

## Call for Papers

**Workshop: “*Fidelio*: A Performative Opera? Beethoven’s Opera in Celebrations and Commemorations (19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries)”**

**Place: Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines University/Paris-Saclay University**

**Dates: April 13-14 2018**

**Languages: French, German and English**

Within the context of the international research and training project “*Beethoven’s Fidelio*: Transfers, circulations, appropriations, 1798-21<sup>st</sup> century,” started in 2016 and supported by several European institutions, and following on workshops held in Bonn (November 2016) and Zurich (June 2017), a third workshop entitled “***Fidelio*: a Performative Opera? Beethoven’s Opera in Celebrations and Commemorations (19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**” will take place on April 13 and 14 at the Paris-Saclay University, in Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines.

Through the celebration of conjugal love, *Fidelio* denounces arbitrariness and celebrates the idea of liberty, carrying with it the ideals of the Enlightenment, human rights and the French Revolution. On the basis of these ideals, which the work musically and scenically embodies, one has to question the multiples uses to which it has been the subject, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present time.

*Fidelio* also forms the core of celebrations marking the jubilees of the birth and death of the composer, as at the Vienna Opera in 1870 (for the centenary of his birth) and in 1877 (for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death). It is the work that is regularly performed during for the inauguration of opera houses at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (the Berlin Opera in 1912, the *Kroll Oper* in Berlin in 1927...). It is similarly with *Fidelio* that various opera houses reopen after World War II (Vienna and Berlin in 1945, Dresden in 1948...).

But *Fidelio* is also the subject of various appropriations, or even ideological and political recuperations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially by different authoritarian regimes. During Nazism, it is embraced as part of the musical canon and is used in multiple ways as a representative of a German cultural tradition promoted by the Nazis. In the same way, the importance of this Opera—that overturns the notions of dictatorship and arbitrariness—and its status in communist European countries, especially in the Soviet Union (a recording by the *Bolchoi* theater was made in the 1950s) and in DDR has been insufficiently studied.

**Different topics** will be the focus of this workshop:

- 1- *Fidelio* in the commemorations of Beethoven's birth and death
- 2- *Fidelio* in opera houses' openings at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and during the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries
- 3- *Fidelio* at official celebrations (for ex. during emperor Napoleon the 3<sup>rd</sup> visit in London in 1855)
- 4- *Fidelio* during the Nazi period (Beethovenian cycle broadcasted on German radio in 1934 introduced by *Fidelio*) and the Second World War (the performances/broadcastings of *Fidelio* in New York by "exiled" conductors such as Bruno Walter in 1941 or Toscanini in 1944)
- 5- *Fidelio* within the context of the reprise of operatic activity after 1945 and the reopening of opera houses (Berlin 1945, Vienne 1945 and 1955, Dresden 1948...)
- 6- *Fidelio* and political commemorations, in Europe (in communist Europe and around the Wall's fall in 1989 for ex.) but also on other continents, in Latin America, North America, Africa (for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of Apartheid in South Africa...)

This call for papers is open to young (PhD and postdoctoral students) as well as advanced scholars coming from various disciplines – historians, theater historians, musicologists, *Kulturwissenschaftler*, art historians, literature scholars, and intellectual historians. The general ambition of the *Fidelio* project is to set the basis for an international and interdisciplinary reflection by mobilizing principally, but not exclusively, Franco-German scientific perspectives.

Propositions (a 1500 character abstract and a short CV, in a .doc format, the whole on a single page) must be sent **by October 30 2017** in French, German or English to [melodie.hack@uvsq.fr](mailto:melodie.hack@uvsq.fr).

**Organization committee:** Philippe Gumpłowicz (Univ. Paris-Saclay/SLAM-RASM), Caroline Moine (Paris-Saclay Univ./CHCSC), Christine Siegert (Beethoven-Archiv, Bonn), Patrice Veit (Centre Georg Simmel at EHESS) and Jean-Claude Yon (Paris-Saclay Univ./CHCSC).

**Partner institutions:** Beethoven-Archiv Bonn, Paris-Saclay University ((CHCSC et SLAM-RAMS), Centre Georg Simmel at EHESS, Marc Bloch Center in Berlin and the Institut für Musikwissenschaft of Zurich University.

The *Fidelio* project is funded by the CIERA (Paris) and the Franco-German University (UFA/DFH) (Sarrebruck).

**A final conference will be held in Paris, at the Comic Opera, in December 2018.**