

Description of and procedures for the 'WAGNERPRIJS VAN NEDERLAND 2018'

'WAGNER PRIZE OF THE NETHERLANDS 2018' of the 52nd International Vocal Competition (IVC)

1. Incentive & Objectives

The Wagnervereeniging was formed in Amsterdam in 1883, the year of Wagner's death, and was soon to become acclaimed. This organization ceased its activities some 75 years later in 1959 and was succeeded by the Wagnergenootschap Nederland (WGN / Wagner Society), founded in 1961. The year 2016 marked the 55th anniversary of the WGN and the 'Wagner Prize of The Netherlands' was instituted in May of that year commemorating more than 130 years of Wagner tradition in The Netherlands.

In 2017 the execution of the prize has been assigned to The Richard Wagner Stichting Nederland (RWSN / Wagner Foundation) for its focus regarding Wagner promotion for broad, general public.

In brief, the aims of the WGN and RWSN with creation of the 'Wagner Prize for The Netherlands' are:

1. To bring Wagner's works to the closer attention of the general public as well as instrumentalists and young singers.
2. To encourage singers whose voices are suited to perform Wagner, to include his music in their programme for the Competition, resulting in more young singers with Wagnerian potential being identified.
3. The existence of an attractive prize for the performance of Wagner's music will encourage young talent to take part in this Competition, knowing that it will enable the winner of this prize to study the Wagnerian repertoire with a Wagner specialist and thereby further his or her musical development.
4. To support the IVC's role as a source of inspiration for young people who desire to develop their talents for classical singing as well as providing information about their prospects for a professional career.

2. Specification of the 'Wagner Prize of The Netherlands'

WGN and RWSN have deliberately chosen to create a prize that will continue the education and further professional development of the winner. The prize has not in view the support of opera singing or voice development in general, but is specifically intended for a penetrating study of the Wagnerian technique and repertoire (Wagner singing, interpretation, textual understanding, presentation).

The prize is appropriated for the payment of advanced studies with a recognized Wagner specialist over an extended period. The winner will receive, when he or she is ready for it and subject to mutual agreement, the sum of € 5,000 to cover the costs of tuition fees with a recognized Wagner specialist.

The award can also be used to cover the costs of participation in masterclasses given by a Wagner specialist.

The prize will be awarded to the candidate, who has been judged by the Wagner Jury to be the best singer/interpreter of a Wagner operatic excerpt in the Competition, and whose voice is suited to the singing of Wagner and for whom future prospects with the Wagner-repertoire are considered most promising.

In a mutual agreed recital the winner will appear unremunerated for the members/relations of WGN/RWSN.

Given the size of the prize, the prize winner will be required to submit to the RWSN a written proposal for the use of the prize money, including the form of tuition chosen, the goals wished to achieve and how these can be assessed. Payments of the money will be made on the basis of periodic reports on the singer's progress.

3. Participation & Repertoire requirements, Competition procedures

The conditions of the IVC apply, as being published at the IVC-website (English version: Rules & Regulations). Singers interested in the Wagner Prize are specially referred to the sections 4.3, 4.7, 4.13-ii, 4.14-ii.

In addition the following will be clear:

- The Wagner Prize is intended as an operatic incentive prize. Only candidates who enter the IVC's Opera category will be considered.
- To be considered for the Wagner Prize, the singer must perform music by Richard Wagner in the three rounds of the Competition.

4. Judging / Criteria

A. A jury appraisal of possible Wagnerian talent on the basis of a performance delivered in a competition is a complex and delicate matter. Many young singers taking part will still be in an early stage of their development and will require much development and experience before being ready for the high Romantic repertoire and for Wagner. An assessment or appraisal can nonetheless be made concerning whether a candidate has sufficient potential and prospects for the future in this repertoire. There is already much that can be inferred from a candidate's performance and presentation:

- the notably technical ability,
- the quality and colour of the voice,
- the pronunciation and text command/phrasing,
- the musical presentation and interpretation,
- his or her artistic personality.

The consideration of all these factors together enables the jury to make a well-considered evaluation of a candidate's potential and future prospects, these being the basic requirements for the awarding of the prize.

B. 1. This Wagner Prize has deliberately been linked to the IVC because of the known high level of selected candidates. Only those candidates who are allowed to the Finale will be considered for the Wagner Prize. By exception the prize can be awarded to a candidate of the Semi-final. The judgement for the Wagner prize is at the discretion of the separate Wagner Jury (See 5. below).

2. Assessments for the Wagner Prize will be based in the first instance on candidates' performances during the First Round/Wagner audition and the Semi-finals, where candidates are free to choose their repertoire. It is therefore necessary that a candidate should perform such works by Wagner in both the First Round/Wagner audition and the Semi-finals so that the Wagner Prize Jury can make a fair and balanced judgement.

3. If a candidate is requested to perform a work by Wagner in the Finale, this performance will be an important factor in the Prize Jury's evaluation. The Finale shows very clearly how a candidate reacts under increasing pressure and performance levels, as these make extra demands on the candidate's concentration and stamina. Furthermore, the Final is with orchestral, not piano accompaniment. This is particularly important for all repertoire, but particularly so for Wagner's music.

C. Given the international character of the IVC, eligibility for the Wagner Prize will not be restricted to Dutch candidates. All candidates who meet the conditions will be taken into consideration for the Wagner Prize.

The prize-giving ceremony will be held after the Final Concert and after the Jury meeting.

The prize winner must be present in person.

5. Wagner Jury

A. The adjudication and awarding of the Wagner Prize will be carried out by a jury of five persons, made up as follows: two persons representing the WGN /RWSN and three members of the IVC jury, these being chosen by the committee of the WGN/RWSN after consultation with the directors of the IVC. For the 52nd edition of the IVC in 2018, when the Wagner Prize will be awarded for the second time, the jury will be made up of:

- **Mrs. Dunja Vejzović**, mezzo-soprano, Wagner singer
- **Mr. Robert Holl**, bass-baritone, composer, Wagner singer
- **Mr. Nicholas Payne**, director of Opera Europa
- **Mrs. Wiebke Göetjes** (*at First Round-Wagner audition*), soprano, Wagner singer, member WGN
- **Mr. Peter van der Leeuw** (*at Semi-Final & Final*), artistic advisor to the WGN for grant applications
- **Mr. Leo Cornelissen**, Chairman of the jury and its public representative; also Chairman of WGN/RWSN

B. The jury will meet in private after each of the rounds and concludes by a majority of the votes.

C. The jury may decide to award no prize in a particular year. Grounds for this could include:

1. No Wagnerian repertoire was presented, or in insufficient quantity preventing the forming of a decided opinion.
2. On the basis of the performances heard, no candidate is considered to have prospects for a future in the Wagnerian repertoire.
3. The inability of the jury to reach a majority decision over a candidate.

D. The jury may, although it is not required to, make its final judgement public. Once the Jury has made a judgement public, individual jury members are bound not to make further public statements concerning that judgement. This pledge of secrecy will remain valid even after the Competition has ended.

6. Disclaimer

If necessary, with the approval of the IVC Management, the WGN/RWSN and the Wagner Jury, the procedures for the Wagner Prize may be modified, even during the competition. The judgement-decisions of the Wagner Jury are final. Participation in the competition means acceptance of these procedures by the candidates.

International Vocal Competition / international Vocalisten Concours

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