

## Call for entries for the Winfried Böhler Kultur Stiftung Composition Competition

### **ad libitum**

#### **Contemporary music for amateur or semi-professional orchestras, ensembles and soloists**

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##### **Preliminary note**

Founded in 2002, the Winfried Böhler Foundation has been involved for many years in social aid projects, development aid and child and youth welfare, including in the cultural and artistic sphere. Through its network of activities, it is an important partner for artists and cultural institutions in the Stuttgart area. To strengthen these activities, Winfried Böhler established the Winfried Böhler Kultur Stiftung in 2007.

##### **ad libitum composition competition**

The contemporary repertoire for amateurs, especially children and young people, is extremely limited. The few existing works are often too technically difficult, unsuitable in terms of instrumentation or not variable enough. The Winfried Böhler Kultur Stiftung would like to contribute to making an attractive, artistically high-quality and playable repertoire of contemporary music available for children, young people and adult amateurs in all genres.

As part of the 10th edition of its composition competition, the foundation is offering prize money for commissioned compositions that meet these requirements. The compositions should combine high musical quality, flexibility in instrumentation and technical feasibility for pupil ensembles. The foundation welcomes compositions that allow young musicians to improvise independently. Ad libitum also explicitly invites experimentation with concepts that, in addition to expanding playing techniques, also focus on social impact: contemporary art that takes a stand, broadens horizons and stimulates discourse; experiences, encounters and shared musical experiences.

The 2026/2027 call for entries is being held in cooperation with the Heilbronn Municipal Music School and its ensembles. The implementation will be artistically and organisationally supported by the "trio marcel" (Malin Grass, violin; Benjamin Kautter, cello; Alexander Waite, piano) as a professional partner ensemble. Together with the music school's teachers, it will support the participating young musicians – including through mentoring and interpretative advice – and accompany them until the final concert.

The cooperation, in particular the 2027 prize winners' concert, will be integrated into the programme surrounding Heilbronn as European Green Capital 2027 and offers the music school the opportunity to present ad libitum as a part of its cultural education portfolio, and as an important catalyst for sustainability in musical and cultural education. As an intangible art form, music requires few material resources but has a major social impact. The competition thus encourages young people to engage with contemporary music, and also to address issues of the future, environmental awareness and social responsibility.

## Call for entries

The Winfried Böhler Kultur Stiftung invites composers to apply for a composition commission for one of the music school ensembles. To do so, please submit a compelling application with the following contents:

- A short CV
- A artistic concept, describing the motivation for the application, including an outline of the form the work is to take, the ensemble(s) for which it is intended and an estimate of the planned duration of the composition. A maximum duration of 8 minutes is recommended as a guideline; longer compositions are possible but require a comprehensible conceptual justification.
- Two to three scores for different instrumentations, with audio samples if possible
- Postal and email address of the composer and links to their website, publisher or agency and other public relations channels
- The completed confirmation form, in the event of receiving a commission for a composition

Upon acceptance of a composition commission, the composer confirms:

- that they will familiarize themselves with the respective ensemble and take the musical and technical level of the student performers into account
- that they will collaborate closely with the ensemble director
- that they will be available during the rehearsal process and actively participate in rehearsals at least once

## Ensembles

The following ensembles and soloists from the Heilbronn Music School are available for the composition competition \*

### 1) Clarinet and saxophone ensemble

Beginners' ensemble currently being formed (minimum 5 participants), ages 8-15

Clarinets in B flat, G-G"; saxophones in E flat, D-A"

The ensemble is looking for suitable literature that will enable it to acquire basic playing techniques in a methodical and skilful manner.

### 2) String trio (2 violins, 1 cello)

advanced, ages 9–12

Players are/were part of the music school's gifted programme and have a particularly solid technical foundation. They are also capable of working on more demanding pieces.

### 3) Trombone (solo)

advanced student in preparatory training, 16 years old

Range of 3 octaves: B' to b'

Challenge and potential: larger leaps, accuracy and dynamics at the edges of his range

Interest in developing modern playing techniques, possibly in combination with percussion or drums (second instrument)

4) Piano (solo)

Lower intermediate level, 5 students, ages 9–12

Requirement: Five short pieces for solo piano (maximum 2 pages per piece) that introduce different aspects of contemporary piano music, preferably with different focuses such as rhythm, playing technique, harmony, etc.

5) String orchestra "Sinfonietta"

advanced, approx. 20 pupils, aged 11–15

Up to third position in the upper strings possible; previous programme: baroque string symphonies and a string symphony by Christoph Willibald Gluck

Challenges and potential: confident handling of polyphonic structures and the rhythmic independence of individual players

6) Young string players

3 violins, 5 cellos, ages 9–12

Violins: first position (close and wide) and half position; cellos: first to fourth position can be played confidently

7) Youngster orchestra

Wind orchestra, difficulty level 1-2, 15-20 children, approx. 9-13 years

Flute, F'-F'''; oboe, C'-G''; clarinet, G-G''; bassoon, F-F'; alto saxophone, D-A''; trumpet, F sharp-E''; horn, G-C''; trombone/euphonium: F-F'; percussion, no mallets!

Challenges and potential: Most are not yet very confident with rhythm, especially when playing many different rhythms against each other; not all accidentals have been mastered yet, but as a rough guide, all natural notes as well as F sharp, C sharp, B flat, E flat and A flat (all sounding) are possible.

\*When applying, please indicate your order of preference for the ensemble you would like to compose for (No. 1 = highest preference, No. 7 = least suitable ensemble). The jury will decide on the final allocation of ensembles, taking your preferences into account.

### **Jury**

A jury of experts will evaluate the applications submitted and award up to six composition commissions with a total value of 18,000 €. The decision on the awarding of the commissions will be announced by the end of April 2026.

### **Rehearsal and premiere**

The commissioned compositions will be rehearsed in close collaboration with the composer and musicians of the ensemble "trio marcel" and premiered in a public concert. A rehearsal weekend is planned for 7th–8th of November 2026 at the Heilbronn Music School, offering an opportunity for particularly intensive work. Travel expenses to rehearsals and performances will be reimbursed (after prior consultation).

The winners' concert will take place in Heilbronn in spring 2027. The participating music school and Musik der Jahrhunderte e.V. will provide their resources for publicity, advertising and press relations for the event.

### Conditions of entry

- The deadline for applications is 31st of March 2026.
- Applications should be submitted to: [adlibitum@mdjstuttgart.de](mailto:adlibitum@mdjstuttgart.de)  
Sample scores and audio samples must be made available in digital form.
- Applicants confirm, in the event of receiving a composition commission, to send the score of the new work to the Winfried Böhler Kultur Stiftung by 31st of August 2026 (completed confirmation form).
- The performance material (instrumental parts, electronics/playback, etc.) will be provided by the composers at the same time, but no later than 10th of September 2026.
- All submissions will be treated with the utmost care. However, the organiser is not liable for any loss or damage to the submitted material.
- Unfortunately, submissions that do not meet the above criteria cannot be considered.

## ad libitum

Composition competition of the Winfried Böhler Cultural Foundation

**Contemporary music for amateur or semi-professional orchestras, ensembles and soloists**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

In the event that I am selected for a commissioned composition as part of the ad libitum Composition Competition 2026/2027, I confirm that I will send the complete score of the composition to [adlibitum@mdjstuttgart.de](mailto:adlibitum@mdjstuttgart.de) by 31st of August 2026. By 10th of September 2026, I will produce and send the necessary performance materials for the respective ensemble.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Place, date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Weitere Informationen und Rückfragen / Further information and questions

Web: <https://www.mdjstuttgart.de/spiel-raeume/ad-libitum/> · Mail: [adlibitum@mdjstuttgart.de](mailto:adlibitum@mdjstuttgart.de) · Tel.: +49 711 6290515