

How to successfully prepare for your audition? Dr. Mathieu

Prospective undergraduate students will need to prepare a **10-minute video** demonstrating music in at least **2 contrasting styles**. Singers should consider one work in English and one in another language.

Choose your audition repertoire in consultation with your private instructor. Try to **highlight your strengths**. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact one of us at the university!

Start preparing as early as possible! The more comfortable you are with your repertoire, the better your recording will be!

You probably have had some experience with virtual lessons this year, giving you the experience of playing in front of a camera. **As you are planning your audition recording:**

- Play as many **mock auditions** as possible in front of your friends & family (online or in person). A mock audition is a 'practice' audition: you act as if it was the real one. Warm-up, dress-up, and perform your repertoire without any interruptions.
- Schedule a **'practice recording'** at least one week before the real one: listen back, make a note of what needs more work, share the recording with your teacher for feedback.
- **Make a schedule** for yourself that will include mock auditions and a few recording sessions for your audition. Don't add unnecessary pressure on yourself by recording at the last minute!
- **Plan to record** your audition at a time of the day when you have energy and have had time to warm-up enough.
- **Wear something nice and comfortable.** Your audition recording *is* a performance.
- If you are recording from home, find an area with a nice background, good lighting, and as little ambient noise as possible.
- **Remember:** the teachers watching your audition recording have all been in your situation before, and only wish the best for you!

Performance Preparation Tips - Dr. Gillis

Appropriate literature is important, **showcase contrasting styles** (lyrical and technical).

Approaching new music – get a **macroscopic sense** of the music as quickly as possible; then work on **‘bookends’** (intro and coda), much can be learned and transferable to other material within the music; this process can also be a **confidence builder** to tackle the other sections of the music.

Focus your attention to accuracy of notes, rhythms, and style articulation; later then strive to play true dynamic markings with control.

Technical challenges should be played through slowly and evenly with a metronome for muscle memory; as one progresses, **finger-practice** the music with the use of a metronome both slowly and up-to-tempo to help fixate your attention on precision of the fingerings to the rhythms and tempi.

The **first 90%** of progress towards excellence will consume approximately half of your time, polishing for the **last 10%** will consume the other half of your time.

After rehearsing repertoire for a significant amount of time, **listen to professional recordings** to get a sense of other **interpretations and sound concept**.

Strive to **emulate the sound of a professional musician** to expedite progress.

Memorize the first phrase of the piece to help you perform with confidence.

Focus your attention to what you sound like, try to emulate the sound concept in your mind.

Videorecord yourself in a mock performance(s) to view your stage presence; performance protocol includes appropriate attire, entrance to and exit from the stage, body movement, eye contact, facial expression, bowing to audience, acknowledgement of audience, acknowledgement of accompanist, music stand height, tuning on stage, and pacing of the performance.

Magic of Three – mock performances – audio or videorecord to provide immediate feedback.

The **warm-up** should be designed to **mentally and physically** prepare you for the rest of the practice/rehearsal.

Before the performance (or creating the audition video) the warm-up should be simple and concise; technical exercises with scales are helpful to match articulation style; it is fine to check tempi, intros, or playing through a few excerpts, however too much of this activity can result in diminishing returns before the performance – **peak in the performance not the practice room**.