

# INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE "Wettbewerbe in der Musikkultur des 19. Jahrhunderts" 28 - 29 June 2019, University of Cologne, Germany

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Musical competitions like the *Eurovision Song Contest*, the *Grammy Awards* or the *Pulitzer Prize for Music* are not just a focal phenomenon of contemporary musical life. As early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, competitions in the musical field were a widespread practice and received increased attention by the public. The results of two research projects at the University of Cologne, which are sponsored by the DFG (German Research Foundation), provide evidence of this. They shed light on 19<sup>th</sup> century musical competitions in general as well as on competitions within the German *Männergesangsvereine* (male voice choral societies); for further information: <http://musikwissenschaft.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/24202.html> and <http://neuere-geschichte.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/1496.html?&L=9>.

A glimpse into this time period reveals a heterogeneous landscape of music-related competitions and similar rivalries, which may refer to compositions, performances, instrument-making, libretti, poetry, musicological writing, etc. Although competitions were omnipresent in 19<sup>th</sup> century musical life, they did not – with a few exceptions like the *Prix de Rome* – inscribe themselves into cultural memory, and they have likewise scarcely been of a scholarly focus. The conference intends to address the diverse aesthetic discourses, social settings, as well as the actors and their (economic, ideological, social) motives involved in music competitions. Possible approaches can be provided by institutional history, network research along with questions of collective identity (e.g. nationalism) or gender relations. The goal of the conference is to bring international scientists (predominantly musicologists, historians and sociologists) and their research in the field of musical competitions together and to encourage further studies. In additions to this, the phenomenon of musical competitions will be theoretically examined and embedded into the interdisciplinary research discourse on questions concerning competitiveness. This will include a collaboration with scientists of the research association "Competition Cultures", which is based at the University of Cologne as well as the LMU Munich (<http://neuere-geschichte.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/903.html>). The conference aims to provide an initial overview on competitions in 19<sup>th</sup> century music culture and to elaborate a comprehension for this cultural practice of rivalry.