

## CALL FOR PAPERS

International Scholarly Conference at the Handel Festival  
in Halle (Saale) May 30/31 2023

### **The Politics of Opera – Handel’s Opera Academies 1719-1737**

The Handel Festival in Halle an der Saale in 2023 will be on the theme “The Opera: Dispute over *Tweddledum* and *Tweddledee*”. The quotation from an epigram by John Byrom in *The London Journal* of 5 June 1725, refers to the competition between the opera composers Giovanni Bononcini and George Frideric Handel. The subject is intended to accentuate the fact that opera has always been the topic of discussions in which cultural-political and artistic interests have been intertwined.

This is certainly true for the two opera academies of which, and in which, Handel was in charge of between 1719 and 1734, and which were followed by the competition between the “Opera of the Nobility” and Handel’s work at the Covent Garden Theatre until 1737. These disputes happened at almost all levels of opera production, and links to comprehensive political-cultural and social negotiation processes become evident: this applies to the organization, patronage and financing of the academies. Such differences applied also to the audience, the public review, the choice of repertoire and libretti, the singers, the scenarios and stage designs, and the compositions themselves.

The International Scholarly Conference at the Handel Festival on 30 and 31 May 2023 would like to explore the named political dimensions of Handel’s academies, but also their pre-conditions and consequences, as well as to invite comparisons with earlier and later forms of institutionalisation of opera as an art form. Last but not least, the aim is also to critically update the historical findings against the background of the situation of opera houses today.

The organisers invite interested scholars to take part in the conference with a 25-minute paper and ask for an **application with a proposal and abstract by 15 November 2022**. Travel and accommodation costs will be covered for the conference days.

Organisers: Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft e.V., Internationale Vereinigung; Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Institut für Musik, Medien- und Sprechwissenschaften, Abteilung Musikwissenschaft; Stiftung Händel-Haus Halle.

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