

Dear Friends of the Opera and Conducting, dear Colleagues!

It is a great honour for me to welcome you from the part of the Jury to the 8th edition of the Blue Danube/Béla Bartók International Opera Conducting Competition. It is my second experience with this unbelievably wonderful artistic event, but the first one as a Jury President. I feel the huge responsibility and certainly all the jury members feel the same way. We are all incredibly happy that after such a long time of Corona we can finally meet in person. Thank you very much for meeting in this marvellous city, in this gorgeous theatre. All the theatre employees are working hard. It is not only during competitions, it is hard work overall, but it is the nicest work – opera and art. We must tell them THANK YOU.

Art is not a sport, and it is very difficult to measure it. From my point of view, it's not even possible. I assume I am not speaking just for myself when I say that we will try to find the highest level of justice during this competition. Opera and all theatre in general represent wonderful arts, but they are very difficult to perform. To be able to conduct opera you have to love it. Opera and theatre, in general, are 'narcotic'. You love them more and more and you need them more and more.

Dear competitors, you are our colleagues, and we would like to wish you great success. We believe, these two weeks will be full of wonderful opera art and you will gain a fantastic experience. Maybe you will not win this competition and you will feel like a loser for a while, but after all, you are the winners, you do OPERA. Show us your skills and show them through your personality. You conduct OPERA and you love OPERA. BEST OF LUCK!