



2023, 12 (3), 2030-2055 | Research Article
A Systematical Evaluation on the Leyla Gencer Voice Competition

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Abstract

Several prestigious classical music competitions are organized in the national and international fields. These competitions, organized in the field such as performance and composition, motivate many young artists and allow them to achieve significant successes. The Leyla Gencer Voice Competition is an international and worldwide-known voice competition, which is the oldest and most important competition held in Turkey in the opera genre. Leyla Gencer, known as La Diva Turca and entitled as State Artist by the Turkish Republic, is one of our world-renowned artists, and with her pioneering character of music, she has made significant contributions to the promotion of the art of opera to our country and the announcement of Turkish opera singers to the world. Leyla Gencer Voice Competition has been organized with different frequencies starting from 1995 until 2018. This competition has been also held in the years after her death and it has maintained its prestige until today. From the past to the present, numerous great performers started their careers with prestigious music competitions such as Leyla Gencer Voice Competition. They achieved important career positions with their success of the competitions and now they are worldwide known artists. In this study, information about the life of Leyla Gencer, who made great contributions to the development of Turkish Opera art, was given; and the findings of the voice contest organized in her name were tabulated and interpreted by using document analysis methodology. The findings were created by systematical analysis of the information on the official website of the Leyla Gencer Voice Competition and the one in the archive of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts. Data regarding terms and conditions of the competition, audition processes, winners, awards, jury members for the preliminary auditions and finals, winners by country, Turkish award winners, number of awards received by Turkish award winners, distribution of award winners by voice type, distribution of award winners by gender, organizing institutions and gala concerts were evaluated and presented by classifying them according to years. As a result, the importance of the increase in prestigious competitions in our country, the increase in the motivation of young soloists, the creation of an archive of the competitions, and most importantly the establishment of a national federation of music competitions were emphasized.

Keywords: Competition, Voice Competition, Turkey, Leyla Gencer, Turkish Opera

Evren, G. F. & Gök, Ö. (2023). A Systematical Evaluation on the Leyla Gencer Voice Competition . Journal of the Human and Social Science Researches , 12 (3) , 2030-2055 . <https://doi.org/10.15869/itobiad.1311952>

Date of Submission	09.06.2023
Date of Acceptance	21.09.2023
Date of Publication	30.09.2023
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2023, 12 (3), 2030-2055 | Araştırma Makalesi
Leyla Gencer Şan Yarışması Üzerine Sistemantik Bir Değerlendirme

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Öz

Klasik Müzik alanında ulusal ve uluslararası alanda prestijli pek çok klasik müzik yarışmasına rastlanmaktadır. Performans ve beste gibi kategorilerde düzenlenen bu yarışmalar ülkemiz ve dünyada yetişen pek çok genç sanatçıyı sanat alanında motive etmekte ve önemli başarılarla imza atmalarına olanak sağlamaktadır. Leyla Gencer Şan Yarışması, opera türünde Türkiye'de düzenlenen en eski ve en önemli yarışma olan uluslararası ve dünya çapında bilinen bir ses yarışmasıdır. *La Diva Turca* adıyla anılan ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti tarafından Devlet Sanatçısı ünvanı alan Leyla Gencer dünya çapında önemli tanınırlığa sahip sanatçılarımızdan olmakla birlikte, müzikteki öncü karakteriyle opera sanatının ülkemize tanıtılması ve dünyaya Türk opera sanatçılarının duyurulması konusunda önemli katkılar sağlamıştır. Leyla Gencer Şan Yarışması 1995 yılından başlamak üzere farklı sıklıklarla 2018 yılına kadar düzenlenmiştir. 2008 yılına kadar kendisinin jüri üyesi olarak katılım sağladığı yarışma vefatından sonraki yıllarda da yapılmış ve bugünkü saygınlığını sürdürmüştür. Bu çalışmada Türk Opera sanatının gelişmesine büyük katkılar sağlamış Leyla Gencer'in hayatına dair bilgiler verilmiş ve adına düzenlenen san yarışmasına dair bulgular doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılarak tabloleştirilip yorumlanmıştır. Bulgular Leyla Gencer Şan Yarışması'nın resmi web sitesinde ve İstanbul Kültür Sanat Vakfı arşivinde yer alan bilgiler sistemantik bir şekilde analiz edilerek oluşturulmuştur. Yarışmanın katılım koşulları, eleme süreçleri, kazananları, ödülleri, ön eleme ve final jüri üyeleri, ülkelere göre kazananları, Türk uyruklu ödül kazananları, Türk uyruklu ödül kazananların aldıkları ödüllerin sayısı, ödül kazananların ses rengine göre dağılımı, ödül kazananların cinsiyete göre dağılımı, düzenleyen kuruluşlar ve gala konserlerine ilişkin veriler değerlendirmeye alınmış ve yıllara göre sınıflandırılarak sunulmuştur. Sonuç olarak ülkemizde prestijli yarışmaların çoğalması, genç solistlerin motivasyonunun artması, yapılan yarışmalara dair bir arşiv oluşturulması ve en önemlisi de ulusal alanda müzik yarışmaları federasyonunun kurulmasının önemi üzerinde durulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yarışma, Şan Yarışması, Türkiye, Leyla Gencer, Türk Operası

Evren, G. F. & Gök, Ö. (2023). Leyla Gencer Şan Yarışması Üzerine Sistemantik Bir Değerlendirme . İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi , 12 (3) , 2030-2055 . <https://doi.org/10.15869/itobiad.1311952>

Geliş Tarihi	09.06.2023
Kabul Tarihi	21.09.2023
Yayın Tarihi	30.09.2023
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Introduction

The History of Music Competitions

It is known that competitions have been held in various ways from ancient times to the present. Erhat (2008) mentioned the first competition phenomenon in mythological legends as follows:

Goddess Hera and Aphrodite ridiculed Athena by seeing that she was playing the flute, and Athena, on top of this, saw that her face really turned ugly by a stream in Phrygia and threw the flute there. While throwing, she has sworn to punish anyone who finds this flute with the greatest punishment. Marsyas found the flute and liked the sounds of the flute very much, saying that there was no musical instrument that sounded better than this. On top of that, he had the courage to compete with Apollo's lyre (lyra). Apollon, who accepts the competition, has one condition: The winner will be able to impose the punishment he wants on the loser. The Phrygian King Midas and the Muses (muses) are chosen to determine the outcome of the competition, which takes place on Mount Tmolos (Bozdağ) in Lydia. There was no result in the first competition, in the second, Apollon told Marsyas to play his flute backwards, and he himself played his lyre backwards. Although he was successful in making the same sounds, Marsyas could not play and lost the competition. King Midas, on the other hand, sided with Marsyas despite the result, therefore he was punished by Apollo by turning his ears into donkey's ears. He tied Marsyas to a tree and skinned him, but Apollo later regretted what he had done and broke his lyre. He also transformed Maryas into a river (Cited by Aytepe ve Yıldız, 2022:189). While offering sacrifices to God or performing a religious ceremony, aulos players usually played music and during the Panathenaic Feasts, sacrificial offerings were made with aulos. In addition, music competitions involving solo singers, soloists, and dancers were held in the name of the gods on agons which is great religious festivals (Çelik, 2020: 2414).

Musical rivalry goes back almost as long as the history of music. Contests organized in the field of classical music emerged both within an institutional structure and in an international format as of the end of the 19th century. It is seen that classical music competitions have caused various discussions since the first examples, and they have caused polarizations in music circles in terms of their benefits and harms as well as their impartiality. Despite this, there has been a serious increase in the competition population since the second half of the 20th century. Classical music competitions have increased in number and have continued their existence strongly until today. While the discussions about the competitions continue, the online competitions that have existed for the last decade also add a new dimension to these discussions (Ergene, 2021: 231).

Several prestigious classical music competitions are organized in the national and international fields. These competitions, organized in the field such as performance and composition, motivate many young artists and allow them to achieve significant successes. According to Wagner (2015), from the point of view of music education, music competitions as a cultural transformation process involve the cooperation of many people, especially students, families and teachers. McCormick (2017) mentioned that music competitions have been organized in their current form since the 19th century to the need for two different expertise as composers and performers. The mastery skills of the performers who combine technical skills and musical

understanding are exhibited in the music competitions, which are the environments where endurance is tested throughout the process and are held according to the recital tradition. (McCormick, 2017, p. 15). According to McCormick (2009), music competitions can be organized by educational institutions at all levels, as part of the program of music festivals or as independent events. Considering the type of the competition and the target audience, the application forms in the performance process and the competitions may differ from each other. (Cited by Toprak, 2022:345). Ergene (2021) stated that Classical music competitions, which are quite large in number, have an important position in this field, however, studies on classical music competitions are not enough yet and the literature needs more studies. In this research, besides the scarcity of the literature on the Leyla Gencer Voice Competition (LGVC) its important place in the international arena was emphasized.

Leyla Gencer and Her Contribution to the Opera Art



Figure 1. Leyla Gencer, Glyndebourne Opera Festival, Anna Bolena, 1965 (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2009: 130)

Leyla Gencer, who is a school in the music world, is an artist known as “La Diva Turca”, who has made a history of world opera and is shown among the top five female opera singers all over the world. Her name has been featured in music encyclopedias and related art resources, alongside composers who have become prominent in the field of opera such as Donizetti and Rossini. As a Turkish singer, she received numerous

awards and medals from many countries and institutions, and golden keys were handed over to her. She has carried her repertoire to extraordinary dimensions on the world stage with Maestros such as Tulio Serafin, Vittorio Gui, Gianandrea Gavazzeni and Ricardo Muti. Due to her success, she has always turned down numerous citizenship offers from many countries. Gencer, who defined himself as an Anatolian child, continued his life as a Turkish citizen (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2009: 51,52). Leyla Gencer, a name that fully corresponds to the word pioneer, as a determined woman who pursues her passion for art, has been instrumental in bringing opera, an art form that these lands are not accustomed to, to this geography and being talked about more. While she was mentioned as La Diva Turca in different geographies, she reflected this magic to the land where she was born, which became giant in the footsteps of her love for opera (Çetin, 2020). Leyla Gencer was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in 1989 by Boğaziçi University for her 'Achievements in a Universal Art' ("Bogazici Universitesi", n.d.). Leyla Gencer received the title of State Artist in 1988. A statue of Gencer was made in front of the Ankara State Opera and Ballet building in 1995 as the Leyla Gencer Monument. The 2005 Lifetime Achievement Award was given by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts. Acknowledged one of the few leading sopranos of her time, Leyla Gencer has represented 70 different principal soprano roles hundreds of times in over 30 years, from 1950 to 1983, in 60 opera stages all over the world (Öziş, 2006:7,8).

Leyla Gencer was born on October 10, 1928 in Istanbul. Gencer's father, who is originally from Safranbolu, is Hasanzade İbrahim Çeyrekgil and his mother is Alexandra Angela Minakovska, who is originally from Poland. His mother later converted to Islam and took the name Atiye. Gencer inherited dark eyebrows, dark eyes, dark hair, physique resembling "Queen Nefertiti", the tolerance of Bektashism, sensations from her father and passion for music, discipline, determination to work and stubbornness from her mother (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2009; Öziş, 2006). After losing his father at a young age, Gencer fell into a great void and tried to fill this feeling by reading more books and turning to music. While studying at Istanbul Italian high school, she wanted to be a great writer who emulated world-class writers such as Balzac and Dante. Apart from these, she memorized all the roles in plays such as Racine and Corneille, and unlike other children, she memorized and sang the arias on the records played at home and the Ave Maria she heard in the Churches. She also wanted to be a ballerina in the future, as she loved to dance. Inspired by all these arts in Leyla Gencer's youth, she aimed to become a great artist. After graduating from high school, Gencer started working at the Beyazıt library, met İbrahim Gencer in a summer and got married after a while. From the day they got married until his death, İbrahim Gencer believed that she should be in the music world with the feeling that she had something special and always supported him (Oral,1992:15; T.C Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2009: 54,55).

She continued her singing education, which she started at the Istanbul Municipal Conservatory, with Italian soprano Giannina Arangi-Lombardi and Apollo Granforte. Gencer made an important decision when she was in his senior year and interpreted the role of "Santuzza" in Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" on the stage of Ankara State Opera in 1950. She took part in the Ankara State Opera and Ballet Choir. A well-known opera singer in a few years, Gencer has been invited to many important State Receptions as a soprano (Utlı, 2010; Madak, 2019).

Gencer made her voice heard abroad on August 1, 1951. She was sent to London with the agreement of the exchange program and performed a recital on the BBC radio. In the same month, she took part in a live broadcast on the Paris radio. She experienced one of the biggest turning points of her life as of 1953. The artist was commissioned by the Republic of Turkey to give a recital in Rome in 1953. Gencer performed a recital on RAI radio in Rome, accompanied by Giorgio Favaretto, who was one of the famous pianists of Italy. This performance was broadcast live and listened all over Italy. Leyla Gencer's performance here was a great success and acclaim, she gave performances on the most important stages of the world from 1953 to 1983 and served in the most important opera institutions. (Ilyasoglu, 2018).

The first of the news-politics magazines in the Turkish press, 'Akis', which was published between 1954-1967 as an example from the Western Time magazine, also featured praiseworthy words about Leyla Gencer (Ismet Inonu Vakfi, n.d.). Since it was the first time that a Turkish name was included among famous performers such as Heifetz, Tabaldi and Schwarzkopf in the list of Columbia Artists Management in the USA, she accepted the offer he received from this company after his success in her first opera performances in San Francisco. It is mentioned that she signed a contract with this company, which holds the market. According to this agreement, Gencer will go on a concert tour in America and will give 11 performances in San Francisco opera beforehand. There is information about this situation and Leyla Gencer in the magazine "Musical America", one of the most important music magazines in America. Leyla Gencer was approved for the Verdi Requiem soprano solo at the grand ceremony held in Milan for her musical life, education, roles and achievements, her recognition in Europe and America, and especially for Toscanini's death in Italy, and this was also the case. The newspaper *Il Giorno* wrote in the next day that "Milan and the musical world knelt on his grave" (Akis, 1957: 30).

Utlu (2010), interpreted Gencer's final soprano part of Verdi's Requiem, accompanied by the La Scala Theater choir and orchestra under the conductor Victor De Sebata, at the Toscanini commemoration ceremonies held in Milan Duomo Cathedral in February 1957. He mentioned that he sang the leading role in *La Forza Del Destino* opera during La Scala Theater's tour of Cologne. According to Oral (1992), De Sabata found Leyla Gencer appropriate for Toscanini's funeral ceremony. Years later, in 1966, Gencer performed Verdi's Requiem again in Verona.

Leyla Gencer, farewell to the opera stage in 1985 with Francesco Gnecco's play *La Prova di un'Opera Seria*, at the La Fenice Theater in Venice continued her concerts and recitals until 1992. Since 1982, she has devoted herself to young opera singers with seminars and interpretation courses. She was the didactic-artistic director of di Milano. Between 1997-98, she was appointed by the conductor Riccardo Muti as the director of the young artists school of the La Scala choir. Leyla Gencer, considered the "last diva of the 20th century", has performed many leading roles in the world's most important opera stages. She consolidated her place in the opera world not only with the diversity of her repertoire, but also with the dramatic nuances she added to the characters she played. Gencer brought to light many forgotten works of the romantic period due to her research personality and being a good educator. She died at her home in Milan, Italy on May 10, 2008 (Utlu, 2010).

She made a great contribution to the development of the "Donizetti Renaissance" by

successfully interpreting Donizetti's forgotten operas (Utlu, 2010). Öktem (2018) wrote in an article that Leyla Gencer was mentioned with Donizetti, and that Donizetti's nine famous or little-known operas; she noted that Verdi was a brilliant performer of fifteen operas, eight of which were performed less frequently. Pioneer in rediscovering forgotten operas between 1957 (first step into Lucia di Lamermoor) and 1979 (farewell to Lucrezia Borgia); she brought the operas of Roberto Devereux (1964), Maria Stuarda (1967), Belisario (1969), Caterina Cornaro (1972) and Les Martyrs (1975) to the light of day and brought them together with opera lovers. The following is her operatic repertoire;

COMPOSER	OPERAS
D'Albert	Tiefland
Bellini	Beatrice di Tenda Norma La Sonnambula
Boito	Mefistofele
Britten	Albert Herring
Çaykovski	La Dama Di Picche Eugenio Onegin
Cherubini	Medea
Cilea	Adriana Lecouvreur
Donizetti	Anna Bolena Belisario Caterina Cornaro Lucia di Lamermoor Lucrezia Borgia Maria Stuarda Les Martyrs Poliuto Roberto Devereux
Gluck	Alceste
Gnecco	La Prova d'un opera seria
Mayr	Medea in Corinto
Mascagni	Cavalleria Rusticana
Massenet	Manon Werther
Menotti	Il Console
Monteverdi	L'Incoronazione di Poppea
Mozart	Così fan tutte Don Giovanni Idomeneo
Offenbach	I Racconti di Hoffman
Pacini	Saffo
Pizetti	Assassinio nella cattedrale Lo Straniero
Ponchielli	La Gioconda
Poulenc	Dialoghi delle Carmelitane
Prokofief	L'angelo di fuoco
Puccini	Madam Butterfly Manon Lescaut Suor Angelica It Tabarro Tosca Turandot
Rey, C. R.	Özyurt
Rocco	Monte Ivnor

Rossini	Elizabetta Regina d'Inghilterra Giyom Tell
Saygun	Kerem ile Asli
Smareglia	A Falena
Spontini	Agnese di Hohenstaufen La Vestale
Verdi	Aida Attila Un Ballo in Maschera La Battaglia di Legnano I Due Foscari Don Carlo Ermani La Forza del Destino Gerusalemme Macbeth Otello Rigoletto Simon Boccanegra La Traviata Il Travatore I Vespri Siciliani
Wagner	Tannhauser
Weber	Il Franco Cacciatore
Weinberger	Schwanda
Zandonai	Francesca da Rimini

Table 1. Leyla Gencer's Opera Repertoire (Oral, 1992: 193)

According to Gencer's opera repertoire in Table 1, it is seen that she concentrated on the operas of Verdi, Donizetti and Puccini. Apart from these composers, it is also one of her remarkable features that she performed non-popular composers' operas. 'Leyla Gencer's extensive repertoire ranges from the works of Monteverdi, Gluck and Mozart to the neo-classical period; to the works of Cherubini, Spontini, Mayr and artists from the romantic period such as Puccini, Prokofiev, Britten, Poulenc, Menotti and Rocca; it covers 72 roles ranging from lyric soprano to dramatic coloratura' (Utlu, 2010).

A few of the recitals that Leyla Gencer gave throughout her artistic life were recorded and published by RAI Record Company. Apart from this, the artist did not have recording. Regarding this, Gencer mentioned that she is independent in everything she does, that she always makes her own decisions, and that she came to Italy in a critical period in the 1950s and that Maria Callas was there at that time. She said that she had a bright, lyrical and perfect tone, that she had studied the Bel Canto technique with her teacher Gianni Arangio Lombardi in Turkey and Italy, but that this technique was not well known at that time, perhaps it was too late to convince record companies, and then she was not interested in thus pirated records appeared (Gould, Filarmoni Dergisi, 1976: 7, Cited by Tuncdemir, 1996: 193-194).

Since her first perform on the stage in 1950, Gencer has made a name for herself in all the world stages she has worked on, and has achieved countless successes. As a Turkish opera singer, she became one of the most important art ambassadors of Turkey, not only its owners, but also among the most important opera singers in the world. The application of her great efforts in her artistic life has made a great contribution to the development of her opera. Leyla Gencer, as a Turkish citizen, introduced our national

opera to the whole world in the best way, and also brought a great prestige to Turkey in the field of opera art. With her success in the international art arena as a Turkish woman, she has also set a great example for the next generations of opera. At the end of 1990, she shared her earnings through training and seminars in the field of opera art with Turkish young opera singers who came after her, and she also became a guide for their international careers. In this direction, one of Leyla Gencer's greatest contributions to the Turkish Opera has been the International Leyla Gencer Voice Competition organized in her name. Many talented young people were discovered and brought to the world stage by this competition (Madak, 2019).

Leyla Gencer Voice Competition

Leyla Gencer Voice Competition (LGVC) is a Turkey-based and international competition in opera field, which commemorates the legendary Turkish soprano Leyla Gencer. According to the information accessed from its official website this prestigious competition has been organized since 1995; and, it has led numerous opera singers to shine and debut in the music society. As of today, there have been nine competitions between 1995 and 2018; yet it hosted several opera singers, granted tens of various awards to musicians from Turkey and all around the world ("Leyla Gencer Voice Competition", n. d.). Utlu (2010) stated that Yapı Kredi won a gold medal from the IPRA (International Public Relations Association) in the field of culture and art organizations related to the Yapı Kredi International LGVC, the first of which was held in 1995 and the idea father of which was Aydin Gun. The bank terminated in 2000. The first mind competition was held under the leadership of Aydin Gun, who was the culture-arts consultant of Yapi Kredi and Bankasi in the 1990s (Ilyasoglu,2018: 51).

LGVC was held under her patronage until she passed away in 2008. It is organized by the Yapı Kredi, the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV), Borusan Sanat, and Accademia Teatro alla Scala, the triennial competition is dedicated to the estimable memory of "La Diva Turca" Leyla Gencer. The competition distinguishes for its international jury, which includes some of the most influential figures from different fields in the profession, as much as for its previous winners, who have subsequently launched on truly international careers. The competition's previous winners such as the Argentinean tenor Marcello Alvarez, South African soprano Pretty Yende, Egyptian soprano Fatma Said, Georgian sopranos Nino Machaidze and Anita Rachvelishvili, and Yugoslavian baritone Nikola Mijailovic are now counted amongst the talented stars of the opera world. Each preliminary auditions provide an opportunity for young opera singers across all continents to showcase their talent ("Leyla Gencer Voice Competition", n. d.).

About the History of the LGVC

Leyla Gencer has contributed to the careers of many young talents and her passion was carried to a higher level when, dedicated to her name that is LGVC. It was held first time with the name of the inaugural Yapı Kredi International LGVC on 3-9 September 1995. The competition attracted worldwide attention and 94 participants from various countries attended. After the competition the laureates were invited to perform on the stages of important opera houses such as Teatro alla Scala. Leyla Gencer gave her support to the second competition by taking part in the jury in 1997. LGVC was postponed due to the disastrous earthquake on 17 August 1999. The IIIrd Yapı Kredi

International LGVC Competition was held between 29 August and 4 September 2000. After six-years, the IVth LGVC was held on 25-30 August 2006. It was organised by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts in collaboration with Accademia Teatro alla Scala, under the sponsorship of Doğuş Group and Garanti Bank, supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and with the contributions of Borusan Holding. Collaboration with La Scala, as well as the practice of preliminary selection from recordings started with this edition and the VIth LGVC introduced the live preliminary auditioning process, during which applicants performed in front of juries at the well-known opera houses of Barcelona, Berlin and Milan, in addition to Istanbul. LGVC turned triennial after 2012 and the VIII competition in 2015 was organized by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts and Accademia Teatro alla Scala, with the contribution of Borusan Sanat and collaboration of the Opera Narodowa, Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Italian Cultural Centre, and the Kadıköy Municipality Süreyya Opera House (“Leyla Gencer Voice Competition”, n.d.).

Except for the Leyla Gencer Voice Competition, other voice competitions such as Siemens Opera Competition, National Young Soloist Competition, Suna Korad Voice Competition, Leyla Pinar Baroque Voice Competition, Voice Competition in memory of Prof. Yalcin Davran, Aria Antiche Voice Competition have been held in Turkey so far.

In addition, participation in the Belvedere Voice Competition, which is not organized by our country but in which we take part in the countries where the eliminations are made, can be provided like other international competitions.

Methodology

In this study a descriptive method was applied, and a literature review was conducted on the subject. Document analysis method which is one of the qualitative research methods was used in the process of obtaining and evaluating the data. Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) is a research method for rigorously and systematically analysing the contents of written documents (Wach, 2013: 1).

O’Leary (2017) describes document analysis as a research method that involves examining, questioning and analyzing various written texts as the primary research data source. On the other hand, Bowen (2009), mentioned that document analysis can be used mostly as a complementary method to other research methods and also as a stand-alone method, and stated that it is applied as a systematic procedure to evaluate both printed and electronic documents. Documents can serve certain functions of a research fundamentals. First, documents can provide data about the context in which the research participants are found. By witnessing past events, documents can help understanding their historical roots and background information. Second, the information contained in the documents may point to some of the questions that should be asked in the research. Third, the documents provide additional research data as a database. Fourth, documents provide a way to follow change and progress, as they offer the possibility of comparison. Fifth, documents are used to corroborate the findings in themselves or with evidence from other sources.

Document analysis, which has advantages and limitations, seems to be an effective method when its advantages are considered. It is more efficient as it takes less time than other research methods. The second advantage is that it is usable, that is, especially since the emergence of the Internet, it has been in the public domain and many

documents can be accessed without the permission of the authors. Therefore, document analysis is an attractive method for qualitative researchers. Since the data are collected in documents, they can be read and examined many times by the researcher. It is a method that remains unchanged during the research process and has no influence from the researcher (Cited by Koyuncu et al., 2018: 217-218).

Ethical Statement

It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.

Data Collection Tools

Data was created by analyzing the information on the official website of the LGVC and the one in the archive of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, one of the organizers of the competition.

Data Analysis

Data regarding terms and conditions of the competition, audition processes, winners, awards, jury members for the preliminary auditions and finals, winners by country, Turkish award winners, number of awards received by Turkish award winners, distribution of award winners by voice type, distribution of award winners by gender, organizing institutions and gala concerts were evaluated and presented by classifying them according to years.

Results and Comments

The following are the analyses and the results of the competition's process, the winners, the prizes, organizers and gala concerts. ¹

General Terms and Conditions / Prizes and Benefits

Beginning with the terms and conditions, the process of the competition is remarkably professional in international level. The information about the terms and conditions are noted for the 2018's competition. The organization committee requests an age limit between 18-32, participating in live preliminary audition or recording submission, detailed documentation on the contestant's résumé and an application fee. After the preliminary assessments, the final rounds are realized in İstanbul. The criteria for the final rounds are comprised of works from the pre-eminent opera repertoire and are executed with 40 musicians, who compete in the quarter and semifinals. 20 singers are selected for the semifinals; while 8 singers runs for the finals. The finals are evaluated by a gala concert for each contestant's singing an aria accompanied by an orchestra, which is subsequently followed by the award ceremony. Table 2 presents the comprehensive information on general terms and conditions.

Age Limit	18-32
Application Requirements	*online application at Yap Tracker platform *live preliminary auditions OR recording submission
Documentation	* Personal and contact information * Education and performance background

¹ The findings are obtained from the official website of the competition. (Leyla Gencer Voice Competition, n.d.) and the interview with E. Çankaya (personal interview, May 15, 2023)

	* Preliminary audition details * upload: Résumé, identification, photo, certification of the educational status, Video files (for applications by recording), copy of bank receipt of the application fee
Application Fee	€50
Preliminary Audition Requirements	2 opera arias of their choice as they have specified in their application, from memory and with piano accompaniment. At least one in Italian language; both arias are to be sung in the original language and key, and with the recitatives if there are any.
Finals Process	*40 finalists *quarter and semi final rounds with piano accompaniment *final round with orchestral accompaniment
Works for the Finals	* four opera arias (two of which are performed in the preliminary auditions and at least one to be by an Italian composer) * a solo passage from an oratorio or cantata to be sung at the quarter and semi-finals, as well as two options for an aria to be sung at the final. * all works are to be sung from memory.
Quarter Final	* non-public event * 2 arias; one of their choice from their official list, one chosen by the jury * 20 contestants are selected for the semi-final
Semi-Finals	* public event * 2 arias chosen by the jury from the official list. * 8 contestants are selected for the final
Finals	* a public-concert with the Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra * 1 aria out of the two priorly submitted by the contestant and approved by the jury
Accompaniment	Provided for free by competition UNLESS the contestant prefers to participate with his/her own accompanist
Rehearsals	* each contestant is entitled to a 20-minute rehearsal with the accompanist before each round
Accommodation	* travel, accommodation and daily expenses are covered by the contestants (except 2 nights' accommodation for the finalists)

Table 2. General Terms and Conditions

The prizes announced for the competition are effective on inviting the most professional and finest candidates, as they may provide exceptional opportunities for the winners. The prizes for 2018's competition as follows: € 12.500 is awarded to the 1st prize winner; € 7.500 for the 2nd prize winner; and, € 3.500 for the 3rd prize winner. The winners of Accademia Teatro Alla Scala Special Award, Leyla Gencer Audience Award, Opera Narodowa Special Award, Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme (JTYAP) Special Award, Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award take highly distinguished performance or education opportunities in very reputable music institutions; however, there is no information on the benefits of Honourable Mention, Opera and Ballet Foundation Special Encouragement Award, Turkey Opera and Ballet Foundation Istanbul Branch Mustafa İktu Special Award, Sedat-Güzin Gürel Art and Science Foundation Special Prize and Doğuş Audience Award, which were granted in the former competitions. Table 3 shows the prizes and the benefits based on competition in 2018.

PRIZES	BENEFITS
1 st Prize	€ 12.500
2 nd Prize	€ 7.500
3 rd Prize	€ 3.500
Accademia Teatro Alla Scala Special Award	Three-month scholarship at the Accademia Teatro Alla Scala
Leyla Gencer Audience Award	Performance in a concert at the Istanbul Music Festival
Opera Narodowa Special Award	Performance in a production of the Polish National Opera ²
Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme (JTYAP) Special Award	Five coaching sessions and an audition for the JPYAP
Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award	A role in a production of the Deutsche Oper Berlin
Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra (BIPO) Special Award	Performance with the Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra

Table 3. Prizes and benefits

Jury Members

Jury for the Final Rounds was constituted of national and international music authorities such as musicians / music writers / music directors from prestigious institutions such as Accademia Filarmonica Romana, Vienna Volksoper, Theatre du Capitole de Toulouse, The Royal Opera of London, Teatro alla Scala, Rome and Treviso Opera Houses, Paris Opera Comique, Royal Opera House, Rome Opera Theatre, Teatro Comunale-Bologna, Teatro di San Carlo di Napoli, Opéra de Monte-Carlo, Opera International Magazine Graz Opera Theatre, Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra, Turkish State Opera and Ballet, Orchestra dei Pomeriggi Musicali di Milano, Sferisterio Opera Festival, Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Valencia Opera, Pergolesi Sponitini Jesi Foundation, Eurobottega, Opera Magazine, Quartetto Society in Milan, Teatro la Fenice, Accademia d'Arte Lirica di Osimo, Teatro Verdi, Opera Narodowa, Opéra de Rennes, Opera di Firenze Accademia del Maggio, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University State Conservatoire, Deutsche Oper Berlin Operndirektor and Festival della Valle d'Itria. Table 4 presents the jury members for the finals by year, name and information regarding their profession and institution. It is important to state that the majority of the jury members were directors of opera houses and opera singers; and they are mostly foreign music authorities. Furthermore, one of the jury member served as "president of the jury" in each competition whereas an additional member was in charge as "coordinator."

YEAR	JURY MEMBER	INSTITUTION / PROFESSION
1995	Massimo Bogianckino, <i>president of the jury</i>	Accademia Filarmonica Romana
	Aydın Gün, <i>coordinator</i>	Tenor, Opera Director
	Klaus Bachler	Vienna Volksoper
	Nicholas Joel	Theatre du Capitole de Toulouse
	Helga Schmidt	The Royal Opera of London
	Gianni Tangucci	Teatro alla Scala
	Vincenzo de Vivo	Artistic Director of Rome and Treviso Opera Houses
1997	Aydın Gün, <i>president of the jury</i>	Tenor, Opera Director
	Leyla Gencer	Soprano
	Pierra Medecin	Director of Paris Opera Comique
	Helga Schmidt	Artistic Consultant of Royal Opera House

² <https://www.iksv.org/en/news/8th-leyla-gencer-voice-competition-concluded>

	Gianni Tangucci	Artistic Director of Rome Opera Theatre
	Luca Targetti	Casting Director of Teatro alla Scala
	Vincenzo De Vivo	Artistic Director of Teatro Comunale-Bologna
2000	Aydın Gün, <i>president of the jury</i>	Tenor, Opera Director
	Leyla Gencer	Soprano
	Francesco Canessa	General Director of Teatro di San Carlo di Napoli
	John M. Mordler	General Director of Opéra de Monte-Carlo
	Sergio Segalini	Chief Editor of Opera International Magazine
	Karen Stone	General Director of Graz Opera Theatre
	Gianni Tangucci	Artistic Director of Rome Opera Theatre
	Luca Targetti	Casting Director of Teatro alla Scala
	Vincenzo De Vivo	Artistic Director of Teatro Comunale-Bologna
2006	Stephane Lissner, <i>president of the jury</i>	General Manager and Artistic Director of Teatro alla Scala
	Leyla Gencer	Soprano
	Gürer Aykal	Principal Conductor of Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
	Yekta Kara	Chief Director of the Turkish State Opera and Ballet
	John M. Mordler	General Director of Opéra de Monte-Carlo
	Gianni Tangucci	Artistic Director of Orchestra dei Pomeriggi Musicali di Milano
	Vincenzo De Vivo	Artistic Director of Teatro Comunale-Bologna
2008	Pier Luigi Pizzi, <i>president of the jury</i>	Artistic Director of the Sferisterio Opera Festival
	Paolo Arcà	Artistic Director of Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino
	Gürer Aykal	Principal Conductor of Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
	Yekta Kara	Chief Director of the Turkish State Opera and Ballet
	Gianni Tangucci	Assistant Artistic Director of Napoli San Carlo Theatre
	Luca Targetti	Casting Director of Teatro alla Scala
2010	Vincenzo De Vivo	Assistant Director of Valencia Opera
	Pier Luigi Pizzi, <i>president of the jury</i>	Artistic Director of the Sferisterio Opera Festival
	Gürer Aykal	Honorary Conductor of Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
	Renato Bruson	Baritone
	Yekta Kara	Chief Director of the Turkish State Opera and Ballet
	Gianni Tangucci	Director of Pergolesi Sponitin Jesi Foundation
	Luca Targetti	Accademia Teatro alla Scala International Project Development Manager
2012	Vincenzo De Vivo	Artistic Director of Eurobottega
	Mirella Freni, <i>president of the jury</i>	Soprano
	John Allison	Chief Editor of the Opera Magazine
	Paolo Arcà	Artistic Director of the Quartetto Society in Milan
	Yekta Kara	Chief Director of the Turkish State Opera and Ballet
	Fortunato Ortombina	Artistic Director of the Teatro la Fenice
	Vincenzo Scalera	Pianist, Faculty Member of Accademia Teatro alla Scala
2015	Vincenzo De Vivo	Artistic Director of the Accademia d'Arte Lirica di Osimo, Board Member of the Teatro Verdi, and Artistic Director of the Eurobottega
	Luciana Serra, <i>president of the jury</i>	Soprano
	David Gowland	Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Director
	Yekta Kara	Chief Director of the Turkish State Opera and

		Ballet
	Izabela Klosinska	Casting Director of Opera Narodowa
	Antonio Pirolli	Conductor
	Alain Surrans	Director of Opéra de Rennes
	Gianni Tangucci	Artistic Director of Opera di Firenze Accademia del Maggio
2018	Renato Bruson, <i>president of the jury</i>	Baritone
	Sascha Goetzel	Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra Artistic Director and Principal Conductor
	David Gowland	Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Artistic Director
	Toni Gradsack	Teatro alla Scala Casting Manager
	Yekta Kara	Turkish State Opera and Ballet Former Director-in-Chief and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University State Conservatoire Head of Opera Department
	Christoph Seuferle	Deutsche Oper Berlin Operndirektor
	Alberto Triola	Festival della Valle d'Itria Artistic Director

Table 4. Jury Members for the Finals

The jury for the final rounds was incorporated of 7 members, one of which was the president, for the competitions in 1995, 1997, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2015, 2018; and, 9 members for the one in 2000 (Table 5).

YEAR	NUMBER OF JURY MEMBERS
1995	7
1997	7
2000	9
2006	7
2008	7
2010	7
2012	7
2015	7
2018	7

Table 5. Number of Final Jury Members by Year

According to the competition's official website, there were preliminary auditions starting from the 6th competition.³ It is observed that, there is information on preliminary auditions for 2012's and 2015's competitions, however, non is presented for the competitions between 1995 and 2010, and 2018. Table 6 shows data regarding preliminary auditions by year, name, institution / profession and audition city. Considering this data, candidates for the final rounds were auditioned in Berlin, London, Vienna, Madrid, Milan, İstanbul, Paris and Warsaw by highly qualified musicians and music authorities from various institutions such as Berlin Staatsoper Opernstudio, Accademia Teatro alla Scala, Opera Magazine, Royal Opera House, Wiener Staatsoper, Italian Institut of Culture of Madrid, Turkish State Opera and Ballet, Opéra de Rennes, Staatsoper Unter den Linden Opernstudio, Silvio Verviso International Opera Studio, Polska Filharmonia Baltycka and Opera Narodowa.

³ <http://www.levlagencer.org/en/history>

YEAR	JURY MEMBER	INSTITUTION / PROFESSION	AUDITION CITY
1995-2010	-	-	-
2012	Boris Anifantakis	Responsible of Berlin Staatsoper Opernstudio	Berlin
	Daniele Borniquez	Responsible of Music Department of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Berlin
	John Allison	Chief Editor of the Opera Magazine	London
	Daniele Borniquez	Responsible of Music Department of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	London
	David Gowland	Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Director	London
	Daniele Borniquez	Responsible of Music Department of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Vienna
	Rene Zisterer	Assistant of General Intendant Wiener Staatsoper	Vienna
	Daniele Borniquez	Responsible of Music Department of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Madrid
	Carmelo di Gennaro	Music Critic, Director of Italian Institut of Culture of Madrid	Madrid
	Luisa Vinci	General Director of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Madrid
	Daniele Borniquez	Responsible of Music Department of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Milan
	Vincenzo Scalera	Pianist, Faculty Member of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Milan
	Daniele Borniquez	Responsible of Music Department of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Istanbul
	Yekta Kara	Chief Director of the Turkish State Opera and Ballet	Istanbul
	Nadia Nigris	Deputy Manager of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Istanbul
2015	Vincenzo Manno	Tenor, Faculty Member of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Paris
	Alain Surrans	Director of Opéra de Rennes	Paris
	David Gowland	Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Director	London
	Vincenzo Scalera	Pianist, Faculty Member of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	London
	Boris Anifantakis	Staatsoper Unter den Linden Opernstudio Director	Berlin
	Umberto Finazzi	Faculty Member of Accademia Teatro alla Scala, Music Director of Silvio Verviso International Opera Studio	Berlin
	Luciana Serra	Soprano	Milan
	Umberto Finazzi	Faculty Member of Accademia Teatro alla Scala, Music Director of Silvio Verviso International Opera Studio	Milan
	Massimiliano Caldi	Principal Conductor of Polska Filharmonia Baltycka	Warsaw

	Izebela Klosinska	Casting Director of Opera Narodowa	Istanbul
	Umberto Finazzi	Faculty Member of Accademia Teatro alla Scala, Music Director of Silvio Verviso International Opera Studio	Istanbul
	Yekta Kara	Chief Director of the Turkish State Opera and Ballet	Istanbul
	Nadia Nigris	Deputy Manager of Accademia Teatro alla Scala	Istanbul
2018	-	-	-

Table 6. Jury Members for the Preliminary Auditions

Winners

LGVC was organized for nine times between 1995 and 2018. The awards granted were 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Honourable Mention, Opera and Ballet Foundation Special Encouragement Award, Turkey Opera and Ballet Foundation Istanbul, Sedat-Güzin Gürel Art and Science Foundation Special Prize, Accademia Teatro Alla Scala Special Award, Doğuş Audience Award, Leyla Gencer Audience Award, Opera Narodowa Special Award, Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Special Award, Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award, BIPO (Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra) Special Award. The winners of the competition with various voice types such as soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass-baritone came from several countries including Turkey, Albania, Argentina, Norway, Italy, Yugoslavia, Georgia, Belarus, Romania, Kazakhstan, Greece, Germany, Sri Lanka, Korea, South Africa, Egypt, Brazil, United States of America (USA), Netherlands, Poland. Table 7, presents the winners by year, type of prize, name, voice type and country. It is noted that the 3rd and honourable mention prizes in 1997, 2nd prizes in 2006 and 2008, 3rd prizes in 2010 and 2015 were shared by two contestants.

YEAR	PRIZE	WINNER	VOICE TYPE	COUNTRY
1995	1 st Prize	Enkelejda Shkosa	Mezzo-Soprano	Albania
	2 nd Prize	Marcello Álvarez	Tenor	Argentina
	3 rd Prize	Birgül Su	Soprano	Turkey
	Honourable Mention	Tuncay Kurtoğlu	Bass	Turkey
1997	1 st Prize	Hege Tjønn	Soprano	Norway
	2 nd Prize	Paola Cigna	Soprano	Italy
	3 rd Prize	Nikola Mijailovic	Baritone	Yugoslavia
		Lasha Nikabadze	Tenor	Georgia
	Honourable Mention	Şenol Şakir Talınlı	Tenor	Turkey
2000	1 st Prize	Güneş Gürle	Bass-Baritone	Turkey
		Elena Salò	Mezzo-Soprano	Belarus
		Otilia Maria Aydın ^{DC}	Soprano	Romania/Turkey
	2 nd Prize	Perihan Diana Nayır	Soprano	Turkey
	3 rd Prize	Irina Muratbekova	Soprano	Kazakhstan
	Opera and Ballet Foundation Special Encouragement Award	Marita Paparizou	Mezzo-Soprano	Greece
	Turkey Opera and Ballet Foundation Istanbul Branch Mustafa İktu Special Award	George Gagnidze	Baritone	Georgia
Sedat-Güzin Gürel Art and Science Foundation				

	Special Prize			
2006	1 st Prize	Nino Machaidze	Soprano	Georgia
	2 nd Prize	Elenore Marguerre	Soprano	Germany
		Francesca Ruospo	Soprano	Italy
	3 rd Prize	Burcu Uyar	Soprano	Turkey
2008	1 st Prize	Nazlı Deniz Boran	Soprano	Turkey
	2 nd Prize	Kishani Jayasinghe	Soprano	Sri Lanka
		Eung Kwang Lee	Baritone	Korea
	3 rd Prize	Anita Rachvelishvili	Mezzo-Soprano	Georgia
2010	1 st Prize	Pretty Yende	Soprano	South Africa
	2 nd Prize	Kartal Karagedik	Baritone	Turkey
	3 rd Prize	Anna Lapkovskaja	Mezzo-Soprano	Germany
Pervin Çakar		Soprano	Turkey	
2012	1 st Prize	Fatma Said	Soprano	Egypt
	2 nd Prize	Ludmilla Bauerfeldt	Soprano	Brazil
	3 rd Prize	Jessica Rose Cambio ^{PC}	Soprano	Italy/USA
	Accademia Teatro Alla Scala Special Award	Irina Ioana Baiant	Soprano	Romania
	Doğuş Audience Award (Voted by the Audience)	Fatma Said	Soprano	Egypt
2015	1 st Prize	Marigona Qerkezi	Soprano	Albania
	2 nd Prize	Jonathan Winell	Tenor	USA
	3 rd Prize	Deirdre Judith Angenent	Soprano	Netherlands
		Hubert Zapiór	Baritone	Poland
	Accademia Teatro Alla Scala Special Award	Marigona Qerkezi	Soprano	Albania
	Leyla Gencer Audience Award	Ayşe Şenogul	Soprano	Turkey
	Opera Narodowa Special Award	Ayşe Şenogul	Soprano	Turkey
	Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Special Award	Hubert Zapiór	Baritone	Poland
2018	1 st Prize	Ezgi Karakaya	Mezzo-Soprano	Turkey
	2 nd Prize	Anna Doris Capitelli	Mezzo-Soprano	Italy
	3 rd Prize	Piotr Buszewski	Tenor	Poland
	Accademia Teatro Alla Scala Special Award	Piotr Buszewski	Tenor	Poland
	Leyla Gencer Audience Award	Ezgi Karakaya	Mezzo-Soprano	Turkey
	Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Special Award	Faik Mansuroğlu	Baritone	Turkey
	Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award	Doğukan Özkan	Bass-Baritone	Turkey
	BIPO Special Award	Ezgi Karakaya	Mezzo-Soprano	Turkey

Table 7. Winners of the Competition

LGVC has attracted numerous opera singers all around the world. The prizes were granted to outstanding singers from Turkey, Albania, Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Egypt, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Korea, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, United States of America (USA) and Yugoslavia. It is noted that two of the prize winners held dual citizenships (Italy/USA,

Romania/Turkey). In addition, 16 of the 49 prizes were won by Turkish contestants. Table 8 presents the number of prizes and their distribution by country and year.

COUNTRY / YEAR	1995	1997	2000	2006	2008	2010	2012	2015	2018	TOTAL
Turkey	2	2	1	1	1	2		2	5	16
Albania	1							2		3
Argentina	1									1
Belarus			1							1
Brazil							1			1
Egypt							2			2
Georgia		1	1	1	1					4
Germany				1		1				2
Greece			1							1
Italy		1		1					1	3
Italy – USA (DC ⁴ 1)							1			1
Kazakhstan			1							1
Korea					1					1
Netherlands								1		1
Norway		1								1
Poland								2	2	4
Romania							1			1
Romania – Turkey (DC 2)			1							1
South Africa						1				1
Sri Lanka					1					1
USA								1		1
Yugoslavia		1								1
TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIZES	4	6	6	4	4	4	5	8	8	49

Table 8. Number of Prizes by Nationality

In almost all the competitions, there were Turkish contestants who won various prizes, except the 2012's competition. A total number of 14 Turkish contestants (one with dual citizenship from Romania and Turkey) were granted 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Honourable Mention prizes, as well as Leyla Gencer Audience Award, Opera Narodowa Special Award, Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Special Award, Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award and BIPO Special Award. It is noted that there were discrepancies in the distribution of the prizes in 1997, 2000, 2015, 2017. Two Turkish contestants shared the Honourable Mention prize in 1997; one dual citizenship holder (from Romania-Turkey) won the 2nd prize in 2000; one contestant was awarded two prizes in 2015 while another one won three prizes in 2018. Award-winning Turkish contestants included 8 sopranos, 1 tenor, 2 baritones, 2 bass-baritones and 1 bass. Table 9 demonstrates the Turkish prize-winners of the competition by year, prize, name and voice type.

⁴ DC: Dual Citizenship.

YEAR	PRIZE	NAME	VOICE TYPE
1995	3 rd Prize	Birgül Su	Soprano
	Honourable Mention	Tuncay Kurtoğlu	Bass
1997	Honourable Mention	Şenol Şakir Talınlı	Tenor
		Güneş Gürle	Bass-Baritone
2000	2 nd Prize	Otilia Maria Aydın ^{DC}	Soprano
	3 rd Prize	Perihan Diana Nayır	Soprano
2006	3 rd Prize	Burcu Uyar	Soprano
2008	1 st Prize	Nazlı Deniz Boran	Soprano
2010	2 nd Prize	Kartal Karagedik	Baritone
	3 rd Prize	Pervin Çakar	Soprano
2012	-	-	-
2015	Leyla Gencer Audience Award	Ayşe Şenogul	Soprano
	Opera Narodowa Special Award	Ayşe Şenogul	Soprano
2018	1 st Prize	Ezgi Karakaya	Mezzo-Soprano
	Leyla Gencer Audience Award	Ezgi Karakaya	Mezzo-Soprano
	Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Special Award	Faik Mansuroğlu	Baritone
	Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award	Doğukan Özkan	Bass-Baritone
	BIPO Special Award	Ezgi Karakaya	Mezzo-Soprano

Table 9. Prizes Won by Turkish Singers

Table 10 below sets out the number of prizes won by Turkish singers by the type of prize and year. Turkish contestants won 17 prizes in total; 1 of them was granted to a contestant with dual citizenship of Romania and Turkey, which is included in this table. It is monitored that Turkish singers were awarded 1st prize in 2008 and 2018; 2nd prize in 2000 and 2010; 3rd prize in 1995, 2000, 2006, 2010; Honourable Mention prize in 1995 and 1997; and other special prizes including Leyla Gencer Audience Award, Opera Narodowa Special Award, Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists Programme Special Award, Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award and BIPO Special Award in 2015 and 2018.

PRIZE / YEAR	1995	1997	2000	2006	2008	2010	2012	2015	2018
1 st Prize					1				1
2 nd Prize			1 ^{DC}			1			
3 rd Prize	1		1	1		1			
Honourable Mention	1	2							
Leyla Gencer Audience Award								1	1
Opera Narodowa Special Award								1	
Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artists									1

Programme Special Award									
Deutsche Oper Berlin Special Award									1
BIPO Special Award									1
TOTAL	2	2	2	1	1	2	-	2	5
GENERAL TOTAL	17								

Table 10. Number of Prizes Won by Turkish Singers

Opera singers with various voice types participated in LGVC. The winners' voice types included soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass-baritone, bass and lacked alto. The following table (Table 11) shows the number of prizes by year and voice types. Based on the total count, it is noted that the majority of the prizes were awarded to sopranos. Out of the 49 prizes, 24 of them were granted to sopranos, 9 to mezzo-sopranos, 7 to baritones, 6 to tenors, 2 to bass-baritones and 1 to bass.

YEAR / VOICE TYPE	SOPRANO	MEZZO-SOPRANO	TENOR	BARITONE	BASS-BARITONE	BASS
1995	1	1	1			1
1997	2		2	1	1	
2000	3	2		1		
2006	4					
2008	2	1		1		
2010	2	1		1		
2012	5					
2015	5		1	2		
2018		4	2	1	1	
TOTAL	24	9	6	7	2	1
GENERAL TOTAL	49					

Table 11. Number of Prizes by Voice Types

Leyla Gencer Voice Competition's prize-winners included both male and female contestants. In all the competitions, there were male and female winners, except in 2006 and 2012. Table 12 presents the number of prizes by year and gender. As it is shown in the table, female prize-winners are predominant.

YEAR / GENDER	MALE	FEMALE
1995	2	2
1997	4	2
2000	1	5
2006	-	4
2008	1	3
2010	1	3
2012	-	5
2015	3	5
2018	4	4
TOTAL	16	33
GENERAL TOTAL	49	

Table 12. Number of Prizes by Gender

Organizers and Gala Concerts

It is important to reveal the organizers of the competition in order to establish more to the objectives towards an international recognition. The competition was organized by Yapı Kredi Bank in 1995, 1997 and 2000; and by IKSŞ (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and ARTS) for the subsequent years. (Table 13)

YEAR	ORGANIZER
1995 - 2000	Yapı Kredi Bank
2006 - 2018	IKSŞ (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and ARTS)

Table 13. Organizers of the Competition by Year⁵

The final rounds of the competition were organized as public-concerts with the finalists accompanied by orchestras such as Bilkent Symphony Orchestra, Cemal Reşit Rey (CRR) Symphony Orchestra and Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra. The orchestras were led by distinguished conductors as Rauf Abdullayev, Cem Mansur, Orhan Şalliel, Güreş Aykal, Pietro Miantini and Antonio Pirolli. Table 14 below presents these concerts by year.

YEAR	VENUE	CONDUCTOR	ORCHESTRA
1995	Cemal Reşit Rey Concert Hall	Rauf Abdullayev	Bilkent Academic Symphony Orchestra
1997	Cemal Reşit Rey Concert Hall	Cem Mansur	Bilkent Symphony Orchestra
2000	Cemal Reşit Rey Concert Hall	Orhan Şalliel	CRR Symphony Orchestra
2006	Hagia Eirene Museum	Güreş Aykal	Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
2008	Hagia Eirene Museum	Güreş Aykal	Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
2010	Hagia Eirene Museum	Güreş Aykal	Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
2012	Hagia Eirene Museum	Pietro Miantini	Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
2015	Süreyya Opera Hall	Antonio Pirolli	Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra
2018	Lütfi Kırdar ICEC Istanbul	Pietro Miantini	Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra

Table 14. Gala Concerts for the Final Rounds by Year

Conclusion and Discussion

As a pioneering figure in the Turkish opera art, Leyla Gencer performed in countless operas in the stages of most prestigious national and international venues. Undoubtedly, she was not only a performer but also an inspiring musician for the younger generations of opera singers for developing themselves as universal contributors to the vocal arena and for introducing Turkish opera artists to the world. The competition in the name of her, LGVC, has led several Turkish and foreign singers to revive the charm of the opera art in Turkey, and generated tens of winners to debut in their careers worldwide.

Considering the analyses in the findings, the results of this research showed that the application requirements regarding age limit, audition repertory for the preliminary auditions / video recordings and final rounds, elimination process through the competition, providing accompanist, sponsors' support in accommodation for the finalists and the glorious gala concert in İstanbul, one of the world's oldest cities with its rich culture, has attracted hundreds of opera singers from all the nations. In addition, the awards surely created substantial funding and performance and education

⁵ Achieved from interview with Esra Çankaya.

opportunities for the finalists, which distributed the participation of the highest-level musicians to the competition.

The information on the jury members for the preliminary auditions and final rounds showed that the elimination was actualized by highly professional music authorities. The majority of the jury involved foreign professionals with esteemed careers in reputable music institutions; and the Turkish jury members, Leyla Gencer being in the first place, had nationally and internationally recognized careers. Thus, this formation of the jury elicited the highest-level prize winners and contributed to their promotion.

Regarding the organizing associations, Yapı Kredi Bank in the first 3 competitions and IKSİV (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts) in the latter appear as institutions with their art-loving visions and financial capabilities, which is always essential for developing arts. Besides, the orchestras accompanying the finalists in the gala concerts and the conductors are among the finest in Turkey, which turned the competition into a glamorous celebration in the end.

According to the assessments on the winners, tens of winners from Turkey and different countries and with various voice types were granted very prestigious awards. The finalists were comprised of both male and female contestants, however, the majority of the prize winners were female, which showed that female singers are more eager to participate in this competition. The foreign winners of the competition included the best opera singers of the world, such as Fatma Said, Pretty Yende, Nino Machaidze, Marigona Qerkezi, Elena Salò, Hege Tjønne and Enkelejda Shkosa. However, reviewing the distribution of the prizes in all the competitions, it is important to state that Turkish contestants won most of the prizes, almost about one third of all. After the competition, all of them have built distinguished careers in Turkey and worldwide. For instance, Birgül Su, Tuncay Kurtoğlu, Şenol Şakir Talınlı, Otilia Maria Aydın, Perihan Diana Nayır, Nazlı Deniz Boran, Ayşe Şenogul, Ezgi Karakaya, Faik Mansuroğlu and Doğukan Özkan are employed as soloists in the State Opera and Ballet Institutions in İzmir, Ankara, İstanbul, Mersin ("Kultur ve Turizm Bakanlığı", n. d.). Additionally, Güneş Gürle ("Guenes Guerle", n. d.) is a soloist in Düsseldorf Opera and Opera am Rhein; Burcu Uyar ("Biam", n. d.) took soloistic roles in Berlin Staatsoper and Berlin Deutsche Oper; Kartal Karagedik ("Kartal Karagedik", n. d.) has been a soloist in Hamburg State Opera; Pervin Çakar ("Wikipedia", n. d.) took soloistic roles at Theater An Der Wien and Milan Teatro Alla Scala. Considering all these careers, it is a pride for the Turkish opera world with its artistic and educational establishments to be able to grow such eminent singers.

In conclusion, LGVC has announced several genius opera singers from Turkey and foreign countries to the world with its organization, prizes, jury formation, and the process in the auditions and final rounds, which is important to inspire younger generation of singers, especially Turkish. Therefore, we can recommend increasing such competitions not only in the opera but also in all the other fields of music to promote the arts and music in all terms. Additionally, hosting and organizing such competitions in Turkey are one of the best ways in introducing and extending our musicians and culture to the world. Furthermore, establishing national federation of music competitions is strongly suggested for creating a comprehensive archive of the competitions.

Peer-Review	Double anonymized - Two External
Ethical Statement	<i>It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.</i>
Plagiarism Checks	Yes - Ithenticate
Conflicts of Interest	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare.
Complaints	itobiad@itobiad.com
Grant Support	The author(s) acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research.
Author Contributions	Design of Study: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50) Data Acquisition: 1. Author (%60), 2. Author (%40) Data Analysis: 1. Author (%40), 2. Author (%60) Writing up: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50) Submission and Revision: 1. Author (%50), 2. Author (%50)

Değerlendirme	İki Dış Hakem / Çift Taraflı Körleme
Etik Beyan	<i>Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.</i>
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Etik Bildirim	itobiad@itobiad.com
Çıkar Çatışması	Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.
Finansman	Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.
Yazar Katkıları	Çalışmanın Tasarlanması: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50) Veri Toplanması: 1. Yazar (%60), 2. Yazar (%40), Veri Analizi: 1. Yazar (%40), 2. Yazar (%60) Makalenin Yazımı: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50) Makale Gönderimi ve Revizyonu: 1. Yazar (%50), 2. Yazar (%50)

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