

International press release  
August 2017



THE  
QUEEN SONJA  
INTERNATIONAL  
MUSIC  
COMPETITION

## **The Queen Sonja International Music Competition 2017 The winners are announced**

After ten days and three intense rounds, we finally have a winner of this year's Queen Sonja International Music Competition. Tenor Seung Ju Bahg, a young talent from South Korea, won the First Prize in the grand final at the Norwegian Opera & Ballet on Friday 18 August.

The Second prize of € 10.000, went to tenor Giovanni Sebastiano Sala from Italy, and the Third prize of € 5.000 went to Belarussian bass Alexander Roslavets. Her Majesty Queen Sonja presented the prizes, including a diploma with original artwork created by Her Majesty awarded to the First Prize winner, in addition to € 40.000. The finalist prizes of € 1.500 went to tenor Pavel Petrov from Belarus and soprano Ruslana Koval from Ukraine.

H.M Queen Sonja thanked the finalists from the stage:

“Dear Finalists, I am full of admiration. You have touched our hearts. Let me thank each and every one of you for your great performances tonight. We have all been thrilled. Success in this competition can be measured not only by the prizes won, but by the confidence in your artistic abilities that I hope you have gained during this competition.”

### **A young talent**

Seung Ju Bahg was born in 1990, in Busan, South Korea. He is currently attending Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Mannheim. His interest in music began when he was young boy and got to hear his father, who is a tenor as well, sing.

### **Further prizes**

In addition to third place Alexander Roslavets also won the prize for best performance of Norwegian music. Despite his uncertainty regarding his pronunciation, the Norwegian jury were impressed by Alexander's performance of Grieg's 'Jeg elsker Dig!' in the semifinal.

The Ingrid Bjoner Scholarship of NOK 75 000 was awarded to the best Norwegian participant, who this year was 25 year old Christian Valle from Trondheim.

The prizewinners will also be offered engagements with leading Norwegian musical institutions. Throughout the semifinal and final concerts there have been international agents, artist managers, casting directors, orchestral programme managers and other music industry representatives present. The competition will also host concerts in Copenhagen and Moscow this autumn, in collaboration with Danish National Symphony Orchestra and Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra.

### **The 2017 competition**

There has been a great deal of interest in the Queen Sonja International Music Competition from young singers around the world this year. There was a record number of 241 applicants from 49 countries, and of these 37 registered participants from 20 nations made it to Oslo.

The preliminary rounds and the semifinal were held at the Norwegian Academy of Music, and were open to the public. The performances were also streamed live from the QSIMC website, which gave viewers around the world the opportunity to tune in.



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Norwegian television personality Hans Olav Brenner hosted the final concert at the Norwegian Opera & Ballet. The concert was also broadcasted on national television, and will be available to watch in most countries on the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation's website after the broadcast.

In the photo (attached) from left to right: Giovanni Sebastiano Sala, H.M Queen Sonja, Seungju Bahg, Alexander Roslavets. Photo: Marius Nyheim Kristoffersen.

***The Queen Sonja International Music Competition is one of the world's leading voice competitions. It takes place every second year in Oslo, and is open for singers from all over the world.***

*The Competition's institutional partners include The Norwegian National Opera & Ballet, the Norwegian Academy of Music, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra and The Norwegian Royal Court. All singers under the age of 33 may apply to take part. Several participants of each competition are also nominated by the Competition's collaborating opera academies. Through several rounds, a jury consisting of internationally renowned opera directors, singers and casting associates from some of the world's top opera houses judge the participants' efforts. Each competition culminates in a grand final concert and prize-giving ceremony with H.M. Queen Sonja of Norway.*

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