



# Performing Civility: International Competitions in Classical Music (Cambridge Cultural Social Studies)

*Lisa McCormick*

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Although competitions in classical music have a long history, the number of contests has risen dramatically since the Second World War, all of them aiming to launch young artists' careers. This is not the symptom of marketization that it might appear to be. Despite the establishment of an international governing body, competitions are plagued by rumors of corruption, and even the most mathematically sophisticated voting system cannot quell accusations that the best talent is overlooked. Why do musicians take part? Why do audiences care so much about who wins? *Performing Civility* is the first book to address these questions. In this groundbreaking study, Lisa McCormick draws from firsthand observations of contests in Europe and the US, in-depth interviews with competitors, jurors and directors, as well as blog data from competition observers to argue that competitions have endured because they are not only about music, they are also about civility.

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