

## Foreword

After seven years of research Marko Motnik, a research fellow at the Institute of Musicology, ZRC SAZU, published in 2024 the monograph *Glasbena pot Sophie Linhart: posledeh družine Antona Tomaža Linharta* (*Sophie Linhart's Musical Career: In the Footsteps of A. T. Linhart's Family*). At around the same time two other scholars at the same institute — Katarina Šter and Maruša Zupančič — began to engage more intensively with the history of women in music. Motivated by a desire to exchange approaches to scholarly questions at the intersection of gender and musical practices, the colleagues at the Institute of Musicology decided to dedicate the present issue of *De musica disserenda* to matters relating to the role of women in (Slovenian) music history and historiography. The idea of a one-day workshop for contributors soon emerged as an opportunity to present the challenges posed by such research. However, growing interest in the topic led to the organization of a full-scale symposium. In November 2024 the Institute of Musicology at ZRC SAZU hosted a two-day international meeting entitled "Beyond Traditional Roles: Female Musicians on the Path to Artistic Freedom".

We believe that the contributions in this issue of *De musica disserenda* are the result not only of rigorous scholarly research but also of the many fruitful discussions prompted by the aforementioned symposium. The articles span a spectrum ranging from strictly historiographical documentation, through the conceptual challenges facing the humanities, to the historic social conditions that constantly permeate the texts. For instance, while Ingeborg Harer and Gudrun Rottensteiner take as their point of departure a prominent female figure, their articles call for a reconceptualization of the musical archive that draws on the theory of the letter or explores biographical narratives before they have begun or after they have ended. The prime aim of Maruša Zupančič's contribution is to chart the women musicians of nineteenth-century Ljubljana, yet she is drawn to adopt an almost sociological lens by considering the social strata from which they emerged, since this context decisively shaped their career trajectories. Class becomes even more prominent in the article by Nataša Maričić, who observes that discomfort with the aristocratic background of the composer Dora Pejačević has coloured the entire post-war musicological discourse in Croatia, where her life and work have been repeatedly addressed. Sara Zupančič weaves together the history of nationalisms with cosmopolitan artistic ideologies, while Michaela Krucsay draws on the material traces of memory studies to engage with the self-narratives of the two protagonists of her article. Finally, Ivan Ćurković combines theories of visual art and gender in his analysis of performances of one of Handel's oratorios, examining how

sexual difference is staged within it. Both the symposium and this thematic issue are intended not only as a tribute to the women musicians of the past but also as a step towards a more inclusive future for musicology.

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*editors*