

Audition Guidelines and Suggested Repertoire

Updated Spring 2023

Video Submission Instructions (All Auditions)

1. Upload the audition video to YouTube and set the privacy to public or unlisted.
2. Copy and paste the link in your Music Major Application or share via email to music@stthomas.edu. Any supporting materials, such as song lyric sheets for contemporary singers, should be attached to the email in a PDF file. *Please do not send Google Drive links.*

Brass/Orchestral Strings/Woodwind/Percussion

Applicants should prepare two pieces of contrasting styles.

Contrasting pieces could consist of:

- A single-movement solo work written specifically for their instrument (either one movement of a concerto, or a solo piece that is entirely one movement).
- An etude from a book of studies specific to their instrument.
- An excerpt from an ensemble piece (orchestral, band, musical, opera) that showcases their instrument.
- Another solo piece that contrasts with the above (for example, the slow movement from a concerto, two improvised choruses of a jazz piece, a piece they composed for their instrument, etc.).
- A cover of a tune from a well-known artist or band (any style).
- A standard or jazz tune (which may include blues and rhythm changes) with your own improvisation.
- A transcription of a well-known artist's solo.
- An original or cover from one or more contemporary musical genres such as: Pop, Rock, R&B, Folk, Gospel, Country, Jazz, etc., demonstrating appropriate stylistic elements.

Percussionists should perform pieces on two of the following three instruments:
snare, mallets, and timpani.

Drum Set:

Upload video performance of 3 selections from one or more contemporary musical genres such as: Pop, Rock, R&B, Folk, Gospel, Country, Jazz, etc.

- One slow tempo selection at 60-80bpm.
- One up-tempo at 125-160 bpm.
- One selection in a compound or odd meter at any tempo.
- Selections should be in diverse contemporary styles and must be performed with a click track or back track and should not be longer than 3 minutes each.
- Each selection must be submitted separately in a video format.
- Additional studio recordings can be submitted for consideration but may not substitute for the video requirements.

Composition

Submit recordings (audio or video files) and score PDFs for at least two representative pieces from your original compositions. For electronic music, submit a narrative describing the work, software used, and any other pertinent information in lieu of a score. Please also include a list of works and performances of your original completed compositions with this information: date of composition, title, duration, instrumentation, and date/location of live performance (if applicable).

Pop/Contemporary/Jazz Composition & Songwriting:

You may submit a video of you playing an original piece of music no longer than three minutes that showcase your individual writing style, as well as a second piece in one or more contemporary musical genres such as pop, electronic, rock, R&B, folk, gospel, country, jazz, etc., demonstrating appropriate stylistic elements. Original songs and materials are highly encouraged for each selection.

OR

You may submit samples of three to five scores that you have composed in .pdf format, including audio and/or audiovisual material (.mov, .wmv., .wav, or .mp3 format). Scores should be original works.

Piano

Memorization is recommended for all piano students but is not required for admittance. For students wishing to be considered for a music scholarship, memorization of all tonal repertoire is strongly encouraged. See below for specific guidelines related to the student's area of focus.

Classical Piano Focus

Performers should prepare two pieces of contrasting styles and historical periods that demonstrate diverse technical and interpretive skills. Examples of art music repertoire choices are as follows:

- Baroque: a major work or movement of a larger work by J.S. Bach, Scarlatti, Handel, or their contemporaries
- Classical: a movement of a sonata by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Martinez, Koželuch, or their contemporaries.
- Romantic: a lyrical or virtuosic work by Chopin, Robert or Clara Schumann, Schubert, Dett, Coleridge-Taylor, Brahms, Liszt, Beach, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, or another composer of the nineteenth century.
- 20th and 21st century: a piece or movement of a work by Debussy, Ravel, Price, Bartók, Prokofiev, Ginastera, Walker, Crumb, Chen Yi, León, Tan Dun, or another reputable composer of contemporary art music. Avant-garde and non-tonal works do not need to be memorized. Works for prepared piano are not permitted.

Please contact Dr. Vanessa Cornett, Director of Keyboard Studies, at vanessa.cornett@stthomas.edu with any questions about audition repertoire.

Jazz Piano Focus

Performers should prepare two solo piano pieces of contrasting jazz styles. At least one piece should be a jazz standard that demonstrates the student's improvisational skills. Pieces may be performed with a band or backing track for a recorded audition and may be performed with a backing track for a live audition if preferred.

Classical/Jazz Piano Focus

Performers should prepare two pieces of contrasting styles. One piece should be a jazz standard for solo piano, and the other piece should be a classical composition such as suggested above.

Organ

Organ students should prepare three works from contrasting historical periods, such as a contrapuntal work by J.S. Bach, a nineteenth-century piece, and a piece from the twentieth century. Students should offer a balance of styles, including at least one virtuosic work and one expressive piece. Pieces need not be memorized. On-campus auditions will be held on the [Gabriel Kney organ](#) in the Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas. Please contact Dr. Jacob Benda, jrbenda@stthomas.edu, with any questions about the Kney organ or audition Repertoire.

Voice

In support of developing well-rounded vocal ability, the Voice area at St. Thomas supports and encourages our students to explore both contemporary and classical singing techniques as part of their voice study.

3 contrasting pieces chosen from the following:

- One art song or classical folk song setting in English
- One art song in a foreign language
- One additional art song, aria, or selection from musical theater
- Songs of contemporary vocal music genre such as: Pop, Rock, R&B, Gospel, Folk, Jazz/Blues, Musical Theatre, Country, etc., demonstrating appropriate stylistic elements.
- If performing an original, a lyric sheet listing the writer and any co-writers should be submitted in PDF format.

Auditionees should introduce themselves and the titles of all three songs at the beginning of the video. Songs that display the singer's uniqueness of style and musical creativity are especially encouraged.

All songs should be performed from memory and can be either self-accompanied, accompanied by live or a high-quality recorded piano accompaniment track such as those available from Piano Trax, Accompanist, etc.

The use of a mic is optional for contemporary focus for auditions, but please note that the voice must be able to be clearly heard, without distortion or effects, above any backing tracks or accompanying instruments. While singers are welcome to submit additional studio recordings for consideration, they may not be used as a substitute for any part of the required three song video recording.

Guitar

Guitarists should contact the Director of Guitar Studies at cskachian@stthomas.edu to discuss audition repertoire. Pieces will be determined based on the applicant's music orientation, background, and goals.

Music Production:

You may upload representative samples of three to five tracks produced exclusively by you, including a detailed explanation of DAW/software used, and how you mixed each track.

OR

You may submit three to five notated scores and audio files of arrangements of existing compositions and/or songs (vocal or instrumental).

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Real-Time Digital Instruments:

Upload video performance of three original compositions from a variety of electronic genres that demonstrate your ability to perform and interact in real-time with software instruments and/or effects using MIDI, PUSH, LAUNCHPAD, MASCHINE, or similar controller(s).

- Applicants must demonstrate competency and originality in an area of contemporary, performance-based electronic music, and display aptitude using performance-oriented music software such as Ableton Live.
- The video must clearly show live interaction with the software and controllers to generate melodic and/or rhythmic content. Clip/Scene "Launching" alone is not sufficient.
- Each selection must be submitted separately in a video format.
- Selections should be in contrasting styles, performed with a band or backing track, and should not be longer than 3 minutes each.
- Additional studio recordings can be submitted for consideration but may not substitute for the video requirement