



2024 Program Manual

Susan and Ford Schuman Center for Composition Studies

Information subject to change | Updated 12/1/2023

Dear 2024 Composer Fellows,

Congratulations on your acceptance as Fellows to the Susan and Ford Schumann Center for Composition Studies at Aspen! We eagerly look forward to working with you all. This handbook is intended to lay out important details regarding the wonderful opportunities you will have at Aspen.

2024 ARTIST-FACULTY

Christopher Theofanidis
Composer-in-Residence

ctheofanidis@gmail.com

Missy Mazzoli
Principal Guest Composer

Timothy Weiss
Conductor, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble

tim.weiss@oberlin.edu

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BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM

- All Fellows are required to write an 8 to 15-minute piece for the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble's First Glimpse concert series (see [Section A](#) below).
- All Fellows are also required to submit an orchestral piece up to 7-minutes in length for reading by the Aspen Conducting Academy (ACA) orchestra (see [Section B](#) below).
- All Fellows have the option to compose a dramatic scene, no longer than 10 minutes in length, for voice and piano (see [Section C](#) below):
- All fellows receive a 1-hour private lesson each week with composition faculty, supplemented by opportunities to work with visiting composers privately or in visiting composer classes as scheduling permits.
- All Fellows attend three 2 to 2½ hour-long composition seminars each week that will cover a broad range of topics on compositional, aesthetic, and professional issues, and will offer presentations by Fellows as well as visiting composers.
- Ad hoc performance opportunities for Fellows are available but are mostly of your own making. Feel free to get together with your colleagues, and you can take it from there. Groups seeking a public performance opportunity can apply for a Spotlight Recital.
- There are prizes awarded each year to two Composition Fellows honoring their summer accomplishments at the AMFS: the Hermitage Prize (a 6-week residency at the Hermitage Artist Retreat), and the Jacob Druckman Prize that confers an orchestral commission for the subsequent season. Recipients are selected by a committee comprised of the Susan and Ford Schumann Center for Composition Studies and the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble faculty, the Vice President for Artistic Administration, the President and CEO (composer), and the Music Director (conductor & composer).

WHAT TO BRING FOR THE COMPOSITION PROGRAM

- Bring a good sampling of your work with you – both in score (digital) and audio formats. You will need them for seminars, visiting composer classes, lessons, and to share with the many fine performers you will be meeting.
- Once the summer season concert schedule is published, review it to see what repertoire is of most interest to you and bring scores if you have them. We're sure to be discussing a good deal of this music in our seminar sessions.

RESOURCES PROVIDED FOR COMPOSITION FELLOWS

- One classroom in the Bucksbaum Building is a dedicated space for Composition Fellows and Faculty. It has a piano, audio and video playback equipment, and wireless internet access. At the beginning of the session, we will create a flexible schedule whereby you can each have private time to work in the room. Just remember that there are 8-10 of you, and composition lessons are also taught in that space, so time slots will be limited. Composition Fellows book practice room space through ArtsVision. "How to book a practice room" instructions will be available on the [AMFS Student Portal](#).
- In this classroom, AMFS will also provide a full-service part making studio, which will include a printer that can handle up to double-sided 11x17 pages (for printing originals, not for

mass copies) as well as a binding machine and coils in a variety of sizes. This equipment is for the sole use of the Composition Fellows and Faculty and is intended to encourage self-sufficiency in our composition students.

- All public performances at the Benedict Music Tent and Harris Hall (including the ACA Orchestra Readings) will be professionally recorded by the AMFS recording team. These recordings will be made available to performers through Starchive within 24 hours following the concert. Starchive login instructions will be available on the [AMFS Student Portal](#). Public performances on the Bucksbaum Campus will not be recorded.

EXPECTATIONS

- Fellows are expected to attend all private lessons, seminars, and to make the most of the Festival by attending as many concerts as possible, as well as sitting in on rehearsals. Indeed, we will have field trips to certain rehearsals so that we can discuss what we've seen and heard there in seminar sessions.
- 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](#).
- Complete the pre-season questionnaire by December 15. Take note of the inventory of available percussion instruments and auxiliary instrument doubling, as well as the prepared piano policy and electronic media policy as you formulate your instrumentation for your Aspen projects. (see [Appendix 1](#))
- Please double check all deadlines and adhere to them. (see [Appendix 3](#))

SECTION A: First Glimpse Chamber Music Commission

- Performances will be scheduled on two dedicated First Glimpse recitals in Harris Concert Hall.
- Treat this assignment as a commission from the Aspen Music Festival and School.
- Instrumentation for this project is to be chosen from the information given below.
- Target duration is 8-15 minutes.
- Composer Fellows are responsible for printing and binding their own parts. For each service that your work is played, you are responsible for bringing an updated set of parts and at least three scores (one for conductor, one for library, one for self), regardless of whether musicians are reading off tablets.
- Communication is key. Any questions or permissions related to the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble should jointly be addressed to Tim Weiss and Chris Theofanidis.
- **First Glimpse Commission Project Deadlines**
 - June 1: PDF score and parts of this piece must be uploaded to the Shared Folder located on your [AMFS Student Portal](#)
 - Updates must be sent to the ACE librarian (not to the musicians directly) no later than 48 hours before the next rehearsal.

Instrumentation Possibilities

- The full Aspen Contemporary Ensemble (ACE) (conducted):
 - Flute (doubling Piccolo and Alto Flute)
 - Clarinet (doubling E-flat Clarinet and Bass Clarinet)
 - Percussion (see list below of available percussion [Appendix 1](#))
 - Piano
 - Violin (2)
 - Viola
 - Cello
 - Doublings should be limited to one doubling per player.
- Composers may also choose a subset of ACE including at least five players. Decisions regarding a subset instrumentation of ACE require approval by Tim Weiss, Director of ACE.

SECTION B: Aspen Conducting Academy (ACA) Readings

- All Fellows are required to submit an orchestral score for a public reading by the Aspen Conducting Academy (ACA) orchestra. We especially urge you to submit new works, even ones that might be incomplete, so please consider writing something brand-new for this occasion. Note that arrangements of other composers' works are not permitted.
- Orchestral works will be assigned to one of two readings, typically in weeks 3 and 4 of the season. Both events take place in the Benedict Music Tent.
- Two or three scores from the initial readings will be selected for a second reading on a composer's workshop, which typically takes place in the penultimate week of the season, in the Benedict Music Tent. If your score is selected, you may revise it in any way you like, and the Orchestra Library staff will assist you in printing new scores and parts. Scores are selected by a committee comprised of the Susan and Ford Schumann Center for Composition Studies and the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble faculty, the Vice President for Artistic Administration, the President and CEO (composer), and the Music Director (conductor & composer). Criteria are non-specific.
- Works must be purely for orchestra. Do not submit concertos or other works with soloist(s).
- The duration should be no more than 7 minutes. If you submit a longer piece, we will ask you to identify an excerpt (or excerpts) from it totaling no more than 7 minutes.
- The ACA is the training ground for emerging young conductors, under the direction of Music Director Robert Spano, who will assign the conductors who will work with each of the ten of you.
 - 3-3-3-3 4-3-3-1 Timp **3** perc Harp Piano/Celesta Strings (6/5/4/3/2 stands)
 - ⊖ Available wind doublings: 1 Piccolo, 1 Alto Flute, 1 English Horn, 1 Eb Clarinet, 1 Bass Clarinet, 1 Contrabassoon. Doublings should be limited to one doubling per player.
- See [Appendix 1](#) for a list of the available percussion instruments. It is very important that you only call for instruments appearing on this list.
- NB: Please note that, starting in the month of May, each of you should plan for one review of your piece with the composition faculty while it is still in progress.
- Composer Fellows are responsible for printing and binding their own parts. See [Appendix 2](#) for important information about score and part preparation.
- **ACA Reading Project Deadlines**
 - June 1: The instrumentation for your orchestra piece must be submitted to the "Instrumentation for Orchestra" form located on your [AMFS Student Portal](#).
 - June 15: PDF score of this piece must be uploaded to the Shared Folder located on your [AMFS Student Portal](#). This score will be reviewed by Maestro Spano for conductor assignments.
 - June 30: Seven printed scores and the full set of parts are due to the ACA librarians.

SECTION C: OPTIONAL Commission for Voice and Piano

To be composed while in Aspen | *Project details and timeline subject to change*

Project Parameters

- In collaboration with vocalists from the Aspen Opera Theater and VocalARTS program, fellows are invited to compose a dramatic duet scene or song/song cycle for singer(s) and piano.
- Duration: 10 minutes maximum.
- Two-singer maximum (duets) for scenes.
- Fellows will work with the singer / pianist pre-season and over the course of the summer on developing the work for public performance
- Participating composers and vocalists must attend a pre-season zoom session with Patrick Summers and Chris Theofanidis in May.
- Composers must provide permissions for text used if not already in the public domain.
- Composers are responsible for preparing and binding parts and scores.

Artistic Guidelines – For discussion between composer and singer

This AOTVA/Composition collaboration is one of our most exciting and vibrant programs, and our hopes for it run in many simultaneous directions. Composing idiomatically for the voice while keeping one's own compositional voice is one of opera's main challenges, and so is the singing and interpretation of new music a challenge for singers, so the opportunities for growth and learning in this project are enormous on both sides.

Given that this is a major anniversary for the AMFS, 75 years, we want the focus of operatic composition to be on **current events**. We encourage you to think in terms of a narrative/dramatic scene rather than a reflective song cycle. Develop a solo or duet scene that is based on events happening right now. This can take the form of politics, environment, social issues, etc. – whatever subject you choose – but make it a subject about which you are passionate, and a subject which is current and ongoing. In developing the text you will set, you can choose a transcript of real words, use a relevant play, or you can develop a poetic/dramatic text of your own.

A few random guidelines that may be helpful:

1. This is a very collaborative process, so work together, composers and singers, on finding and developing material.
2. Singers, you will have parts of your range in which you feel particularly comfortable. Communicate this with clarity to your composers. Talk about tessitura issues, and share where you think you sound best. Also, you may love whistling, humming, or other vocal sounds that are unique to you – communicate this as well. Do you play an instrument as well as sing? They will want to know that as well!
3. Composers: look for examples/inspirations in composers of many eras who had particular gifts for writing for singers:
 - a. After Life - (Cipullo) - characters meeting in the afterlife
 - b. Dead Man Walking (Heggie) - Sister Helen meets Joe for the first time

- c. Silent Night - (Puts) - characters from different cultures meeting each other.
 - d. Die Walküre (Wagner) - Siegmund meets Sieglinde
 - e. Falstaff (Verdi) - Mistress Quickly meets Falstaff
 - f. Hansel und Gretel (Humperdinck) - the title characters meet the Witch
 - g. The Snowy Day (Thompson) - Peter meets the bullies
 - h. La bohème (Puccini) Rodolfo meets Mimi
 - i. Don Giovanni (Mozart) - recitative and duet, “La ci darem la mano”
4. Composers – when you ‘stretch the boundaries’ of flute playing, for example, you have little risk of harming the player. The same is not true of singing: ‘stretching the boundaries’ of a singing voice can be harmful, so use this collaborative opportunity to learn about singing at its most expressive, beautiful, and healthy.
 5. For participating vocalists and composers: be bold! If you have heard a speech from a public official that moved you or upset you, create a scene about it. Think primarily about your audience, and what you hope they will experience in this scene, what you hope the scene will make them think about.

Pre-Season Deadlines

- Early April: Vocalist assignments determined by AOTVA Admin. Assigned vocalists notified of pre-season zoom.
- Mid-Late April: Zoom meeting with program Artistic Directors, participating composers, and assigned vocalists
- June 1: Confirmed group members, topic, and libretto submission due through form on [AMFS Student Portal](#).
- June 15: Collaborative Pianists assigned

In-Season Deadlines

- End of week 1: First draft score due. First draft digital scores will be reviewed by Patrick Summers and Chris Theofanidis for initial feedback
- Week 2: First rehearsals (students only)
- End of week 2: Second digital draft score due
- Week 3: Second rehearsals (students only)
- Week 4: Coachings with Renéé Fleming
- Week 5: Revisions, third rehearsals, coachings with Chris Theofanidis and Patrick Summers
- Final score and parts (digital and print) are due to the Shared Folder and AMFS Music Library one week before assigned performance (end of Week 5 for Week 6 performance, end of Week 7 for Week 8 performance)
- Week 7: Fourth rehearsals (students only for Week 8 performance)
- Week 6-8: Performance(s)
 - Harris Hall Spotlight recital TBD (if enough participants)
 - August 16: Dress rehearsal at Wheeler
 - August 17: Performance at Opera Encounters, 10am

[APPENDIX 1: PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS AVAILABLE IN ASPEN](#)

Please be aware that with several orchestras and a host of other activities at Aspen, and with many of the instruments rented and trucked into a little mountain town, the scheduling of percussion instruments across the Festival is a complex task and admits virtually no flexibility. The instruments listed below will be available for readings, rehearsals, and performances. Requests for additional instrumentation beyond this list will not be considered.

First Glimpse Chamber Music Commission Percussion Availability

[See page for diagram or click here for electronic copy.](#)

Vibe

High Octave Crot (C5 – C6 sounding C7 – C8)

Toms (2)

Bongos

Concert B.D.

Triangle

Tambourine

Wood Blocks (3)

Slapstick

Sus Cymbal

Orchestra / Ad Hoc Percussion Availability

Timpani (set of 4)

Bass Drum (1)

Snare Drum (1)

Tom-toms (3)

Bongos (1 set)

Tambourine

Kick Bass Drum

Triangle

Suspended Cymbals
(2: M & L)

Crash Cymbals (piatti)

Hi-hat

Splash Cymbal

Chinese Cymbal

Cowbell

Tam-tam

Wood Block (1)

Temple Blocks
(set of 5)

Glockenspiel

Tubular Bells

Vibraphone

Xylophone

Marimba

Auxiliary Instrumental Doublings Available for Orchestral Readings

1 Piccolo

1 Alto Flute

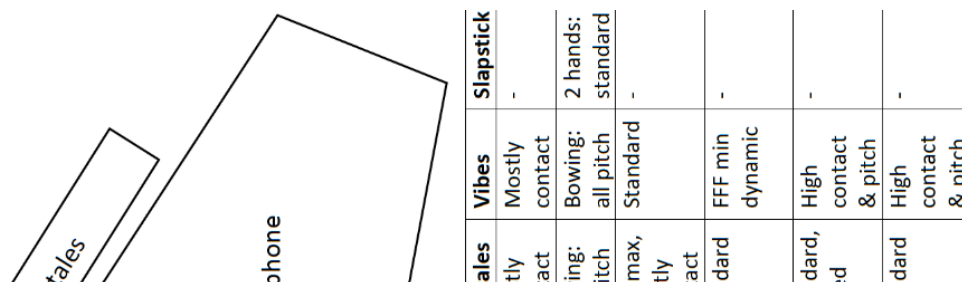
1 English Horn

1 E-flat Clarinet

1 Bass Clarinet

1 Contrabassoon

[Percussion Configuration for Chamber Music Compositions](#)



Prepared Piano Policy

Any “non-conventional” use of the piano, which includes, but is not limited to, hand-muting/plucking/brushing of strings, manipulating hammers, striking any part of the instrument, etc. is defined as prepared-piano.

Any prepared-piano should be done in consultation with the AMFS Head of Piano Technology. Specifically in the Benedict Music Tent, the schedule logistics around piano usage is complex, so we ask for your flexibility and cooperation regarding piano selection in that space. The Head of Piano Technology reserves the right to substitute an alternate piano or deny the use altogether. Alternate methods to produce the same effect without inflicting damage to the instrument may be suggested.

See All-School Directory (available in June) for contact information.

Amplification and Use of Electronic Media

The AMFS has extremely limited resources and inventory for accommodating non-acoustic elements. Though we are unable to guarantee availability, should the AMFS own the desired equipment, every effort will be made to make it available for ONLY the dress rehearsal and performance of your piece. If you intend to incorporate any form of electronic media in your pieces to be performed in Aspen, we strongly recommend that you bring the required equipment and know how to operate it. All uses of electronic media must be made known in advance, and in as much detail as you can provide, to the composition faculty and the Director of Production, even if you plan to use your own equipment.

See All-School Directory (available in June) for contact information

Kyle Schick
Director of Production

kschick@aspenmusic.org

APPENDIX 2: SCORE AND PART PREPARATION

Along with the instructions below, please also refer to the [MOLA Guidelines for Music Preparation](#). The AMFS library staff also highly recommends Elaine Gould's [Behind Bars](#).

The AMFS Head Librarian will visit the Composition Studio during Week 1 for a Library Workshop. This workshop will cover how to use the printer and the binding machine, as well as all score and part preparation protocols, procedures, and deadlines.

The AMFS Library expects composers to present bound, performance ready scores and parts to the library for each composition. Failure to comply with score and part preparation procedures and deadlines may result in your piece being removed from the program, at the discretion of the Vice President of Artistic Administration. While composers must publish their music themselves, the AMFS library will need to approve all parts prior to their distribution to the orchestra. Those deadlines will be released at the Library Workshop. And in the meantime, the AMFS library staff is happy to consult about page turns, layouts, and other concerns. Please feel free to make an appointment at least 7 days in advance of upcoming due dates. Both the Bucksbaum Campus and Tent Libraries are open Tuesday-Friday 9am-5pm and Saturday-Sunday 9am-1pm. They are closed on Mondays.

See All-School Directory (available in June) for contact information

For Chamber Music and Orchestral Readings

- Print parts on heavy paper (but no more than 60 lb.)
- No separate pages ("sliding" parts) or "accordion-fold" parts. Parts longer than 4 pages should be taped using library tape. Spiral binding is not appropriate for parts.
- The preferred sizes for parts are 9x12 and 10x13, and we urge you to make every effort to find a printer who can handle these professional sizes, however, letter size (8½x11) may be acceptable. Staff size should be between 7 and 8.5 mm. Legal size (8½x14) and tabloid (11x17) are not acceptable for parts.
- Every page of each part must carry a header giving title, instrument name, and page number, in the event that the pages become separated.
- Plan page turns with care, making sure that there is sufficient time for each turn, taking into consideration the tempo, the distance that the player will have to cover to reach the stand (e.g. bassists sit farther from their stands than oboists), and the risk of a hasty page-turn being audible (more important in a chamber music context).
- Give measure numbers either at the beginning of each staff or every 5 bars.
- Insert cues as needed, especially if an instrument has 10 or more bars of rest. Being liberal with cues is not a problem.
- All dynamics and most expression marks go beneath the staff in italics. Tempo and technical markings (e.g. pizzicato, fluttertongue, mute indications, mallets required) go above the staff in roman type.

- All scores should be printed at 11x17, double-sided, spiral bound. Beware of both using too small a staff size (4.0 mm is the minimum, but 4.5 and larger is preferred) and permitting yourself too much white space between staves and choirs within the orchestra. Avoid overcrowding the page with too many measures. Remember that the instrument names, clefs, notes, dynamics, expression and tempo marks must be legible on the podium music stand from a distance of 4 to 5 feet.
- The front matter of all scores should include: Title, instrumentation, movements (if any), full program note copy, date of composition, your birth year, and accurate performance time.
- Percussion parts should have a title page that lists all the instruments required by the part, plus any indications of unusual mallet requirements or the use of bows. All percussion parts should be in the same printed part for First Glimpse chamber works. Orchestral works require individual parts.

Specific Guidelines Relative to the ACA Readings

- Every wind player must have their own part. Do not combine 1st and 2nd lines into a single part.
- Use separate staves for string divisi whenever there is the slightest possibility that combining the parts on one staff could be hard to read.
- Divisi limitations: the faculty recommend the following maximum divisi formats: Vln I a 2; Vln II a 2; Vla a 2; Vcl a 2; Db a no divisi.
- Make the following number of string parts: 9 each of Violin I; 8 each of Violin II; 6 each of Viola; 4 each of Cello; 3 each of Double Bass.
- Be sure to list required woodwind doublings on the front cover of the appropriate parts.
- Make as many percussion parts as there are players/instruments.

APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF DEADLINES

Click here for link to [AMFS Student Portal](#)

Click here for link to [Shared Folder](#)

Deadline	Project	Description
Dec. 5-10 TBD	Zoom Meeting	Pre-season zoom meeting for enrolled class.
Dec. 15	Pre-Season Questionnaire	The pre-season questionnaire must be completed, along with requested instrumentation for your chamber work. You will be notified by January 5 as to whether your request is approved.
June 1	AOTVA Project	Group members and topic and libretto submission due through a form on your AMFS Student Portal.
June 1	First Glimpse Commission	PDF score and parts of "First Glimpse" commission must be uploaded to the Shared Folder on your AMFS Student Portal.
June 1	ACA Reading	Instrumentation for your orchestral piece for ACA readings must be submitted through the "Instrumentation for Orchestra" form on your AMFS Student Portal. This must include a complete list of percussion requirements.
June 15	ACA Reading	PDF score of your orchestral work must be submitted to the Shared Folder on your AMFS Student Portal.
June 30	ACA Reading	ACA orchestra work: seven printed scores and parts due to ACA Librarians.
June 30	AOTVA Project	First draft digital score due to the Shared Folder on your AMFS Student Portal.
July 7	AOTVA Project	Second digital draft score due to the Shared Folder on your AMFS Student Portal.
July 28	AOTVA Project	For week 6 performances: Final digital scores due to the Shared Folder on your AMFS Student Portal. Final printed score and parts due to the AMFS Music Library.
August 10	AOTVA Project	For week 8 performances: Final digital scores due to the Shared Folder on your AMFS Student Portal. Final printed score and parts due to the AMFS Music Library.

PRE-SEASON QUESTIONNAIRE

To be completed online on through your [AMFS Student Portal](#) by December 15.

1. Do you give permission for your birthdate to be published in the AMFS program book?

Yes

No

2. Do you want your parts back following a reading or public performance?

Yes

No

First Glimpse Chamber Commission - Approval on a first-come, first-served basis; you may be asked for a second preference

3. Confirm the instrumentation of your chamber work, including anticipated doublings. Please take note of Appendix 1 regarding available percussion, and policies concerning prepared-piano and electronics. You may select a maximum of 5 instrumentalists from the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble instrumentation.
4. Do you anticipate needing a conductor? Please note the final decision regarding a conductor will be at the discretion of the ACE conductor.

ACA Reading / Orchestral Work

5. Will your work have been performed previously (new works encouraged)?

Vocal work with AOTVA

6. Do you wish to participate in the vocal project to compose an original dramatic scene for singer and piano in collaboration with singers from the Aspen Opera Theater and VocalArts program?
Yes
No
Undecided
7. How many singers would you prefer to work with? Your preference will be considered but not guaranteed.
1
2
8. Do you anticipate needing a conductor for this project?
Yes
No

Undecided

Sampson Foundation Prize

9. The inaugural Sampson Foundation Prize will be awarded to a 2024 composition fellow at the AMFS. The prize includes a \$1,000 cash award from the Sampson Family Foundation and a residency at the [Sampson Center for the Arts](#) in Grand Junction, CO. The residency may be up to a multi-week stay to be coordinated with the Center at the awardee's convenience. The Center can accommodate rehearsals and a public performance of the composer's works presented by the Center during the residency.

Please indicate if you are interested in being considered for the Sampson Foundation Prize.

Yes

No

Agreement

10. I have reviewed the 2024 Composition Program Manual and agree to its terms and deadlines.