

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



“So anch’io la virtù magica”:
**MORALITY AND LIBERTINISM
OF VIRTUOSE
FROM THE SEVENTEENTH
TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

**Conservatorio di Musica “Santa Cecilia”
15–17 December 2026 | Rome**

Call for papers

The International Conference «*So anch'io la virtù magica*»: *Morality and Libertinism of Virtuose from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* aims to explore the complex and often contradictory relationship between morality, virtue, transgression, and libertinage in the lives, careers, and representations of female singers, performers (virtuose), dancers, and actresses from the 17th to the 19th century. The conference seeks to investigate how the virtuose negotiated social norms, moral expectations, and artistic freedom in different cultural, geographical, and institutional contexts, through a historical, critical, and interdisciplinary approach.

The goal is to analyze the ways in which virtuose were perceived, celebrated, criticized, controlled, or marginalized, as well as the strategies which enabled them to construct their public and private identities, manage power relationships, and contribute to shaping artistic practices. Particular emphasis will be placed on the intersection of gender, morality, reputation, celebrity, and libertine discourse within musical and theatrical cultures.

Both aspects related to social history, gender studies, and moral discourse, and those concerning performance practice, repertoire, iconography, literature, and reception will be taken into consideration.

The themes of the conference will be investigated from an interdisciplinary perspective, exploring the phenomenon in relation to various fields, such as:

- moral, religious, and social norms regulating the lives of female performers;
- Libertinism, transgression, and the construction of scandal;
- representations of virtuose in literature, theatre, satire, and iconography;
- the relationship between virtue, vice, and artistic excellence;
- stardom and the public image of the virtuosa;
- patronage, protection, and power networks;
- gender, body, and voice in musical cultures in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries;
- virtuose and the theatre: opera, drama, dance, and hybrid genres;
- reception, criticism, and moral judgement in contemporary sources;
- strategies of self-representation, agency, and resistance;
- comparative perspectives across different European and extra-European contexts;
- continuities and transformations between the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

Proposals should be submitted in a Word or PDF file and must include the following information: name and surname of the proposer(s); institutional affiliation (if any); email address; title of the paper; an abstract (maximum 1,800 characters including spaces); a short CV (maximum 500 characters including spaces); technical equipment required for the presentation.

Proposals should be sent to convegni@conservatoriosantacecilia.it by **15 September 2026**. Notification of acceptance will be sent by **30 September 2026**.

Each presentation is strictly limited to 20 minutes (approximately 12.000 characters including spaces) and will be followed by 10 minutes of discussion.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Antonio Carocchia, *Conservatorio di Musica "Santa Cecilia"*

Teresa Chirico, *Conservatorio di Musica "Santa Cecilia"*

Francesco Cotticelli, *Università degli Studi Federico II*

Paologiovanni Maione, *Università degli Studi della Campania "L. Vanvitelli"*