

Master of Music in Performance Studies Admission Information

A collaboration between nationally recognized academic instructors and leading industry professionals, this unique one-year graduate degree program is designed to prepare students for successfully navigating the ever-changing landscape of today's music industry while simultaneously assisting with the development of artistic identity as a performer. The Master of Music (M.M.) from Musicians Institute combines advanced performance training with additional study in both traditional and contemporary disciplines such as music history, theory, education, research skills, recording technology, production, business relations and online brand management. Students further their performance expertise in one of five major instrumental areas: Vocals, Keyboard, Guitar, Electric Bass or Drums. Successful completion of both a written thesis and graduate recital are required of all candidates pursuing a M.M. in Performance from Musicians Institute. Whenever possible, visiting artists, educators and industry professionals are invited into the classroom to participate in the group discussion and professional critique that serves as the intellectual foundation of the graduate program.

Entrance Requirements

Successful applicants to Musicians Institute's Master of Music (M.M.) Performance program must hold either a Bachelor of Music (B.M.) degree or a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) with music as the primary focus. In addition to working knowledge of contemporary styles and advanced performance experience, students must demonstrate a strong academic record, language, writing & leadership skills and the ability to interact well with others while consistently displaying overall dedication to the worldwide advancement of music as an art form.

Application Fee

Submit your online application at www.mi.edu, accompanied by a \$100 (non-refundable) application fee. Note that the application fee will be credited toward tuition & fees for Musicians Institute Bachelor Program alumni. See the following section to learn of the additional steps required for applying to the Master of Music in Performance program.

Admission Procedure**STEP 1: Document Review**

1. Resume
2. Personal Statement
3. Academic Transcripts
4. Two Letters of Recommendation
5. English Proficiency Requirement (International students only)

STEP 2: Performance Review

1. 4 pre-screening video submissions for faculty review
2. Include 1 arrangement OR original composition, complete with pdf score & mp3 audio-file

STEP 3: Result Notification**STEP 4: Placement Testing Days**

1. Placement Tests
2. Interview
3. Level and Class Assignment

STEP 5: Final Results**STEP 6: Course Assignment, Registration & Enrollment Deposit****STEP 1: Document Review**

1. **Resume:** Please include a copy of your most recent resume. Contents should include:
 - **Previous academic study** (college institutions, dates, degree(s) awarded).
 - **Private study** (subjects, instructor(s), dates).
 - **Relevant performance experience, awards, and participation** in festivals and/or Summer programs, if applicable.
2. **Personal Statement:** The **personal statement** (two to three type-written pages, in English...docx or pdf format) provides applicants with the opportunity to **introduce themselves to both the admissions committee and graduate faculty.** In addition to music, what are you passionate about? Hobbies? Other interests? How has your background influenced your musical endeavors? What are your professional plans for the future? How does obtaining a graduate degree play in to your plans?

3. **Transcripts:** Please include a scanned copy of all official college transcripts (“unofficial” or “student copies” permitted). **Grades and the names of both student and institution must all be legible. If your transcript is not in English, please provide a translated copy.** (See www.wes.org or www.ece.org for assistance). Official transcripts will be required for students who ultimately enroll. **Offers of admission are contingent on receipt of final official transcripts.**

4. **Letters of Recommendation:** Please provide **two letters of recommendation**, one being from your most recent private instructor. Please include recommender’s phone number(s) and email address at the end your resume.

5. **English Proficiency Requirement:** Please provide official scores to either TOEFL (Test of English to Speakers of Other Languages), IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or PTE-Academic (Pearson Test of English) if:
 - English is NOT your native language.
 - You received an undergraduate degree from a college or university OUTSIDE the United States where English is NOT the primary language.
 - Musicians Institute does not offer conditional admission for applicants who have not earned a passing TOEFL/IELTS score.
 - The score report is required before application processing can be completed.

- **TOEFL:** The minimum overall TOEFL score required for admission to graduate study at Musicians Institute is a 75 on the TOEFL internet-based test (iBT).

TOEFL scores expire after two years. Scores that are older than two years will not be accepted by Musicians Institute.

- **IELTS Scores:** As an alternative to the TOEFL, you may submit scores from the Academic Modules of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) designed by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate and administered by the British Council worldwide. Their website address is <http://www.ielts.org>.

The minimum overall band score required for admission to graduate study at Musicians Institute is 6.5.

IELTS scores expire after two years. Scores that are older than two years will not be accepted by Musicians Institute.

- **PTE (Pearson Test of English) Academic:** Musicians Institute accepts PTE Academic scores. The university is still in the process of determining minimum scores for ISE Exam exemption, so these test scores will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

***English-Language Test Waiver:** International applicants are exempt from submitting English-proficiency scores under the following circumstances:

- You hold a bachelor's degree completed in its entirety in the United States or another Anglophone (English speaking) country.
- The bachelor's degree should be earned at a regionally accredited university located in the United States, or at an officially recognized university in another country where English is both the language of instruction and the only officially recognized language of the country. Please note that the entire program needs to have been completed in the qualifying country. *Note: Dual-degree holders who completed part of their degree in the U.S. do not qualify for this waiver.*
- Your native language is English. This applies to native English speakers from countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada (except Quebec), where English is both the only official language of the country and the language of instruction.

STEP 2: Performance Review

Please Submit Four Pre-screening Videos (MP4 format)

- Please prepare **four** contrasting, **un-edited** selections that highlight your performance & improvisational abilities **across a range of styles** (i.e.: Rock, Jazz, Fusion, R&B, Funk, Country, Latin, World, etc.). **Live performance** utilizing instrumentation of your choosing **is required for all pre-screening materials. Play-along tracks are not permitted.** Be sure to **label selections:** Your name & instrument, song title, composer/arranger, style. Recordings need not be professional quality.
- Please **include one arrangement OR original composition, complete with a PDF copy of the full score, and an mp3 audio-file (Sibelius score preferred, if possible).** Your selection should demonstrate your ability to write for rhythm section, 4 or more horns, and strings. If you have not written for this instrumentation before, submit a score utilizing the largest instrumentation that have worked with to date.

If your submission doesn't fulfill our requirement, you may be asked to submit three additional arrangements according to Appendix 1-3.

****Vocal Candidates submitting sonically enhanced videos (compression, auto-tune, rhythm alignment, EQ, punch-ins, edits, etc.) will not be considered for admission. ****

STEP 3: Result Notification

Prospective students will be notified by email of Performance review results within two weeks of their completed document (Step 1) & performance review submissions (Step 2). Candidates who successfully pass the audition process (Steps 1 & 2) will be invited to Musicians Institute to meet the faculty and tour the school, along with completing required performance and written placement tests. Upon email notification of your acceptance, please contact your advisor to reserve a Placement Testing Day & timeslot. **Students must respond to offers of acceptance within one week (7 business days) to guarantee placement for the upcoming quarter.**

STEP 4: Placement Testing Days

During Placement Testing Days, **admitted students will perform together in various ensemble formats, take meetings with faculty, tour the campus and complete performance and written placement tests (music theory, history, ear-training and keyboard proficiency).** As outlined in Interview Day email notifications, **prospective students will be expected to spend the full day on campus.**

1. **Performance requirements for Placement Testing Days include:**
 - **Solo audition with rhythm section:** Applicants should be prepared to perform two selections in varied styles and improvise on each of them. One selection should be from the pre-screening video, the other must be new. Please bring lead-sheets for the rhythm section and screening committee (six copies total).
 - **Group performance with other students.**
 - **Individual interview with respective performance faculty.**

2. **Music theory, history, ear-training and keyboard proficiency placement tests are required of all entering graduate students prior to registration. Remedial courses (which do not count toward degree credit) may be assigned, at the discretion of the Program Chair, to students exhibiting deficiencies in the above areas.**

STEP 5: Final Results and Course Level Assignment

The Graduate Admissions Committee **evaluates applicants based on their completed application, supporting materials, and Placement Testing Day results (performance and written exams), and assigns the course levels.**

STEP 6: Registration & Enrollment

Upon **completion of Placement Testing Day requirements, new students will be able to enroll in courses and complete the registration process.**

**Appendix 1 Instrumental arrangement for four horns + rhythm section
(Equivalent to MI's Contemporary Arranging III)**

Choose a song from the list below. Arrange in jazz/swing style, at a tempo between mm=130 and mm=145.

Score should be **in concert**.

Instrumentation:

Trumpet, Alto sax, Tenor sax, Trombone
Piano, Bass, Drums [no guitar]

Form:

Intro (4 bars max.)
Melody (32 bars)
[optional: interlude – similar to intro – 4 bars]
Solos (32 bars) – use at least two horns, 16 bars each
Melody (32 bars) – (modulate to a new key?)
Ending – similar to intro, or new material - (4 bars)

Guidelines:

- Melodies are to be embellished. Do not copy the melody “as is” from the lead sheet.
- Determine the best key for the four horns at our disposal. **Do not write your arrangement in the same key as the lead sheet, unless that is the best key for the instrumentation.** If you plan to modulate, make sure the key doesn't end up too high.
- Rhythm section parts should begin with one or two measures of specific notation, after which slashes and “simile” may be used. At any point where the rhythm

section feel changes, write a measure or two of the new pattern, after which “simile” may again be used.

- Include rhythm section “kicks” (accents, syncopations, etc.) including the drums, as appropriate. Do NOT write any rhythm section part consisting of nothing but slashes.
- indicate all phrase markings clearly; use a double-bar line every 8 or 16 measures or as needed
- Arrangement must include at least **32 bars of 4-part soli style harmonized melody**. You can use the 4-part harmony at different points in the arrangement, or write an entire chorus in 4-part harmony. You may write more than 32 bars of 4-part soli texture if you wish. 32 bars is the **minimum**.
- **A change in texture must occur at least every 8 bars.** For example: an additional instrument is added; a background line enters; a change from unison to soli harmony, etc.
- **Solos should be assigned to the horn players. No piano solos.**
- **Write backgrounds behind soloists.** Allow the soloist to play alone for 4 to 8 bars, then introduce the background part. **Backgrounds should include both unison and voicings.** Unison lines should be embellished, but not overly busy. Best range for background lines: F below middle C to A above middle C.
- **Do not copy and paste the melody from the first chorus to the last chorus.** Change the embellishments and the textures.
- **Length: 3½ minutes max.**

Song choices: Bernie’s Tune, If I Were A Bell, Just Friends, Let’s Fall In Love, Lullaby of Birdland, Polka Dots and Moonbeams, There Will Never Be Another You, Yardbird Suite

Appendix 2 Adaptation and arrangement for string quintet, using reharmonization (Equivalent to MI’s Contemporary Arranging IV)

Instrumentation: string quintet (Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, Bass)

Choose one of the following folk songs:

Amazing Grace; Aura Lee; Danny Boy; Greensleeves; Oh Susanna;
Scarborough Fair; Shenandoah; Simple Gifts

These are very short, simple tunes, to be arranged at a slow to medium tempo. These arrangements will require an imaginative approach to keep them interesting! You can use a steady tempo throughout, or rubato, or a combination of both. **Arrangement must be at least two minutes in length and include reharmonization during at least one “chorus.”**

Form

Intro (optional): ensemble chords with minimal melodic content; establish key; “set up” the melody.

Melody - first statement: solo violin, viola and/or cello, **unaccompanied** – rubato, or in tempo. One player can play the entire first statement, or you can change instruments at the end of a phrase.

Melody - second statement: Add the other players gradually, using a contrapuntal approach, or support the melody with the entire ensemble. A “pianistic” approach will work well: root on the bottom; basic chord sound in mid-register, playing whole notes or half notes. Melody on top. Use basic chords if desired, or use simple reharmonization choices.

4-bar interlude – chords over a rhythmic pedal point

Modulate after the interlude. Do not limit yourself to simply modulating up by half or whole step. A major or minor 3rd may work better. Pick the best key for the instrument carrying the melody and choose the new key accordingly.

Melody - third statement: use a texture different from the one used during the second statement. You must reharmonize the basic chords, if you haven’t done so already by this point. This “chorus” is probably going to contain the high point of the arrangement. Choose the best key for the melody player (probably Violin 1). Use your *richest* reharmonization choices during this section.

Ending: A standard technique that works well for endings is to use a 4 or 8-bar recapitulation of the last portion of the melody and repeat that. On the final repeat you may want to try returning to a solo instrument for the ending, to mirror the sound of the opening.

Final chord: full ensemble, soft dynamics

Utilize at least one change of tone color during the arrangement, for *at least* one player. Possibilities include: *mutes, sul tasto, pizzicato. Col legno* and *sul ponticello* are inappropriate for this assignment.

- Embellish the melody with simple ornamentations: appoggiaturas, grace notes, etc.
- You may modulate more than once if you wish.
- Use different reharmonizations for each “chorus” if desired.
- When cello or viola are assigned a melodic fragment, the violins typically end up playing harmony *above* the melody. Choose dynamics so that the violins do not overpower the melody.

Lead sheets can be found here:

<https://www.amazon.com/cloudrive/share/B4KL4agh1e0XHKEAcCFjBxZYf1ERajX61m8zn7PDeeH>

**Appendix 3 Instrumental arrangement for five horns, rhythm section + strings.
(Equivalent to MI’s Contemporary Arranging V)**

Objective: rearrange an existing song by changing the style, feel, tempo, etc.

Score should be **in concert**.

Instrumentation

Trumpet (doubling on Flugelhorn)

Alto sax (doubling on Clarinet)

Tenor sax (doubling on Flute)

Trombone

Baritone sax (doubling on Flute)

Electric guitar

Keyboard (acoustic piano, electric piano or organ)

Electric bass

Drums

String section: Violins I & II, Violas, Cellos

Guidelines:

- 3 – 3½ minutes maximum
- melodic embellishment is required
- an introduction, interlude and ending are required (no fade-out endings)
- change the time signature if you wish
- no odd meter, rubato or tempo changes!
- some reharmonization is required; use where appropriate
- a change of texture must occur every 8 bars. For example: an additional instrument is added; a background line enters; a change from unison to harmony; a change in the rhythm section, etc.
- soloing section required – soloist(s) can be horn(s), guitar or piano
- background lines, voicings, and/or rhythmic figures are required behind soloists
- at least one *modulation* is required
- use of one or more “doubling” instruments is required, for at least 8 bars. Doubling instrument(s) can be used for lead or background lines. Remember to give the player sufficient time to change from one instrument to another.
- rhythm section parts should begin with one or two measures of specific notation, after which slashes and “simile” may be used. At any point where the rhythm section feel changes, write a measure or two of the new pattern, after which “simile” may again be used.
- include rhythm section “kicks” (accents, syncopations, etc.) including the drums, as appropriate. Do not write any rhythm section part consisting of nothing but slashes.
- indicate all phrase markings clearly; use a double-bar line every 8 or 16 measures or as needed

Arrange a song of your own choosing. **Song selection and stylistic treatment must be approved by instructor.** Choose the optimum key(s) for your arrangement based on the instrumentation available.

Considerations: textures to be used at different points in the arrangement; rhythmic ideas, bass line, etc.