT) time on Thursday 28 March 2024**.
 3. Recordings must be recent, recorded on or after **Monday 23 October 2023**.
 4. Applications that arrive after the closing date, or that do not contain all the required material, or where the applicant has not paid the registration fee, will not be accepted.
 5. The recording for the Selection Stage must be certified by a recognised musician or the recording engineer as the recent work of the named performers. Competitors are advised to have the recording made professionally otherwise it may not do justice to their performance. The certification document must confirm the name and voice type of the singer, the name of the pianist, the repertoire on the recording and the date and place of recording; it must also be signed and dated by the recognised musician or recording engineer and NOT by either the singer or the pianist.
 6. The Competition is open to singers and pianists of all nationalities. Pianists will only be considered as part of a duo. Pianists may enter with more than one singer as long as both pianist and singer(s) meet the age criteria.
 7. Singers must be aged 33 years or under on **Saturday 7 September 2024**.
 8. Pianists must be aged 33 years or under on **Saturday 7 September 2024**.
 9. The Competition is divided into four stages:
Stage 1 – Selection Stage: Pre-recorded audition by MP3 or WAV only
Stage 2: Welcome meeting and rehearsals on **Friday 6 September 2024**
Preliminary Rounds on **Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 September 2024**
Stage 3: Semi-finals on **Monday 9 September 2024**
Stage 4: Final on **Wednesday 11 September 2024**
- All Stages except Stage 1 will be held at Wigmore Hall in public, and competitors will perform their timed programmes without interruption.
10. The order of performance for Stage 2 will be decided by the General Manager of the Competition to provide a balanced programme of voices and repertoire and will be confirmed a maximum of one month and a minimum of two weeks before the Competition begins. The order of performance for Stages 3 and 4 will also be determined by the General Manager of the Competition to again provide a balanced programme.

11. For the purpose of the Competition, Song is defined as settings of poetic texts for voice and piano, in their original form and language.

Allowed

- Works originally written for performance with piano, or simultaneously written with piano or orchestral accompaniment, i.e., Berlioz: *Les nuits d'été*; Mahler: *Rückert-Lieder*, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, *Kindertotenlieder*, Ravel: *Sheherazade*.
- Works originally written for voice and orchestra and subsequently arranged for voice and piano by the composer themselves. Arrangements or piano reductions of orchestral scores made subsequently by other composers or arrangers are not allowed.
- Folk song arrangements/settings written with piano accompaniment, i.e., Berio, Britten, Canteloube, Copland, Dallapiccola, Gerhard, Ravel.
- Purcell – acceptable in realisations by major 20th century composers such as Britten, Tippett etc.
- An a cappella song would be permitted only if it were part of a cycle for voice and piano. This also includes song cycles with solo piano movements e.g., Joaquín Turina *Poema en forma de canciones* Op. 19.

Not allowed

- Unaccompanied plainchant
- Early works i.e., Dowland etc. where accompaniment would have been written for lute or harpsichord. Bach and Handel also fall into this category.
- Operatic arias
- Folksongs, unless in arrangements/settings as described above.
- Orchestral songs, unless they were conceived for piano accompaniment as described above.
- Songs from Shows – theatrical context not suitable for a Song Competition
- Pop songs
- New commissions unless the Competition has commissioned them.

12. All songs must be sung from memory.

13. Transpositions will be allowed at all stages of the Competition, including Stage 1.

14. Competitors must submit their programme for Stage 1 via the online application form to correspond with the repertoire outlined in the Repertoire and Selection Process section.

Competitors selected from Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2 and must then present their programmes for Stages 2, 3 and 4 by **Monday 10 June 2024**. It is important to present programmes accurately and in the correct performing order, along with timings for each song. Once the Competition programme has been printed no changes will be allowed.

15. Timings of all works must be submitted with programmes. The overall timings for each Stage given in the breakdown of Stages on page 1 are for complete programmes **including breaks**. The Jury reserves the right to penalise competitors who overrun.

16. Competitors must specify the keys (and transposed keys, if applicable) and publishers of all the songs they wish to perform at all stages.

17. For Stages 2 – 4, singers must provide the jury with one photocopy of the original copy of each song. Failure to submit these will result in disqualification. Competitors are reminded that photocopying of published material in copyright is illegal, and that singers and pianists may not perform from such music, unless they own original copies.

18. Singers are encouraged to come to the Competition with their own pianists, provided they are within the age limit, as established partnerships make a great difference in terms of performance.

- If a singer plans to bring their own pianist if selected for the Competition, then the recording for Stage 1 **MUST** be made with this same pianist; a singer cannot bring a pianist to the Competition who did not participate in the recording submitted for Stage 1.
- If a singer does not plan to bring their own pianist if selected for the Competition, i.e., they plan to use the official pianist provided by the Competition, then the Stage 1 recordings may be made with the singer's choice of pianist.
- If a singer is selected for the Competition who does not plan to bring their own pianist, Wigmore Hall will provide a pianist who is also within the age limit of the Competition. Competitors will be entitled to one rehearsal with this pianist for each stage of the Competition free of charge. Any additional rehearsal will be at the competitor's expense. If a pianist is required, this must be requested on your application form.

19. The Competition Jury's decision at any and every stage of the Competition is final and not open to discussion or correspondence.

20. Candidates will be informed whether they have been selected to progress to Stage 2 of the Competition by **Monday 22 April 2024**. Once accepted, candidates must submit their acknowledgement, complete programmes, 100 word biographies, high resolution (minimum 300dpi) colour photographs and further entrance fee by **Monday 10 June 2024**. The Selection Jury's decision to accept or refuse an application is final and requires no explanation.

Practical Information

21. The right is reserved to stream, broadcast or televise any stage of the Competition. However, competitors are not permitted to bring any photographic or recording equipment into any stage of the Competition.

22. Selected competitors will be expected to arrive in London no later than lunchtime on **Friday 6 September 2024** and leave on **Thursday 12 September 2024**.

23. Accommodation will be provided at a University Hall of Residence, and the Competition will pay for bed and breakfast for 6 nights for singers and pianists (Friday 6 – Wednesday 11 September 2024 inclusive). Please note that the accommodation is provided for all competitors for the duration of the Competition, no matter what stage competitors reach. Any additional nights will be charged separately and must be booked and paid for direct.

24. No travelling or general expenses can be refunded.

25. Rehearsal rooms for competitors will be available from Friday 6 – Wednesday 11 September 2024, venue and times will be confirmed nearer the Competition. Rehearsal time at Wigmore Hall will be available on the afternoons and evenings of Friday 6 and Saturday 7 September 2024. **We strongly advise competitors to take advantage of these rehearsal times as these are the only ones available at Wigmore Hall before Preliminary Round performances.**

26. Wigmore Hall can accept no responsibility for loss or damage to competitors' property at any time. Competitors must make their own property and travel insurance arrangements.

27. The Competition is required by law to deduct Withholding Tax from any prize money payments made to competitors not resident (for tax purposes) in the UK. However, the Competition has entered into a global agreement with the Foreign Entertainers Unit of the Inland Revenue for the deduction of certain expenses. A tax deduction certificate will be given to these competitors as proof of Withholding Tax paid, if a tax deduction is made. This can be used to claim credit from the tax authorities in the competitor's country of residence. Further information will be available from the General Manager after the Competition Final.

28. It is the responsibility of all competitors to ensure that any necessary visas are applied for in good time before the Competition. Wigmore Hall is happy to write supporting letters but cannot make visa applications on behalf of any competitors.

29. Candidates who do not reach the Final stage will be given an opportunity, if they so wish, to discuss their performances in private with members of the Jury before the final stage takes place.

30. The text of this document is available in English only. Only the English text will be considered valid in the case of dispute and English Law will prevail.

31. Please note that the First Prize winner may be required to remain in London on **Thursday 12 September 2024** for possible media interviews.

32. Winners of the First Prize of the Competition are excluded from further participation in any subsequent Competitions. Winners of other prizes can apply for subsequent Competitions, as long as they meet the age criteria.

33. All competitors shall agree to have their performances recorded, filmed or broadcast/streamed on the Wigmore Hall website or on other digital platforms, or on radio or television anywhere in the world. No payment will be made to competitors for the recording or broadcasting of Competition performances.

34. Each candidate, by signing the application form, agrees to be bound by all the rules of the Competition.

35. All communications should be addressed to: SongCompetition@wigmore-hall.org.uk

Application Process and Requirements for Entry

The deadline for applications is **1.00pm GMT (UK time) on Thursday 28 March 2024**; all application forms, recommendations and additional material plus recorded MP3/WAVs for Stage 1 must be **received** by the Competition General Manager by this date and time.

Please use the online application form; please **DO NOT** email application materials.

Applications open on **Monday 23 October 2023**. To apply to enter the Competition you must:

- Pay your initial registration fee of £25 for each application via the online application form, by credit or debit card or by PayPal.
- For applicants resident outside the UK please note that any card usage fees or bank charges are not included in the £25 fee and must be paid by the applicant (if applicable).
- When you have paid your fee, uploaded all the required materials, and completed and submitted the application form, you will receive an automated 'Order Confirmation' email. If you do not receive this email within 5 working days, please email songcompetition@wigmore-hall.org.uk to check that your submission has been registered on the system.
- Confirmation of your application will only be sent after your materials have been received and checked, and this could take up to 48 hours.

You **must** complete the **online application form** and upload the following **required materials**:

- Your WAV or MP3 (audio) recordings for Stage 1.
- Certification of the MP3/WAV recordings as the recent work of the named competitors (rule 5).
- Copies or scans of singer's and pianist's passports confirming the applicants' nationalities and dates of birth. NB: driving licences and ID cards are NOT acceptable.
- CVs for both singer and pianist with particulars of general education and professional training together with details of recent concert appearances.
- The names of TWO prominent musicians who will each provide a reference for singer and pianist respectively referring to this specific Competition. These musicians **must** email their references direct to the General Manager, Competitions, at the above email address.

Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

Once a candidate has been selected to proceed to Stage 2, you need to **complete a second online form by Monday 10 June 2024**, which will require you to do the following:

- Pay a further entrance fee of £35, payable online in the same way as the initial registration fee.
- Provide complete programmes for Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the Competition (Preliminary Round, Semi-finals and Final), including timings, key, transposed key (if applicable) and publisher for each work (see Rules 14 – 16).
- Upload short biographies (each 100 words maximum) of both singer and pianist for inclusion on our website and in the printed programme which must cover the period up to September 2022.
- Upload one recent high resolution colour photograph (**minimum 1MB or 300dpi**) of both singer and pianist (if applicable) suitable for use on our website and for reproduction in the programme. Please include the photographer's name/credit if applicable.
- Pay an additional £30 if the services of the official Competition pianist are required.
- Confirm whether the accommodation provided by the Competition is required.