

Leipzig, 05.06.2025

### **Friends, Neighbors, World Travelers** **Day 2 of the 15th "a cappella" Contest with multi-faceted ensembles**

For the second of a delightful total of four times this year, the "a cappella" festival enters the Great Hall of the Leipzig Gewandhaus. On Thursday morning, the second day of the contest takes place – and its presentation also cuts a fine figure in this perfected hall and acoustic space – and once again showcases an exciting, because so diverse, selection of young ensembles from the scene, who compete here with their own distinctive styles for the favor of the contest jury and the "a cappella" audience, as well as for invaluable experience.

The ensemble **Amita** opens, four female voices from Lübeck and Leipzig. The quartet takes a close-harmony journey through the small and large things in life in their program, from "La vie en rose" to "Thank You for the Music," with pure, lean voices and much warmth. The ensemble is distinguished by courage in pauses, pianissimo, and personality, and delivers a thoroughly enchanting contribution. Toward the end, they even perform "Jag såg dig," a piece by festival favorites Kraja – and what can one say: the four do complete justice to the arrangement and sound of their Swedish colleagues. Great performance by palpable friends.

What follows is eye-catching not only because of the red-pink, almost candy-decorated outfits of the five girls in the next seven-member group: The average age of **The Bookmarks** from Georgia is 15 years, so they are – in their first contest participation – the (significantly) youngest and most-traveled participants of this year and, one might say, under the same aegis as the 2013 contest runners-up The Quintessential Five, essentially the next generation of extremely young talents from Georgia. The seven quite mature young voices can handle their microphones and master, apparently effortlessly, both broad jazz harmonies and breakneck text and vocalise tempos. With seven voices, long-held, colorful chords are naturally a particularly appealing listening experience. And alongside some understandable nervousness, you can also see their joy and passion for singing. In tomorrow's masterclass, Stephen

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Connolly will certainly practice with them the proper, tension-filled placement of song endings, but in itself this contribution is of course impressive and is accordingly honored by the audience.

Last but not least, probably the most experienced ensemble in the field of participants takes the stage. **Mehr als 4** from Halle was founded in 2010 and scores with, among other things, a nonchalant "Java Jive," the very heartfelt English folk song "Bushes And Briars," and equally the romantic "Warum bist du so ferne." Some humor, folk, and barbershop are also included – all with precise sound treatment, round tone, high focus, and direct connection to the audience. A few parallels to the hosts amarcord cannot be denied in this professionally elegant quintet from the neighboring city. In any case: high level and great cheering at the end – the barbershop conclusion (on point!) even elicits an emphatic "Yes!!" from a voice in the audience.

Yes, this second contest day was really something special. For audience and jury, it meant intense recapitulation and deliberation once more. The results of the prize awards will be announced tomorrow, Friday, at the end of the "a cappella Showcase" with all groups (5 p.m. in the Copper Hall). Before that, the "a cappella Masterclass" awaits equally lively audience interest and participant engagement (10 a.m. in the Skylight Hall of the City Library).

25th International Festival for Vocal Music **a cappella** Leipzig:  
May 30 – June 7, 2025

15th International **a cappella** Contest Leipzig:  
June 4 – 7, 2025

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## Rezeption



[www.a-cappella-festival.de](http://www.a-cappella-festival.de)  
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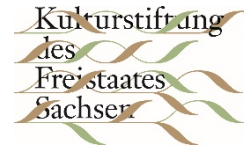
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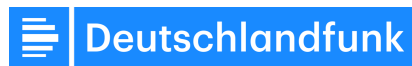
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