6th International Bach Composition Prize 2027

The City of Eisenach announces the 6th International Bach Composition Prize 2027, endowed with 4,000 euros. With this prize, the City of Eisenach expressly honors the work and memory of Johann Sebastian Bach, born in Eisenach in 1685 and the greatest composer in the world.

Bach's monumental legacy is not meant to be managed as a historical museum, but to serve as a living source of inspiration for the here and now. The prize aims to build a bridge between Baroque genius and contemporary musical language. Young and established composers from around the world are encouraged to translate Bach's structural and emotional depth into the modern age. In this way, new orchestral works are created that show how powerfully Bach's spirit continues to live on in the music of our time.

The winning work will receive its world premiere at the opening concert of the 101st Bachfest of the Neue Bachgesellschaft (New Bach Society) on 22 October 2027 in the Georgenkirche (St. George's Church) in Eisenach, performed by the Thüringer Bach-Collegium under the musical direction of Gernot Süßmuth. The Bachfest takes place in Eisenach from 22 to 31 October 2027 under the motto "Gloria".

Participants may use the theme "Gloria" in their composition, but are not required to. They may draw in particular on works by Bach that contain a "Gloria".

Competition criteria

- Duration: 10 to 12 minutes
- Instrumentation: 3 Baroque trumpets (natural trumpets); 1 timpani; 2 oboes; 2 flutes; 1 bassoon; harpsichord or positive organ; strings: 1 violin, 1 viola, 1 cello, 1 double bass
- Please note: The orchestra plays on historical instruments or replicas of historical instruments, tuned to 415 Hz.
- The score must be anonymized. A score bearing the composer's name will be excluded from the competition.
- The work must not have been premiered before.
- A short biography, in German or English, must be attached to the submission email as a separate file.
- Previous prizewinners are excluded from the competition.
- The winner will provide the orchestra with the orchestral material for the premiere concert free of charge one month after the jury meeting at which the winner is selected.
- There is no age limit.

The jury

An international jury will select the winning work from the submitted compositions in a closed session. The jury's decision is final and cannot be contested. Recourse to the courts is excluded.

Submission deadline

The deadline for submitting compositions is 30 April 2027. By then, scores must be submitted as PDF files exclusively by email to kultur@eisenach.de.