Amici della Lirica
UMBERTO BORSÒ - CASTELFIORENTINO

Umberto Borsò International Opera Singing Competition – 4th edition

Castelfiorentino (FI) 19, 20, 21 February 2027

The Amici della Lirica – Umberto Borsò ETS Cultural Association of Castelfiorentino (FI), under the patronage of the Metropolitan City of Florence, the Municipality of Castelfiorentino, and the Union of Municipalities of the Empolese Valdelsa District, in collaboration with the Orpheus Association and the Simonetta Puccini for Giacomo Puccini Foundation, announces the 4th edition of the Umberto Borsò International Opera Singing Competition, governed by the following:

REGULATIONS

ART. 1 – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All voice parts of all nationalities, aged at least 18 by the closing date of this announcement and born after 1 January 1989, are eligible to participate in the competition. Winners of the first, second, and third prizes in previous editions are not eligible to participate.

ART. 2 – PERIOD AND PROCEDURES

The competition is divided into three rounds: Preliminary Round (virtual, based on videos submitted by participants), Semi-final Round (in person) and Final Round (in person). The in-person rounds will take place in Castelfiorentino (FI) on 19–20–21 February 2027. The Final Round, to which 12 to 14 competitors will be admitted, will be held at the Teatro del Popolo in Castelfiorentino on Sunday, 21 February 2027 (afternoon).

ART. 3 – REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Registration for the competition must be submitted via the dedicated online form accessible on the webpage **https://www.amicidellalliricaborso.it** , further attaching the following documentation:

- a brief artistic Curriculum Vitae;
- a copy of a valid identity document, along with a visitor's permit or study visa for foreign candidates;
- a photograph of the candidate;
- 2 video links of a performance of the candidate's choice (recorded within the last two years);
- proof of payment of the €25.00 registration fee by bank transfer to the Association's bank account: Beneficiary: **Ass. Amici della Lirica Umberto Borso ETS**, IBAN: **IT38H0842537790000010586352**. **SWIFT/BIC: CRACIT33**, Bank: **Banca Cambiano 1884 S.p.a**., payment description: *Registration fee Premio Borsò + Candidate's Surname and Name*;
- PDF files of the voice and piano reductions of the arias proposed for the audition.

ART. 4 – REGISTRATION DEADLINE

The deadline for submitting registration applications is Saturday, 9 January 2027. Applications that lack a valid identity document, video links/files, or proof of payment of the registration fee by the day following the deadline of the call for applications will be considered invalid.

ART. 5 – PRELIMINARY ELIMINATION ROUND

The preliminary elimination round will consist of an evaluation of the submitted video links/files (2 videos per candidate, recorded in the last two years). The video evaluation committee will be composed of at least five members of the competition Jury, including the jury president. The secretariat will inform candidates of the results of the preliminary round and the names of those admitted to the in-person semi-final (via email and potentially through official social media channels) no later than 30 January 2027, specifying the scheduled time frame for their appearance. Candidates admitted to the semi-final round must pay the participation fee of **€50.00** (in addition to the registration fee already paid) by bank transfer within the following five days.

ART. 6 – SEMI-FINAL ROUND

The in-person Semi-final Round will take place at the headquarters of the Amici della Lirica Umberto Borsò Association, located at Vicolo delle Monache no. 7 in Castelfiorentino, on Friday, **19 February and Saturday, 20 February 2027**. Candidates may indicate their preference for the date of their Semi-final (19 or 20 February), though this will not be binding for the organization. The chronological order of registration submissions will be taken into account. During the Semi-final, competitors will perform one or more arias in their entirety, chosen upon request of the Jury. The Jury reserves the right to interrupt the performance after the first piece.

ART. 7 – FINAL ROUND AND PRIZES

The Final Round will take place at the Teatro del Popolo in Castelfiorentino on the evening of **Sunday, 21 February 2027** (tentatively at 6:00 p.m.) in the form of a public concert. The names of the finalists will be officially announced after the end of the Semi-final Round (20 February).

Candidates may perform only one piece (complete with recitative and any cabaletta). The choice of piece to be performed will be made by the Jury, as far as possible (and non-bindingly) in agreement with the competitor. At the end of the evening, the winners of the following prizes will be announced:

Main Prizes:

- **First Prize: €3,000**
- **Second Prize: €2,000**
- **Third Prize: €1,500**
- **“Nuova voce per Puccini” Award: €1,000** (for the best Puccini interpretation or vocal performance)
- **Young Opera Promise Award: €1,000** (for competitors under 28 years of age) – dedicated to the memory of Prof. Cesare Orselli and offered by his heirs (Nicola Lombardi and Nicoletta Nencioni Orselli) and friends.

Special Prizes (may be combined with main prizes):

- **"Città di Castelfiorentino" Audience Award: €700** (offered by the Municipal Administration of Castelfiorentino, awarded by direct vote of the audience during the final evening);
- Potential Role Prizes for the opera **Norma** (Castelfiorentino – 9 April 2027) with a remuneration of €900 for roles not assigned directly with the main prizes. Roles up for competition: Pollione, Adalgisa (soprano or mezzo-soprano), Oroveso, cover for Norma (with a remuneration of €500);
- Potential Concert Prize for selections from G. Bizet's **Carmen** (Castelfiorentino - October 2027) with a remuneration of €600;
- Potential Role or Concert Prizes offered by the Orfeo in Scena Association or members of the Jury.

(Note: **The main prizes and role prizes are offered by the Borsò Family unless indicated otherwise**.)

Additional special prizes, audition awards, and/or special merits may be added to those listed above. All finalists will receive a certificate of merit. All prize amounts are gross of statutory taxes. All candidates admitted to the Final Round will be considered for potential engagements in the organizing Association's activities for the following year.

ART. 8 – PARTICIPATION IN SCHEDULED EVENTS – PRIZE PAYMENT CONDITIONS

This edition of the Competition is linked to the following musical productions scheduled by the organizing Association for 2027:

- Staged production of V. Bellini's opera **Norma** with orchestra, to be held at the Teatro del Popolo in Castelfiorentino on 9 April 2027 (with mandatory rehearsals starting 4 April);
- Concert-form selection of G. Bizet's opera **Carmen** (date TBD, tentatively scheduled for October 2027, with rehearsal the day prior);
- **Concert** with piano accompaniment at the Simonetta Puccini Auditorium in Torre del Lago Puccini (LU), the programme and date TBD, tentatively scheduled for August 2027, subject to the final decision of the Simonetta Puccini Foundation for Giacomo Puccini.

1st and 2nd Prize winners are required, upon express request by the Association, to perform as soloists free of charge in **two** of the above-mentioned productions.

3rd Prize, "Nuova voce per Puccini" and "Young Opera Promise" winners are required to perform free of charge, upon express request by the Association, in **one** of the above-mentioned productions.

"Città di Castelfiorentino" Audience Award winners (if awarded separately from main prizes) are required to perform in one of the two concerts mentioned above.

Role and Concert Prize winners are required to perform exclusively in the production tied to their award, subject to forfeiture of the prize in case of withdrawal.

The full disbursement of prizes is contingent upon fulfilling these obligations.

The assignment of artistic roles will be determined at the sole discretion of the Association based on recommendations from the artistic direction, following informal and non-binding consultation with the winners. If winners are deemed unsuitable for specific roles in the linked productions due to their vocal characteristics, an alternative artistic performance tailored to their profile may be requested. If scheduling prevents an alternative performance, the prize will still be paid in full, waiving the performance requirement.

Prize amounts consist of a scholarship portion and a performance fee portion for the engagements to which they are linked. Winners are not entitled to additional remuneration for requested performances unless deemed appropriate by the Association in specific cases, or for extra assignments negotiated separately.

For the artistic assignments above, the Association guarantees a flat-rate reimbursement of documented travel expenses up to €50.00 net per day of required attendance.

Payment of the prize amounts will take place within 15 days of the announcement for the first installment, equal to half (50%) of the prize value, and the second installment of the remaining 50% within 15 days of completing the artistic performances requested by the Association as specified above.

Withdrawal from or failure to perform the artistic services, as well as the relative rehearsals, will result in a 50% deduction of the prize amount as a penalty; therefore, should this circumstance occur, the remaining final installment will not be paid.

ART. 9 – REPERTOIRE

Each competitor must submit a list of 4 pieces from Italian or foreign operas suited to their vocal range, performed in the original language and key (including recitative and cabaletta, if applicable).

The 4 selected arias must include:

- One aria from standard repertoire operas by **G. Donizetti, V. Bellini, or G. Verdi;**
- One aria from operas by **Giacomo Puccini** (mandatory for those wishing to compete for the "Nuova voce per Puccini" Award).

Candidates competing for role prizes in V. Bellini's **Norma** (Pollione, Adalgisa, Oroveso, cover for Norma) or the concert prize for G. Bizet's **Carmen** must also present the arias and/or key excerpts for those respective roles.

ART. 10 – JURY COMPOSITION

The Jury listed below, comprising distinguished figures in the field and members of the organizing Association, is subject to modifications in composition and size due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the organization's control:

- Augusto Lombardini: Artistic Direction Support at Teatro G. Verdi in Pisa – Jury President;
- Marina Comparato: Mezzo-soprano;
- Vittoria Borsò: University teacher, daughter of tenor Umberto Borsò;
- Roberta Ceccotti: Soprano and President of the "Orfeo In Scena" Association;
- Diego Fiorini: President of the Teatro G. Verdi Foundation in Pisa;
- Fabrizio Moschini: Music critic, Editor-in-Chief of OperaClick, and Director of Montecatini Terme Città della Musica;
- Manuel Rossi: Scholarly Director of the Simonetta Puccini Foundation for Giacomo Puccini;
- Martina Barreca: Soprano, President of the "Amici della Lirica U. Borsò ETS" Association;
- Gabriele Centorbi: Orchestra conductor;
- Francesco Marchetti: Tenor, Artistic and Operational Director of the Premio Borsò.

Voting will be conducted by secret ballot. In the event of a tie, the President of the Jury's vote will prevail. The Jury's verdict is final, and submission of the application implies full acceptance of the same.

The "Città di Castelfiorentino" Audience Award will be assigned by direct vote of the audience present during the final evening.

ART. 11 – INCOMPATIBILITY

Persons related by blood or marriage to one or more competitors may not serve on the Jury. Jury members who currently have, or have had in the two years prior to the competition, direct teaching or professional relationships with any competitor must abstain from discussions and voting regarding those candidates. Such abstentions will be recorded in the official minutes.

ART. 12 – ACCOMPANYING PIANIST

The Association will provide an official pianist for the Semi-final and Final Rounds. Competitors may choose to bring their own accompanist at their own expense, provided this is indicated on the registration form.

ART. 13 – ACCEPTANCE OF REGULATIONS AND PRIVACY

Online submission of the application form constitutes full knowledge and unconditional acceptance of these regulations and the decisions of the Jury. Expressing consent on the online form confirms acceptance of the terms outlined herein (including prize payment methods and penalty clauses) and authorizes the processing

of personal data for communication and selection purposes pursuant to Legislative Decree 196/2003 and GDPR 2016/679, as amended. In the event of any dispute, the Italian version of the regulations shall prevail.

ART. 14 – AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS
The Association reserves the right to make modifications to these regulations whenever necessary for technical, organizational, or unforeseen reasons. Where necessary, the Association may rule on matters not explicitly covered by these regulations.

ART. 15 – EXPENSES BORNE BY PARTICIPANTS
No reimbursement for travel expenses will be provided to candidates for participating in the in-person rounds. Discounted rates for room and board at local partner establishments may be made available.

ART. 16 – LEGAL JURISDICTION
Any disputes shall be settled by the Court of Florence, and the regulations written in Italian shall be considered the official legally binding text.