

## SPOTLIGHT CLASSICAL VOICE RULES

### WHAT'S REQUIRED OF ME FOR MY CLASSICAL VOICE PRELIMINARY 1 VIDEO AUDITION?

All students begin with a Preliminary 1 video audition. You will be singing one song for your video audition. Those scoring highest will advance to Preliminary 2 live auditions in January 2026. If selected to advance to Preliminary 2, you will sing two contrasting songs for your live audition. Those scoring highest after Preliminary 2 will advance to the Semifinals

- Please prepare and memorize one piece: it can be either a piece from Category 1 OR a piece from Category 2 listed below
- The piece must not exceed 3 minutes. This may require cutting repeats. The fact that you do not sing a piece in its entirety will not be held against you in judging
- Arias must be in the original keys; Arie antiche and pieces should be in keys suitable to voice type. You may sing with pre-recorded piano track, a backing track, or provide your own accompanist
- If selected to advance to Preliminary 2, you will sing two songs for your live audition: one from Category 1 and one from Category 2

#### **Category 1: One art song/Baroque aria from the 24 Italian Songs & Arias Book (or subsequent editions) OR any piece written by one of the following composers:**

Argento, Bach (JS) (arias OK), Barber, Beach, Beethoven, Bellini, Bernstein, Bizet, Bolcom, Brahms, Britten, Carissimi, Cavalli, Chausson, Copland, Da Falla, Debussy, Delibes, Donaudy, Donizetti, Dougherty, Dowland, Duke, Elgar, Faure, Finzi, Foster, Franck, Granados, Hahn, Handel (arias OK), Haydn, Hoiby, Hundley, Ives, Kohn, Massenet, Mendelssohn (both), Monteverdi (arias OK), Mozart, Paladino, Pergolesi (arias OK), Poulenc, Purcell, Quilter, Ravel, Rodrigo, Rorem, Rossini, Saint-Saens, Sarti (24 Italian Songs & Arias, the new edition), Scarlatti, Schubert, Schumann (both), Strauss (Richard), Thomson, Tosti, Vaughan-Williams, Vivaldi (arias OK), Wolf

**Category 2: One art song, spiritual (suggested arrangements: Burleigh or Hogan), or aria from the standard classical vocal & operatic repertoire. Classical Operettas are allowed. Examples: Gilbert and Sullivan is allowed. "What Good Would the Moon Be?" from Street Scene by Kurt Weill would be allowed. Andrew Lloyd Webber is not allowed in this category.**

### ACCOMPANIMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Make sure the level of your piano accompaniment or backing track does not overpower the sound of your voice in the recording
- Recorded piano tracks are permitted
- Any lengthy piano introductions should be abridged

### GUIDELINES FOR RECORDING YOUR AUDITION

- Your recording device can be a cell phone, tablet, camera, etc. You do NOT have to rent fancy recording equipment. We will refer to the recording devices as "cameras"
- Your song should contain the following introduction: My song is (title) from (Opera) by (composer). OR: My song is (title) by (composer). Your introduction is **not** part of your 3-minute song time limit
- Your introduction may be uploaded separately
- Dress appropriately as you would for a live audition
- Use a fixed point of view for your camera. Shoot straight on, leaving the camera in one location
- Please be sure your image is clear. The panel must be able to see your facial expressions to properly adjudicate your work
- **No sound manipulation, editing or enhancement (e.g. reverberation, auto-tune, frequency equalization, microphones external to video recorder, etc.) are allowed. Sound edits will be grounds for disqualification**

- Your video should be one continuous shot with no editing. Any edits will be grounds for disqualification
- When recording with a tablet or cellphone, use the landscape/horizontal mode for best results
- Do not edit within the piece

**Before recording your piece, film a test. Perform the first few lines of your selection, then watch and listen to it on playback. Check the following important things:**

**Sound:** Make sure the acoustics in the room are suitable for a recording. Practice your piece in the space. Please ensure the balance of the volume between piano and voice is appropriate. If possible, don't sing in a room with wall-to-wall carpet as it might affect the sound. Make sure there is no noise coming from other rooms near you as you record

**Lighting:** Make sure the space is well-lit, but not too bright. Judges should be able to see your face clearly. Too little light and judges cannot see you. Too much light will leave you overexposed, and your expressions will be washed out

**Framing:** The camera should be set at a distance to frame your face and body clearly. If judges only see your face and shoulders, it's too close. If judges can see the entire stage but your facial expressions cannot be seen clearly, it's too far away

## HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR AUDITION VIDEO

- After you have recorded your piece, watch it in playback to make sure you can be seen, and the music heard
- When uploading, verify that image is upright (not sideways) and plays smoothly
- Save and name your file and upload into application

## WHAT JUDGES ARE LOOKING FOR

**Tone Production** - the ability to achieve a quality of sound appropriate to the type of voice and to the style of the music

**Technique** - the degree to which the performer has acquired control of the voice

**Diction** - accurate pronunciation and clear articulation

**Intonation** - singing in tune

**Interpretation** - the ability to accurately express the piece performed with a clear understanding of its meaning and attention to the composer's directions

**Phrasing** - sensitivity to the need for phrasing and the ability to execute it

Please show personality and character!

*Please be sure you follow all requirements related to your application. Failure to comply with any of the requirements may result in disqualification during the review process and/or make your application ineligible for an award.*

For **guidelines or requirement** questions, email us at [spotlight@musiccenter.org](mailto:spotlight@musiccenter.org).

For **technical issues** please visit the **Acceptd Help Desk** at [support@getacceptd.com](mailto:support@getacceptd.com).

To **start or complete your Spotlight application**, go to: <https://app.getacceptd.com/musiccenter>. If your application is already open, simply click on the Acceptd tab on your computer to return to it.