COMPETITION RULES 2027

Klosters Music Violin Summit – Competition

Facsimiles of the Guarneri del Gesù "Sainton" 1744

Preamble

The Klosters Music Violin Summit will take place for the first time in 2027. It comprises a symposium, an academy for young violin makers and a violin-making competition, to which these Rules apply.

Each edition is devoted to one significant stringed instrument. At the centre of the first edition is the "Sainton" by Guarneri del Gesù, c. 1744, one of the landmark instruments of his final period, rarely seen in public. We are particularly grateful to its owner, who has made access to the instrument and its scientific documentation possible.

The Competition seeks to create a space for shared reflection on what a facsimile of a historical violin can be from today's perspective. The choice of point of departure and of approach is deliberately left open:

- the presumed original form, as it can be inferred from the evidence available today by tracing back the material and structural changes that have occurred or been made over time;
- the present state of preservation, including its distortions, wear and other material alterations;
- an approach to the making process itself: to the working techniques, decisions, gesture and spontaneity that may have been characteristic of del Gesù. In other words, a facsimile whose approach is guided by the historical model without seeking to reproduce its exact result.

What matters is a considered engagement with the technological documentation provided, the precision of observation and the clarity and coherence of the decisions taken. Each entry is therefore accompanied by a short Statement of Intent setting out the chosen approach and the principal decisions made.

The specialist jury brings together different and complementary perspectives from expert appraisal, restoration, research and contemporary violin making. The submitted instruments are also played and assessed for their sound by festival soloists. The exchange between violin makers, experts, restorers, researchers and musicians during the festival is intended to deepen our understanding of historical and newly made instruments alike.

Balthazar Soulier, Curator, Klosters Music Violin Summit (hereinafter the "Curator")

1. Organiser, subject matter and basis of the Competition

1.1 Stiftung Kunst & Musik Klosters (hereinafter the “Organiser”) is holding an international violin-making competition (hereinafter the “Competition”) in Klosters, Switzerland, as part of the Klosters Music Violin Summit 2027.

1.2 The Competition is intended to be held annually, with a different Featured Instrument for each edition. These Rules apply exclusively to the 2027 edition, which takes place from 2 to 7 August 2027.

1.3 The featured instrument of the 2027 edition (hereinafter the “Featured Instrument”) is the violin “Sainton” by Guarneri del Gesù, 1744. The Competition concerns newly made violins that relate to this instrument as facsimiles within the meaning of the Preamble.

1.4 Admitted participants are provided with technological documentation of the Featured Instrument in digital form (hereinafter the “Reference Dossier”). It serves as a reference for the construction of the new instrument. Access and rights of use are governed by Art. 5.

1.5 These Rules and their annexes constitute the binding basis of the Competition. In the event of contradictions, these Rules prevail over the annexes. The Preamble sets out the aims and spirit of the Competition and serves as an aid to interpretation.

2. Participation

2.1 Violin makers of all nationalities who have reached the age of majority are eligible to participate.

2.2 Each person may be involved in only one violin, either alone or as a joint effort with others.

2.3 Violin making schools may participate as institutions and submit up to three jointly made instruments.

2.4 In the case of joint works, all persons involved in making the instrument and their respective contributions must be identified.

2.5 Members of the jury and persons working in their workshops are excluded.

3. Registration and admission

3.1 Registration is made within the deadline set out in Art. 4 using the online form at www.klosters-music.ch. A separate registration must be submitted for each violin. It comprises:

3.1.1 the personal details of all persons involved (surname, first name, address, telephone, e-mail, date of birth and nationality); for violin-making schools, the details of the institution;

3.1.2 the information required under Section 2.4;

3.1.3 a curriculum vitae of no more than one page for each person involved; for violin-making schools, a short profile of the institution.

3.2 For joint works and entries by violin-making schools, a contact person must be designated. That person submits the registration and represents those involved in dealings with the Organiser.

3.3 All documents must be submitted in English or German.

3.4 The Organiser reviews registrations for completeness and eligibility and makes admission decisions on a rolling basis. In the case of joint works, admission requires all persons involved to be eligible. The Organiser may limit the number of participants; in that case, priority is determined by the order in which complete registrations are received.

3.5 Following admission, a participation fee of CHF 80 must be paid within the deadline set out in Art. 4. The Reference Dossier is sent once payment has been received (Art. 5). If payment is not made by the deadline, admission lapses.

3.6 The participation fee is charged per registration and is non-refundable.

3.7 If, in the case of joint works, a person involved withdraws after registration, the registration remains valid. Changes must be notified to the Organiser.

3.8 By registering, all persons involved accept these Rules.

4. Dates and deadlines

4.1 The following dates and deadlines apply to the Competition:

Date	Step
1 October 2026	Publication of the call for entries; online registration opens
from 15 October 2026	Ongoing notification of admission decisions (Art. 3)
31 January 2027, 23.59	Registration deadline
by 15 February 2027	Notification of all outstanding admission decisions
within 20 days of admission	Payment of the participation fee; the Reference Dossier is sent thereafter (Art. 3 and 5)
30 June 2027	Binding confirmation of participation and submission of the Statement of Intent (Art. 6 and 7)
Sat, 31 July 2027, 12.00	Latest arrival of the instrument if shipped (Art. 7)
Sun, 1 August 2027, 14.00	Latest delivery of the instrument in person in Klosters (Art. 7)
2–6 August 2027	Competition (Art. 8); final concert and award ceremony on 6 August; public exhibition on 7 August
7–10 August 2027, 16.00	Collection of the instruments (Art. 7)

4.2 All times refer to local time in Klosters. The time of receipt by the Organiser, rather than the time of dispatch, is decisive.

4.3 The Reference Dossier is sent once payment has been received. Registering early therefore means receiving it earlier.

4.4 The Organiser may adjust dates for compelling reasons. Participants will be notified of any changes in writing without delay.

5. Reference Dossier

5.1 The Reference Dossier contains technological documentation of the Featured Instrument, produced by Balthazar Soulier (Atelier Cels) in collaboration with the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), Grenoble. It includes, in particular, photographs, measurements, tomographic scans, visualisations derived from them and three-dimensional surface models, as well as selected material analyses of wood and varnish.

5.2 Once payment has been received, the Reference Dossier is sent in digital form by electronic data transfer to the participant or to the contact person under Section 3.2. That person is responsible for ensuring compliance with this Article by all those involved.

5.3 The Reference Dossier is intended exclusively for participation in the Competition. It may not be passed on to third parties or published, either in whole or in part. All rights in the Reference Dossier remain with the respective rights holders.

5.4 The Organiser gives no warranty as to the completeness or accuracy of the Reference Dossier.

6. Instrument and Statement of Intent

6.1 The entry must be a newly made, completed violin, set up and ready to play.

6.2 The method of construction is unrestricted. The body, neck and scroll must be made of wood; plastics and composite materials are not permitted for these parts.

6.3 The setup may be freely chosen. For instruments with a modern setup, a standardised set of strings is required in the interest of comparability in the sound assessment. The brand, string type and gauge will be announced together with the Reference Dossier.
A historical setup (in particular gut strings, a Baroque neck and fingerboard, and a historical bass bar) is expressly permitted and must be declared at registration. Instruments with a historical setup are assessed without restriction in the making assessment. They take part in the sound assessment provided that a sufficient number of instruments with a historical setup is submitted to allow a separate and comparable assessment by the Sound Jury.
The possibility of awarding special prizes is reserved.

6.4 A statement of intent (hereinafter the "Statement of Intent") must be submitted for each violin within the deadline set out in Art. 4. It sets out:

6.4.1 the point of departure and the approach chosen, within the meaning of the Preamble;

6.4.2 the principal design, craftsmanship and interpretative decisions, together with the reasons for them;

6.4.3 the processes and tools used, including digital fabrication processes and work carried out by third parties.

6.5 The Statement of Intent may not exceed two A4 pages. Illustrations are permitted.

6.6 The Statement of Intent is made available to the juries, together with the information under Section 2.4, before the instruments are examined.

7. Submission, transport, customs, return and liability

7.1 Participants must provide binding confirmation, within the deadline set out in Art. 4, that they will submit their violin. If confirmation is not provided by the deadline, the registration is deemed withdrawn.

7.2 The violin must be submitted within the deadlines set out in Art. 4, either by shipment or in person, to:
Stiftung Kunst & Musik Klosters
Klosters Music Violin Summit
Landstrasse 177
CH-7250 Klosters

Instruments may be submitted no earlier than Monday, 19 July 2027. If an instrument is shipped, the Organiser must be notified of its expected arrival. An appointment must be made in advance for delivery in person.

7.3 A data sheet of no more than one A4 page must be enclosed with the violin. It contains details of the materials used and of the essential parameters of the setup, in particular the position of the bridge and the soundpost. The concept and the reasons for the decisions taken are the subject of the Statement of Intent under Art. 6.

7.4 The violin must be submitted in packaging suitable for both the outward and return transport. All costs of packaging, transport, customs clearance, temporary importation, re-exportation and return transport are borne by the participants. The participants bear the transport risk until receipt has been confirmed by the Organiser and again from the handover to the person collecting the violin or to the appointed transport company.

7.5 Participants acknowledge that the violins will be examined, played, exhibited and transported in the course of the Competition, and that this may result in normal signs of use as well as adjustments to tuning and setup. The Organiser is liable for damage to or loss of the violins only in cases of intent or gross negligence. Any further liability, in particular for slight negligence and for auxiliary persons, is excluded to the extent permitted by law. The Organiser does not take out insurance for the violins; participants may arrange insurance for transport and for the period in Klosters at their own discretion.

7.6 Importation into Switzerland takes place under the temporary admission procedure or with an ATA Carnet. The Organiser provides an information sheet and guidance on shipping. Responsibility for customs formalities and for timely re-exportation lies with the participants.

7.7 For components subject to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), participants must obtain the required permits themselves and enclose them with the violin. Participants bear the consequences of missing or inadequate documentation.

7.8 The condition of the violin is documented photographically on receipt.

7.9 The violin must be collected in Klosters within the deadline set out in Art. 4. Collection may be made by the participant, by a person authorised in writing or by a transport company instructed to do so. Receipt must be confirmed in writing; any objections must be raised at the time of handover.

7.10 Violins arriving late are excluded from the Competition.

7.11 If a violin is not collected in time, the Organiser may store it or return it at the participant's cost and risk. Any additional costs arising are charged to the participant.

8. Course of the Competition

8.1 On receipt, the Organiser checks the violins for compliance with the formal and technical requirements under Art. 6. The consequences of non-compliance are governed by Section 9.6.

8.2 The juries assess the violins in non-public examinations (making assessment) and in non-public playing and sound tests with festival soloists (sound assessment). Participants are not present.

8.3 During the assessment phase, participants should be available to answer specialist or technical questions. Participants present in Klosters may be consulted in person; the others will be contacted by telephone or electronically.

8.4 Adjustments to tuning and setup are made exclusively by a specialist designated by the Organiser, where possible in consultation with the participants in the case of substantial interventions.

8.5 For the sound assessment, six to twelve violins will generally be played in the public final concert. The Sound Jury determines the final number on the basis of the quality of the violins and the time available. The juries then decide on the prizes in both assessments, after which the award ceremony takes place.

8.6 All violins are shown at the public exhibition referred to in Art. 4 and made available to musicians to be tried out under supervision.

9. Jury, assessment and exclusion

9.1 The jury consists of two specialist juries:

9.1.1 Making Jury: Peter Biddulph, Michael Baumgartner and Philip Ihle;

9.1.2 Sound Jury: Bomsori Kim, Arabella Steinbacher and Lawrence Power.

The Curator of the Violin Summit sits on both juries as a non-voting member. The Organiser may add further members to the juries; if a jury member is unable to serve, the Organiser designates a replacement.

9.2 The Competition comprises two assessments:

9.2.1 Making: assessed by the Making Jury on the basis of the violin and the Statement of Intent. The point of departure chosen within the meaning of the Preamble is not itself assessed; what matters is the consistency with which it is pursued. The assessment is based on the overall appearance, the mastery of execution, and the depth and precision of the engagement with the Featured Instrument on the basis of the Reference Dossier. It takes account of the approach set out in the Statement of Intent.

9.2.2 Sound: the tonal and playing qualities of the violin, assessed by the Sound Jury.

9.2.3 The violins are assessed in both assessments; for violins with a historical setup, the special provision under Section 6.3 applies. The juries appraise the instruments as a whole; there are no fixed weightings or scores.

9.3 Each jury reaches its decisions by simple majority. If the votes remain tied after further deliberation, the prize is shared. The juries may share prizes or decide not to award them, and may award additional special prizes under Art. 10.

9.4 Before the assessment begins, the jury members and the non-voting member disclose to the Organiser their relationships with participants, in particular teaching, employment or business relationships within the last three years, as well as family ties or close personal ties. Where such a relationship exists, they recuse themselves in respect of the violin concerned, which is assessed by the remaining members of the jury in question.

9.5 The Organiser may exclude a violin from the Competition after hearing the juries, in particular where:

9.5.1 the conditions under Art. 2 or the requirements under Art. 6 are not met;

9.5.2 material information, in particular concerning those involved, their contributions or work carried out by third parties, is incorrect or incomplete;

9.5.3 Art. 5 has been infringed;

9.5.4 participants attempt to influence members of the jury.

9.6 The juries may provide participants with brief written feedback. Their decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

10. Prizes and special prizes

10.1 The following prizes are awarded in each assessment:

10.1.1 Making: first, second and third prize;

10.1.2 Sound: first, second and third prize.

The prizes consist of a certificate, mention in the communications of the Summit and its media partners and, for prizes in the sound assessment, performance in the final concert. A violin may be awarded a prize in both assessments.

10.2 Special prizes may be endowed by the Organiser or by third parties. They are awarded by the juries or in accordance with the conditions of the donor.

10.3 As a special prize, the Walter Fischli Stiftung purchases one violin. The selection is made by the Walter Fischli Stiftung. Only violins whose participants agree to sell them are taken into consideration. Transfer of ownership, payment, customs duties and value added tax are governed by a contract of sale between the Walter Fischli Stiftung and those involved.

10.4 In the case of joint works, prizes and special prizes are awarded jointly to all those involved; in the case of violin-making schools, they are awarded to the institution. Payments are made to the contact person on behalf of all those involved; their division is a matter for those involved.

11. Attendance, travel and accommodation

11.1 Participants are encouraged to attend in Klosters, but attendance is not a condition of participation. Prizes are also awarded in absentia.

11.2 Participants who attend should, as far as possible, be available for interviews, public discussions and panels. They have free admission to the symposium and the exhibition as well as to the final concert with the award ceremony.

11.3 Travel and accommodation costs are generally not covered. The Organiser will assist with finding accommodation where possible. In justified exceptional cases, support may be considered on request; there is no entitlement to such support.

11.4 On request, the Organiser will issue a confirmation of participation for visa applications. The Organiser gives no guarantee that a visa will be granted.

12. Photography, film, audio and communication rights

12.1 Participants agree that they and their violins may be photographed and recorded in video and audio during the Summit.

12.2 Participants grant the Organiser a non-exclusive, royalty-free right to use these recordings and the documents submitted, in particular Statements of Intent and information from curricula vitae, without limitation in time or territory. This right covers the documentation, reporting and promotion of the Summit and of the Organiser in its own media and in editorial media, in particular in print, on websites and social media, in livestreams and on radio and television. The Organiser may make the recordings available to media partners for the same purposes.

12.3 Participants confirm that they hold the necessary rights to the documents submitted and that the submission of those documents does not infringe any third-party rights. In the case of joint works and violin-making schools, the contact person or the institution ensures that the necessary consents of all those involved have been obtained.

13. Data protection and confidentiality

13.1 The controller for the processing of personal data is Stiftung Kunst & Musik Klosters, Landstrasse 177, CH-7250 Klosters, violin.summit@klosters-music.ch.

13.2 The personal data and documents collected in the course of registration and participation are processed for the purpose of conducting the registration, admission, payment and competition procedures, for the related communication and for the purposes set out in Art. 12. Dates of birth, addresses and contact details are not published.

13.3 Online registration is handled via the 442Hz platform and payment via Stripe. To the extent necessary for the conduct of the Competition, the Curator of the Summit, the artistic management of Klosters Music, the juries and appointed service providers are given access to the data they require.

13.4 Depending on the registered office and technical infrastructure of the service providers used, personal data may also be processed outside Switzerland. The countries concerned, the applicable legal basis under data protection law and any safeguards are set out in the privacy policy linked to the registration form.

13.5 Documents relating to registrations that are not admitted are deleted no later than six months after the final admission decision. Other personal data are deleted after the end of the Competition unless required for the documentation of the Summit under Art. 12. This is without prejudice to pending disputes and statutory retention obligations, in particular for payment and accounting records. Data are retained for future calls for entries only with separate consent.

13.6 The deliberations of the juries and the information provided under Section 9.4 are confidential.

14. Amendments and cancellation

14.1 The Organiser may change dates, procedures and the composition of the juries for compelling organisational, artistic or safety-related reasons. Material changes will be notified to participants as early as possible. After the registration deadline, the conditions of participation, the requirements for the violin and the assessment criteria will not be changed to the detriment of participants.

14.2 In cases of force majeure, the Competition may be postponed or cancelled. Cancellation on account of an insufficient number of registrations is possible only until the final admission decision under Art. 4.

14.3 In the event of postponement or cancellation, the participation fee is not refunded. Claims for reimbursement of construction, material, travel and shipping costs are excluded to the extent permitted by law.

15. Applicable law and place of jurisdiction

15.1 The Competition and these Rules are governed by Swiss substantive law.

15.2 The exclusive place of jurisdiction for all disputes arising from or in connection with this Competition is Klosters, Canton of Graubünden (Regional Court of Prättigau/Davos in Klosters).

15.3 The exclusion of challenge under Section 9.6 concerns exclusively the specialist decisions of the juries.

16. Final provisions

16.1 By submitting the registration, all those involved confirm that they accept these Rules and have taken note of the privacy policy.

16.2 Communication takes place electronically to the e-mail address given on registration; in the case of joint works and violin-making schools, to the contact person.

16.3 These Rules are available in German and English. In the event of discrepancies, the German version prevails.

16.4 Should any provision of these Rules be invalid, the remaining provisions remain in force. The invalid provision is replaced by a provision that reflects its purpose as closely as possible.

16.5 These Rules enter into force upon publication on 1 October 2026.