



2024 Aspen Conducting Academy and Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra Program Manual

Information subject to change | Updated as of 12/15/2023

Congratulations on being selected for the 2024 Aspen Conducting Academy (ACA) class or a member of the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra! We very much look forward to your arrival in June. The general outline of the program is described below. Please direct any program or general questions to studentservices@aspenmusic.org.

AUDITIONS

Conductor Auditions (Required for all conducting fellows and ACA orchestra fellows)

- Saturday, June 22

Conducting fellows will audition with the full ACA orchestra. Conducting fellows will be notified of their audition repertoire through email by 5 pm on June 19. **Conductors must bring their instruments and are expected to play in the orchestra when not on the podium.** Conducting assignments will be determined based on the conducting audition, the videotape you submitted, and your experience.

Orchestra Seating Auditions (Required for all conducting fellows and ACA orchestra fellows)

Strings (ACA conductors and ACA orchestra fellows)

ACA string fellows will be evaluated for seating placement based on the audition materials submitted for admission*. A separate seating audition is not required. Audition materials will be reviewed by Laura Park Chen and Robert Spano for seating purposes only.

*ACA string conductors are required to submit a virtual placement audition with the repertoire below.

Winds, Brass & Percussion (ACA conductors and ACA orchestra fellows)

ACA winds, brass, and percussion fellows are required to participate in a seating placement audition. All students will receive information about placement auditions by March 1 in the Audition Letter. Placement auditions are performed in person in Aspen and will be reviewed by the respective department faculty. This audition will enable faculty members to make appropriate assignments of other School participants into the Academy Orchestra when needed.

Placement audition repertoire

- Repertoire will be communicated by March 1 in the Audition Letter on your AMFS Student Portal. Conductor fellows and orchestra fellows are expected to prepare the same excerpts.

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

The ACA orchestra generally meets four-seven times per week with one day off per week. Services will take place daily in mornings or afternoons. The orchestra takes a short hiatus at the end of Week 4 for several days. The AMFS has made an effort to limit the number of double service days to encourage physical wellness as well as participation in extracurricular offerings such as solo recitals and chamber music. When possible, string seating assignments will be the same for programs and readings with the same repertoire, so musicians can focus on learning one part. Musicians in the Aspen Conducting Academy can expect the general outline of services below:

- Six standard orchestra concerts with performances weekly on Wednesdays at 5 pm in the Klein Music Tent
- Eight orchestra repertoire reading sessions with the ACA orchestra, two (2) repertoire reads with the Aspen Festival Orchestra, and two (2) repertoire reads with the Aspen Chamber Symphony.
- Three readings of compositions from the Susan and Ford Center for Composition Studies with the ACA Orchestra
- Two Opera Encounters workshops at the historic Wheeler Opera House. Both workshops involve ACA conductors and one workshop will be with the ACA Orchestra

A sample weekly schedule may be as follows (please note that weeks with Composer Readings and Opera Encounters will follow a slightly different pattern):

Monday: occasional evening rehearsal

Tuesday: morning rehearsal

Wednesday: morning dress rehearsal and afternoon concert

Thursday: usually a dark day

Friday: morning rep read

Saturday: morning rehearsal and four occasions for afternoon technique check (conductors)

Sunday: morning rehearsal

CURRICULUM AND EXPECTATIONS* (ACA Conductors)

*Members of the ACA Orchestra should see the Orchestra Manual (to be available this Spring on your [AMFS Student Portal](#)) for details regarding orchestra expectations and curriculum.

Attendance

Students are expected to adhere to the [Leave of Absence Policy](#) on the AMFS website and submit Leave of Absence Requests through the [AMFS Student Portal](#).

Required Kick-Off Meeting (conductors only)

- All ACA conductors are required to attend a program kick-off meeting with Maestro Spano on Monday, June 24 from 2:30-5:30 pm in Friedman Atrium.

Orchestra Participation

- **ACA conductors are required to bring their instruments to Aspen.** When not on the podium, ACA conductors play as members of the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra. It is part of the

educational concept of the program for conductors to benefit from playing under the direction of their colleagues.

- ACA conductors whose instrument is the piano are expected to play orchestral piano, celesta, and other keyboard parts.
- These parts must be prepared to performance standard in advance.

Assignments and Repertoire

- The [ACA Repertoire List](#) including concert programs, audition, reading repertoire, and tech check repertoire is available on your [AMFS Student Portal](#). “TBD” information will be updated as soon as it is confirmed after the New Year. Any revisions will be in this list and communicated by email.
- Selection of repertoire and assignments will be made based on a variety of artistic and pedagogical considerations.
- ACA conductors can request a piece for assignment by submitting the Repertoire Request Form through their [AMFS Student Portal](#) by May 15. Requested assignments are not guaranteed.
- Directly after the conducting auditions, Maestro Spano will make assignments for the first few weeks and then during the third week, make the assignments for the rest of the summer.
- ACA Orchestra Managers will distribute copies of all assignments to all conductors.
- Conductors should never get on the podium unprepared. Tell the ACA Orchestra Managers immediately if you are not ready to lead a work, however conductors are expected to prepare all assigned repertoire.
- ACA conductors are encouraged to bring as many scores as possible to Aspen. The AMFS has an extensive library of scores and parts, but you won’t be able to mark them or take them with you. Scores cannot be purchased in Aspen, as we do not have a music store.
 - The AMFS provides scores for all concerti.
 - ACA conductors should have scores for the entire audition repertoire.
 - ACA conductors are encouraged to buy scores for orchestral repertoire.
 - If you are assigned a piece and do not own the score, you may obtain one from the AMFS library; unassigned conductors may obtain a score from the AMFS library, on a first-come, first-serve basis.
 - ACA conductors can bring scores with them to Aspen or mail scores after June 15 to: name, c/o Aspen Conducting Academy, Aspen Music Festival & School, 225 Music School Rd, Aspen CO 81611.

Podium Time

- We anticipate ACA conductors will have at least 30 minutes of podium time in most weeks, though this cannot be guaranteed.
- A master conductor oversees all sessions, offering advice and comments. Maestro Spano will be present at rehearsals and repertoire reading sessions, with Guest Conductors participating through the summer in score study sessions. Guest conductors for the 2024 season include Jane Glover, Mark Stringer, and Patrick Summers.

Video Camera and Recordings

- ACA Orchestra Managers will record all sessions with the Festival’s HD video camera.
- Conductors need to bring a 32 GB SDHC card or larger for video recordings. SD cards are required for the first session: conductor auditions on June 22.

- Conductors are responsible for giving their SD cards to the ACA managers, prior to the beginning of each session in which they are conducting
- If you wish to use your own recording device, you will be responsible for its operation.
- Conducting videos will be reviewed during video review sessions with guest faculty
- Services done in front of an audience (concerts and opera scenes) will be recorded on the ACA SD card by the ACA managers as one piece and then spliced and made available to the conductors through Starhive. ACA managers will communicate specific instructions before the first concert.

Supplemental Rehearsal and Performance Observations

- All ACA conductors are required to attend rehearsals of other orchestras, especially those conducted by the Visiting Conductors
- Taking the opportunity to observe orchestra preparation and performance by the array of faculty and guest conductors is considered part of the curriculum. Generally, the class attends all orchestra rehearsals and concerts as a group whenever there isn't a conflict with the ACA schedule

ADDITIONAL CLASSES

Visit the **Class and Non-Orchestral Performance Schedule** (to be available electronically through the Student Portal) for a complete listing of classes, locations, and dates. Be sure to check this schedule regularly, as it will continue to be updated throughout the summer season.

Technique and Score-Reading Sessions (conductors only)

- All pianist conductors will play for Technique check sessions on four Saturdays during the summer.
- These parts must be prepared to performance standard in advance.
- Repertoire will be posted to your [AMFS Student Portal](#) in as soon as it is available after the new year.

Seminar Classes (conductors only)

- Additional classes with faculty and guest conductors may be held several times per season, on both musical and extra-musical topics.
- Topics may include the roles and responsibilities of the music director, the role of the concertmaster, specific instrumental techniques (ex. harp and percussion), programming and organizational structure at various arts institutions, and communication.
- Attendance at seminar classes is required for ACA conductors.

Video Review Sessions (conductors only)

- Video recordings of ACA conductors will be reviewed during several sessions throughout the summer. These sessions will be scheduled and communicated by the ACA managers.

Livestream Score Reading

- Conducting fellows will each be assigned to a livestreamed concert in order to assist the Livestream Director with cuing. Fellows will be required to assist with the assigned performance only. These assignments will be communicated by the ACA managers at the beginning of the season.