

# West Central Region

## NATS National Student Auditions

# HANDBOOK



**43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference**  
**November 2–4, 2017**  
**University of Northern Colorado**

**Reginald Pittman, *Regional Governor***  
**Ellie Seligmann, *Auditions Chair***  
**Melissa Malde, *Registrar***

# West Central NATS National Student Auditions

## I. PURPOSE

- A. To offer the students of NATS members:
1. Encouragement towards more diligent preparation of appropriate and distinguished repertoire
  2. An opportunity to perform under conditions designed ideally to combine the best elements of competitive and non-competitive performance
  3. A specific goal, which stimulates the desire and incentive for vocal and musical self-improvement
  4. An opportunity to sing before qualified and impartial judges and to receive careful and constructive criticism
  5. Public recognition of musical talent and vocal achievement

## II. ORGANIZATION OF AUDITIONS

- A. Student auditions are an annual activity officially sponsored by the West Central Region of NATS, which includes Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Wyoming.
- B. These auditions are under the direct supervision of the Regional Governor, assisted by the Chapter Governors and the NATS National Student Auditions, West Central Regional Auditions Chair.
- C. Student auditions are NOT a part of the NATS Artist Awards: NATSAA or NMTC.
- D. Clarification of audition categories below:
1. A student's category is determined by the amount of vocal study, *not* present academic standing.
  2. The semester in which the student is currently enrolled is counted in the total.
  3. Summer semesters of study will NOT be counted in the total.
  4. For those studying voice privately [*not registered for university or college credits*], one year's study is accepted as equal to two semesters.
  5. If a student is restricted by the age limits outlined in section III, that student's category should be cleared with the region's Auditions Chair.
  6. Students awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place in any regional category are eligible to enter that category again.
  7. Students who do not wish to compete for placement, but would like to sing for evaluation will be placed within the appropriate categories in preliminary auditions only. When "FOR EVALUATION ONLY" is duly indicated on an application and repertoire list, the judges' comment sheets will not include any scores.
- E. Student auditions are divided into the following categories:

### HIGH SCHOOL:

| CATEGORY NUMBER / NAME                  | ANY LEVEL OF VOICE STUDY IN PROGRESS | FOR AGES |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------|
| 1 Upper High School Music Theatre Women | Grades 9-12                          | 14-19    |
| 2 Upper High School Music Theatre Men   | Grades 9-12                          | 14-19    |
| 3 High School Women                     | Grades 9-12                          | 14-19    |
| 4 High School Men                       | Grades 9-12                          | 14-19    |

### COLLEGE:

| CATEGORY NUMBER / NAME              | LEVEL OF VOICE STUDY IN PROGRESS   | FOR AGES      |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| 5 Lower College Music Theatre Women | Undergraduate 1 <sup>st</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> semester of voice                  | 22 or younger |
| 6 Lower College Music Theatre Men   | Undergraduate 1 <sup>st</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> semester of voice                  | 22 or younger |
| 7A Lower College-Freshman Women     | 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester  | 20 or younger |
| 7B Lower College-Sophomore Women    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> semester  | 22 or younger |
| 8A Lower College-Freshman Men       | 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester  | 20 or younger |
| 8B Lower College-Sophomore Men      | 3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> semester  | 22 or younger |
| 9 Upper College Music Theatre Women | 5 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> semester  | 25 or younger |
| 10 Upper College Music Theatre Men  | 5 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> semester  | 25 or younger |
| 11A Upper College-Junior Women      | 5 <sup>th</sup> or 6 <sup>th</sup> semester  | 23 or younger |
| 11B Upper College-Senior Women      | 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , or 10 <sup>th</sup> semester | 25 or younger |
| 12A Upper College-Junior Men        | 5 <sup>th</sup> or 6 <sup>th</sup> semester  | 23 or younger |
| 12B Upper College-Senior Men        | 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , or 10 <sup>th</sup> semester | 25 or younger |

### ADVANCED/GRADUATE:

| CATEGORY NUMBER / NAME    | LEVEL OF VOICE STUDY IN PROGRESS                                     | FOR AGES |
|---------------------------|--|----------|
| 13 Advanced College Women | Graduate students & undergrads after their 10 <sup>th</sup> semester | 22-30    |
| 14 Advanced College Men   | Graduate students & undergrads after their 10 <sup>th</sup> semester | 22-30    |

### NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS: *This is a regional category not included in the NATS National Student Auditions*

| CATEGORY NUMBER / NAME                | ANY LEVEL OF VOICE STUDY IN PROGRESS | FOR AGES    |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| NT Non-Traditional/Adult: Men & Women | Singers outside of other categories  | 22 or older |

### HALL JOHNSON SPIRITUAL COMPETITION: *A new category included biennially in the NATS National Student Auditions*

| CATEGORY NUMBER / NAME            | ANY LEVEL OF VOICE STUDY IN PROGRESS | FOR AGES |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| HJ Undergraduate College Students | No limit of study                    | 17-23    |

F. Students who self-identify as transgender or gender fluid must choose one audition category in Classical and/or Music Theatre based on their gender identification at the time of the chapter or regional audition, and select repertoire linked and associated with the gender of that category throughout the corresponding audition season.

### III. AGE LIMITS

[Determined by a student’s age at the time of auditions – on November 3, 2017]

**High School Categories:** Students in 9-12<sup>th</sup>

- Classical Divisions: 14-19 years
- Music Theatre: 14-19 years

**College Categories:** All college students studying 1-5 years beyond high school

- Lower College
  - Classical Freshmen through 20 years
  - Classical Sophomores through 22 years
  - Music Theatre Students through 22 years
  - Lower College Students above the age limits should enter the next higher category, overriding age restrictions
- Upper College
  - Classical Juniors through 23 years
  - Classical Seniors through 25 years
  - Music Theatre Students through 25 years
  - Classical College Students 26 or older should enter the Non-Traditional Category
  - Music Theatre Students 26–28 years are encouraged to enter NATS National Music Theatre Competition

**Advanced/Graduate Categories**

College graduates or undergraduates with more than 10 semesters of study

- Post-baccalaureate through 30 years
- Advanced/Graduate students 31 or older should enter the Non-Traditional Category

**Non-Traditional Category**

Students exceeding age limits of other categories

- Lower age limit 22 years / no upper age limit

**Hall Johnson Competition Category**

Undergraduate college students of all genders with no limit on level of study

- Undergraduate College Students aged 17-23

### IV. REPERTOIRE

*Questions concerning repertoire may be emailed to the Regional Auditions Chair, Ellie Seligmann, at [EllieNATS@aol.com](mailto:EllieNATS@aol.com).*

#### NATIONAL NATS ADDITIONAL REPERTOIRE RESTRICTIONS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Aria</b>                                 | An aria is a solo taken from an opera, oratorio, mass, cantata, zarzuela, operetta, or works titled “concert aria.” Oxford Online definitions will be used for the purposes of this audition. For example, Purcell’s selections from the semi-operas and masques are considered songs. Note that arias from <i>Dido and Aeneas</i> will be accepted as arias.   |
| <b>24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias</b> | The repertoire found in the 24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias collections may be counted as an aria or an art song in the high school and lower college classical categories. For the singers in the upper college categories and beyond, these pieces may count as an art song ONLY, regardless of origin. Any repertoire found outside of these collections will be considered only as the composer intended, as an art song or aria.  |
| <b>Memorization</b>                         | All repertoire, including oratorio, must be sung from memory.   |
| <b>Original Languages</b>                   | Selections should be sung in original language or in translation if warranted by common performance practice.   |
| <b>Transposition</b>                        | <b>CLASSICAL CATEGORIES:</b> All arias from opera, oratorio, mass, cantata, zarzuela, operetta, or works titled “concert aria” must be sung in the original or standard published key.<br><b>MUSIC THEATRE CATEGORIES:</b> Music Theatre selections in the college categories must be sung in the original or standard published key. In the high school categories, Music Theatre selections may be transposed to accommodate voice change issues only. Any transposition must retain the composer’s intention and style of music, and preserve the character being portrayed in the story and lyrics. |
| <b>Classical Repertoire</b>                 | The word “classical” in this context refers to art songs and arias from the “classical” genre, not limited to the “Classical” period of Mozart and Haydn. In other words, no music theatre, pop, soul, jazz, rhythm and blues, etc. Published arrangements of folk songs, spirituals, and traditional hymn tunes in English are widely accepted as part of the classical genre. Students in classical categories may present one selection of this type to fulfill the English art song requirement.  |

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Judicious Cuts</b>           | Piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed, and internal cuts of opera arias and music theatre selections are allowed as in common performance practice. Cuts of verse or verses of selections are not allowed. In the case of strophic pieces, all verses should remain that are traditionally included.  |
| <b>Music Theatre Selections</b> | All repertoire must be written or intended for a staged musical production. The production may be a musical (including film musicals), revue, or song cycle. Singers should ensure that <b>contrasting selections represent the spectrum</b> of their vocal and dramatic abilities. This should be exhibited by selecting songs from varying style periods (pop/rock, contemporary, Golden Age, operetta), by varying composers, and which allow students to employ a variety of vocalism (belt, mix, legit). Singers may choose only one operetta aria as one of their selections. Various online resources confirm such status and teachers are encouraged to consult them when selecting repertoire for the audition. |

### **HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC THEATRE – Categories 1 (Women) & 2 (Men)**

**3 selections required • 8 minute preliminary audition**

- Three contrasting Music Theatre selections from staged musical productions (*a musical, revue, song cycle or operetta*)

### **HIGH SCHOOL: Classical – Categories 3 (Women) & 4 (Men)**

**3 selections required • 8 minute preliminary audition**

- One art song in English (*original language*)
- One art song in a foreign language required
- One additional art song or aria selected at the discretion of the teacher

### **LOWER COLLEGE MUSIC THEATRE – Categories 5 (Women) & 6 (Men)**

**3 selections required • 10 minute preliminary audition**

- Three contrasting Music Theatre selections from staged musical productions (*a musical, revue, song cycle or operetta*)

### **LOWER COLLEGE: Classical – Categories 7A & 7B (Women) & 8A & 8B (Men)**

**3 selections required • 10 minute preliminary audition**

- One aria (*opera, operetta, oratorio, cantata, zarzuela or concert aria*)
- One art song in English (*original language*)
- One art song in a foreign language required

### **UPPER COLLEGE MUSIC THEATRE – Categories 9 (Women) & 10 (Men)**

**4 selections required • 12 minute preliminary audition**

- Four contrasting Music Theatre selections from staged musical productions (*a musical, revue, song cycle or operetta*)

### **UPPER COLLEGE: Classical – Categories 11A & 11B (Women) & 12A & 12B (Men)**

**4 selections required • 12 minute preliminary audition**

- One aria (*opera, operetta, oratorio, cantata, zarzuela or concert aria*)
- One art song in English (*original language*)
- One art song in a foreign language
- One additional selection from the classical repertoire

At least three languages must be represented.

### **ADVANCED/GRADUATE: Classical – Categories 13 (Women) & 14 (Men)**

**5 selections required • 15 minute preliminary audition**

- One opera aria
- One oratorio or cantata aria
- One art song in English (*original language*)
- One art song in a foreign language
- One additional selection from the classical repertoire

At least three languages must be represented.

### **NON-TRADITIONAL/ADULT MEN & WOMEN: Classical – Category NT (All genders)**

**3 selections required • 10 minute preliminary audition**

- One aria (*opera, operetta, oratorio, cantata, zarzuela or concert aria*)
- One art song in English (*original language*)
- One art song in a foreign language required

### **HALL JOHNSON SPIRITUAL COMPETITION: Classical – Category HJ (All genders)**

**3 selections required • 10 minute preliminary audition**

- Three contrasting selections from the designated 21 songs in the Hall Johnson spiritual repertoire as found in the Carl Fischer Hall Johnson Collection or the Hal Leonard Digital Series: Hall Johnson Concert Spirituals

**OFFICIAL REPERTOIRE LIST:** [https://www.nats.org/Hall\\_Johnson\\_Spirituals\\_Competition.html](https://www.nats.org/Hall_Johnson_Spirituals_Competition.html)

## V. CONDUCT OF AUDITIONS

A. The Student Auditions are NOT a contest, but rather a mutual effort to stimulate the highest degree of vocal artistry and technique.

### B. GUIDELINES FOR PIANISTS

1. Pianists are provided by the entrants
2. NATS members who enter students in the auditions may **not** accompany *any* student auditions
3. No pianist may play for more than 12 auditions
4. One singer participating in two categories will count as two auditions/registrations
5. Pianists must play from originals, not photocopies (*see page 8 for details*)

C. **THREE ROUNDS OF AUDITIONS** will be conducted within each class:  
**Preliminary, Semifinal & Final.**

#### EXCEPTIONS:

1. If no auditions within a category merit an averaged minimum score of 90 or two scores of 90 or above, no students will advance and no awards will be presented in that category.
2. In the event of insufficient numbers in a category of auditions, the Semifinal auditions may be omitted at the Auditions Chair's discretion
3. An under-represented category may be combined with a parallel category at the discretion of the Auditions Chair.

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### PRELIMINARY AUDITION GUIDELINES

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#### 1. When:

- a. Each NATS member will be emailed a preliminary auditions schedule to relay to his/her students and collaborative pianists.
- b. Preliminary auditions will be held on Friday, with few exceptions.

#### 2. Time Limits:

- a. 08 minute maximum for High School Auditions ..... Categories 1, 2, 3 & 4
- b. 10 minute maximum for Lower College, Non-Trad., Hall Johnson Auditions...Categories 5, 6, 7, 8, NT & HJ
- c. 12 minute maximum for Upper College Auditions ..... Categories 9, 10, 11 & 12
- d. 15 minute maximum for Advanced Auditions ..... Categories 13 & 14

#### 3. Scoring (*each student's audition is judged by a national standard as outlined in rubrics found on p. 10-11*):

- 90 - 100 = exceptional
- 85 - 89 = good
- 80 - 84 = average
- 70 - 79 = below average

#### 4. Repertoire Performed:

- a. High School, Lower College, Non-Traditional & Hall Johnson Categories (1–8, NT & HJ)  
The singer will announce and perform a selection of his/her choice, followed by selections as requested by the judges, until the time limit is reached or all repertoire has been performed. Judges may stop any audition exceeding the required time limits. (*See #2 above*).
- b. Upper College Categories (9–12)  
The singer will announce and perform a selection of his/her choice, followed by selections as requested by the judges, until the time limit is reached or all repertoire has been performed. Judges may stop any audition exceeding the 12 minute time limit.
- c. Advanced/Graduate Categories (13–14)  
The singer will announce and perform a selection of his/her choice, followed by selections as requested by the judges, until the time limit is reached or all repertoire has been performed. **Judges are not allowed to request a portion of a selection to accommodate the time limit.** Judges may stop any audition exceeding the 15 minute time limit.

## 5. Repertoire Lists:

- a. Each singer must present THREE copies of his/her repertoire cited on the judging form (*see page 13*).
- b. Repertoire lists will be presented at the preliminary audition only.
- c. Do NOT include name of teacher, school, or singer on repertoire lists.
- d. Do fill in the student contestant number and category of audition number.
- e. If opting to audition for comments only, check the comments only box and mark an X in the scoring box.

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## SEMIFINAL AUDITION GUIDELINES

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### 1. When:

- a. The Auditions Chair will announce the exact time and location of all semifinals, as published in the Conference's program.
- b. High School Categories 1, 2, 3 & 4 will perform semifinals early Friday afternoon.
- c. All other categories will perform semifinal auditions Saturday morning.

### 2. Time Limits:

**No contestant's semifinal audition may exceed 5 minutes in duration.**

### 3. Scoring:

- a. Two scores of 90 or above, or an average of 90 or above in the preliminary round, will advance a singer to the semifinal auditions.
- b. Judges will use a weighted scoring system in semifinal Auditions to determine finalists. Judges will not write comments or provide scoring sheets.
- c. Judges must not confer, until after their rating sheets are completed and in the sealed envelope.

### 4. Repertoire Performed:

Each semifinalist will announce and perform ONE selection of his/her choice from the required repertoire listed on his/her entry form.

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## FINAL AUDITION GUIDELINES

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### 1. When:

- a. The Auditions Chair will announce the exact time and location of all final auditions, as published in the Conference's program
- b. High School Categories 1, 2, 3 & 4 perform finals on Friday afternoon.
- c. Lower College, Upper College Juniors & Non-Traditional Categories 5, 6, 7, 8, 11A, 12A, NT & HJ perform finals early Saturday afternoon.
- d. Upper College Music Theatre, Upper College Seniors, & Advanced Categories 9, 10, 11B, 12B, 13 & 14 perform finals late Saturday afternoon in the formal Concert Finals.

### 2. Time Limits:

**No contestant's final audition may exceed 5 minutes in duration.**

### 3. Scoring:

- a. Each judge will rank the finalists' auditions, awarding a score of "1" to the best performance.
- b. Judges will not confer; the results are tabulated in the Auditions office.
- c. Final Auditions held earlier Saturday afternoon will be judged by three NATS members per category.
- d. Concert Finals (later Saturday afternoon) will be judged by all NATS members present.

### 4. Repertoire Performed:

- a. Each finalist will announce and perform ONE selection of his/her choice from the required repertoire listed on his/her entry form.
- b. Early Saturday afternoon finalists will perform as their collaborative pianists are available, in random order.
- c. Concert finalists (late Saturday afternoon) will perform in an order determined by the Auditions Chair or Regional Governor backstage, before each category of finals begins.
- d. The winner of the Non-Traditional category will perform his/her winning selection in the concert finals.

## D. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

1. All students, teachers, and pianists may hear the announcement of awards at the time and location published in the Conference's program.
2. Certificates and awards are presented as soon as all tabulations are completed:
  - a. High School Categories - Friday afternoon at the conclusion of high school finals
  - b. All other Categories - Saturday in the late afternoon at the conclusion of all final auditions
3. Teachers may collect awards for students not present during the awards ceremony.
4. If both teacher and student are absent, the Auditions Chair will mail the award to the teacher.
5. The top five students in each category (excepting the Non-Traditional category) are invited to participate in the YouTube round of NATS National Student Auditions, from which the top fourteen student-singers in each category of entry are invited to the National NATS Student Audition Semifinals to continue auditioning for national honors and prizes, as detailed online at [www.NATS.org](http://www.NATS.org).
5. The "Singer of the Year" award is presented to the student giving the most excellent performance in concert finals. This award may not be won in more than one year by the same student.
6. The "Collaborative Pianist of the Year" award is presented to the pianist giving the most excellent collaborative performance in concert finals. This award may not be won in two consecutive years by the same pianist.

## VI. ELIGIBILITY

- A. NATS members in good standing may enter any students currently studying with them on a regular basis, providing the student and teacher reside within the West Central Region at the time of the regional auditions.
- B. A teacher may enter a student, who has studied with him/her for less than 8 months, provided the name of the former teacher is listed on the entry form and included in all announcements, as governed by the NATS Code of Ethics:

**The NATS Code of Ethics states:**  
"It is unethical to claim as a pupil one having studied less than eight months with the teacher, except when there has been no previous training."

- C. Applications of new members, who wish to enter students in the West Central Student Auditions, must be completed and filed with the National NATS Office by October 1st.
- D. No limit is placed on the number of students entering regional auditions.

## VII. PARTICIPATION

- A. Each NATS member will go online to complete your students' entries, teacher's registration, teacher's judging availability, and more. Detailed instructions will arrive via email in the Audition Chair's letter to the membership.
- B. **A non-refundable fee of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) is charged for each audition entry.**
- C. Questions about student entries should be directed to the West Central Regional Auditions Chair:

**Ellie Seligmann, Regional Auditions Chair**  
4032 S. Nepal St.  
Aurora CO 80013  
**EMAIL:** [EllieNATS@aol.com](mailto:EllieNATS@aol.com)  
**CELL:** 303-564-3099
- D. Questions about your registration or pre-purchased lunch should be directed to the Conference Registrar:

**Melissa Malde, Registrar**  
**EMAIL:** [melissa.malde@unco.edu](mailto:melissa.malde@unco.edu)  
**CELL:** 970-310-0864  
**OFFICE:** 970-351-2051

E. Mail submissions for students to participate in master classes/workshops to the Regional Governor:

**Reginald Pittman, WC-NATS Governor**

KSU-School of Music, Theatre & Dance

109 McCain Auditorium

Manhattan KS 66506-4700

**EMAIL:** pittman@ksu.edu

**CELL:** 785-341-1405

F. Each student will be assigned a contestant number on the official schedule for preliminary auditions. This number will serve as the student's I.D. admitting him/her to all sessions of the NATS Conference, except the official business meeting and noon buffet, which require a pre-paid reservation for teachers and/or collaborative pianists only.

G. Disqualification:

1. A student entered in regional auditions and found with certainty in violation of any of the guidelines outlined in this handbook is subject to being disqualified, as determined by the Auditions Chair in consultation with the Regional Governor and the Chapter President involved.

### National NATS Policy on Copyrights

*The National Association of Teachers of Singing endorses a strict policy regarding copyright laws. The use of photocopied music is prohibited at all NATS sponsored events, from the national to the chapter level. **EXCEPTIONS** are:*

1. *Music that is out of print, still under copyright law, with permission from a publisher.*
2. *Sheet music or books, for which the copyright has expired, but are available in CD format, (e.g., CD Sheet Music). Performers must be prepared to present proof of ownership.*
3. *Sheet music purchased legally from an online vendor. Such music should have either a separate page proving the performer has purchased such or a copyright notice at the bottom of the music that includes the performer's name. Similarly, electronic copies of electronic scores or sheet music on an iPad or Android Tablet require either an electronic or paper receipt of purchase. Performers must be prepared to present proof of ownership.*
4. *Music available from approved public domain websites. Performers should take particular care when accessing these sites as some do not guarantee that all works are indeed in the public domain.*

**CURRENT APPROVED ONLINE PUBLIC DOMAIN SITES**  
www.imslp.org & www.sheetmusicarchive.net

### In compliance with NATS national policy and with current copyright laws **THE USE OF ORIGINAL SCORES IS DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. Collaborative pianists must play from the original score, not from photocopies. **If a collaborative pianist plays from photocopies in an audition, automatic disqualification of the student will occur.** It is the responsibility of the NATS member/teacher and student to verify the pianist will play from original scores.
2. The receipt of a purchased score that has not yet arrived is ***not accepted*** as a substitute for an original score.
3. When an original score is either too fragile or too small to be read by the accompanist, photocopies may be used, but *only* when the original is present in the preliminary audition.
4. A photocopied page may **NOT** be used to avoid a difficult page turn. Enlist a page-turner, if needed.



### **Resolution of a Copyright or Repertoire Violation**

If legal photocopies or unbound music are being used by the collaborative pianist it is suggested that the singer address the adjudicators upon entering the room and provide proper copyright approval prior to their performance in the form of a CD Sheet music approval form or other accepted documentation (e.g., publisher approval letter, public domain notice) prior to announcing their first selection.

If the student DOES NOT provide the proper documentation an adjudicator has the right and responsibility, at the conclusion of the audition, to request the student to provide such if they notice that copies or unbound music are used and the following list of steps should be taken. These steps also apply to potential repertoire discrepancies.

- Adjudicators should not disrupt the audition process to question the student.
- Nothing should be written on a comment sheet by adjudicators regarding any suspected violation. Please write a note on a separate sheet of paper.
- Write comments and score the student as if there were no violation.
- Rank or score the student as if there were no violation.
- When the auditions are completed, all adjudicators should consult the Auditions Chair and discuss the potential violation.
- The Auditions Chair may need to research the issue or consult others before making a final ruling.
- If it is determined that a violation exists, the Auditions Chair makes every effort to discuss the violation with the student's teacher prior to notifying the student. This is to be done by the Auditions Chair and not the adjudicators.
- The singer is disqualified if, in fact, a violation has occurred.

## **VIII. GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES**

- A. ALL TEACHERS ENTERING STUDENTS MUST REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE AND BE AVAILABLE TO JUDGE AT LEAST ONE SESSION. If a teacher cannot attend the conference for professional or personal reasons, he/she may petition the Auditions Chair *in writing* for a waiver of the judging requirement. A resolution of the written request to be relieved from judging is at the Auditions Chair's discretion, pending the availability of sufficient judges. If the instructor is excused from judging and enters a student, failure to register for the conference will result in the instructor being classified as "not in good standing." Any teacher, who cannot judge and wants to enter students, will pay a \$75 fee to cover securing a guest judge in his or her stead.
- B. Teachers will not judge categories in which they have an entry, unless emergencies require their services in categories with only one or two of their students entered. As much as is possible, the Auditions Chair will avoid having any teacher judge students currently studying at his/her school.
- C. At [www.NatsAuditions.com](http://www.NatsAuditions.com), teachers entering students will be asked to submit on-line their availability to judge and preferences in judging assignments. The Auditions Chair will honor these requests as scheduling allows.
- D. Judges are to write comments that support a motivating spirit of cooperation in the pursuit of vocal artistry and technique through hearing and being heard in a climate of mutual support and concern. These comments should be consonant with the NATS Code of Ethics.
- E. Judges are to supply sufficient, appropriate comments to validate both the score assigned to each audition and the tick marks indicating the audition's success in meeting the standards established in the NATS Audition Rubric.
- F. Judges are not to question an auditioning student about the eligibility of his/her repertoire. Judges should clearly outline any concerns about the eligibility of repertoire on a separate piece of paper to be returned to the Auditions Office with the completed scoring sheets. In adherence to regional and national NATS policies, the Auditions Chair determines the suitability of auditioning repertoire.
- G. Judges are not to question an auditioning student about potential copyright infringement. ONLY after a full audition is completed, judges may ask a student to show a letter of receipt or permission to validate the use of what appeared to be photocopies used by the pianist. No further discussion should ensue with the student. Judges should clearly outline any concerns about copyright infringement on a separate piece of paper to be returned to the Auditions Office with the completed scoring sheets. In adherence to regional and national NATS policies, the Auditions Chair will address any potential infringement of copyright, as outlined on page 9.

- H. Without prejudice, judges must allow a potentially disqualified student to sing, score the audition and continue auditions in a timely manner. The Auditions Chair will review all concerns leading to potential disqualification to determine with certainty whether or not the audition is disqualified at a later time, which will be determined before students advance to the next level of auditions.
- I. Scoring of student auditions is to uphold a common national standard set by the National NATS Rubrics found on the pages 11 and 12. Scoring of student auditions at the regional level must be completed on forms provided by National NATS (*see a sample on page 13*).
- J. NATS teacher/members who meet the requirements of a student auditions category—age and years of study—may enter student auditions through the NATS member with whom they are currently studying, but they may not enter themselves in the auditions. If a member/teacher enters their students in the auditions, they must still be available to adjudicate a category of auditions as well. (*See VIII, A on page 9*)

## IX. ENDOWED NATIONAL NATS BIENNIAL AUDITIONS

### A. Hall Johnson Spiritual Category of Student Auditions

Due to the generosity of the Hall Johnson Estate a \$2000 award will be given in each national conference year (national finals are only in even years) to the best performance of a Hall Johnson Spiritual for the national conferences years from 2016-2036. All interested performers will apply for this category as part of regional student auditions with the top five regional singers advancing to the NSA rounds just as with all other categories.

### B. NATS Artist Awards (NATSAA)

This biennial competition is designed for singers aged 21 to 35 years and preparing to launch a professional career. Substantial monetary and performance prizes are awarded. The competition takes place every other year culminating with semifinals and finals at the NATS Winter Workshop, January 5-7, 2018 in New York City. Preliminary auditions are held regionally in the fall of active competition years. Online entries on NATS.org include a \$75 entry fee. Entries must be completed online at NATS.org by September 5, 2017 for the next NATSAA competition in the 2017-2018 academic year. Extensive repertoire requirements are clearly detailed online at NATS.org.

### C. NATS National Music Theatre Competition (NMTC)

This biennial competition is designed for Music Theatre artists aged 20 to 28 years and preparing to launch a professional career or in the early stages of a professional career. Substantial monetary and performance prizes are awarded. The competition takes place every other year culminating with semifinals and finals at the NATS Winter Workshop, January 5-7, 2018 in New York City. Preliminary auditions require students to submit links to several video-taped audition selections in the fall of active competition years. Entries include a \$75 entry fee for students of NATS members. Entries must be completed online at NATS.org by September 15, 2017. All repertoire requirements are detailed online at NATS.org.

## NATS Audition Rubric – Classical Categories

As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer’s performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating.

| STANDARD  | Lowest 70-79   | Average 80-89  | Best 90-100   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Tone:</b><br>Resonance and timbre are appropriate to the style, with balanced chiaroscuro throughout range. Onset and offset are clean, clear and balanced allowing for vibrancy. Tuning is accurate throughout range. Dynamic flexibility is present; singer has the ability to make subtle changes appropriate to style and character. | Resonance is incomplete, chiaroscuro not evident in vocal range. Onsets are often delayed and with extra noise or air much of the time. Offsets have extra air or extraneous noise much of the time. Tuning is often problematic. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is not fully evident in the performance. | Resonance is developing, chiaroscuro through some of the range. Onsets are immediate most of the time but occasionally either tighten the tone or allow excess breath in the sound. Offsets have occasional extra air or extraneous noise. Tuning is mostly accurate. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is sometimes evident in the performance. | Resonance is complete, ringing chiaroscuro throughout range. Onsets are immediate and promote clear, complete timbre at all times. Offsets are silent and allow rebound in the breath system. Tuning is always accurate. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is fully evident in the performance. |
| <b>Breathing/Alignment:</b><br>Inhalation is easy, full and efficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, vibrancy, and vocal energy. Buoyant alignment assists a balanced engagement of the tone.   | Inhalation is often noisy or insufficient. Exhalation does not provide stability, and the singer tenses or collapses in the body. The singer requires extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy is occasional.   | Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy some of the time, with some collapsing in the body at the ends of phrases. Buoyancy is developing.  | Inhalation is silent, easy and sufficient all of the time. Exhalation provides support, balanced stability, and energized phrasing. Alignment is buoyant.   |
| <b>Language/Diction:</b><br>Languages are sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation, with idiomatic inflection beyond basic phonetics. The singer displays thorough understanding and communication of the text.  | Languages are often inaccurate in pronunciation and articulation, and lack idiomatic characteristics. The singer often does not communicate the meaning of the text.   | Some languages are accurate in pronunciation and articulation, and demonstrate idiomatic characteristics. The singer communicates the meaning of much of the text.   | All languages are accurate in pronunciation and articulation, and demonstrate idiomatic characteristics. The singer communicates the meaning of all text.   |
| <b>Musicianship:</b><br>Pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer, editor, or arranger are observed and presented with idiomatic style. Performance is easily sung from memory.  | Many pitches and rhythms are inaccurate. Attention to the score is unclear or lacks understanding. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete with several errors.   | Pitches and rhythms are accurate most of the time. Most of the markings in the music are observed, and much of the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with some errors.  | All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the music are observed, and the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete.   |
| <b>Artistry / Expression:</b><br>The physical life, musicality, and vocalism of the singer fully express the music and story, and engage the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic experience.  | The singer has difficulty making physical, musical and vocal choices, and their individual artistry does not engage the listeners in the entire performance. The performance is expressive and meaningful some of the time.  | The physical, musical and vocal choices made by the singer allow their individual artistry to engage the listeners in part of the performance. The performance is personally expressive and meaningful most of the time.   | The physical, musical and vocal choices made by the singer allow their individual artistry to engage the listeners in the entire performance. The performance is personally expressive and meaningful all of the time.  |
| <b>Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY</b><br>The singer and pianist are well rehearsed, and coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.   | The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized, and the artistic goals of the performance were unclear.  | The singer and pianist are coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance some of the time.  | The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.   |

## NATS Audition Rubric – Music Theater Categories

As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer’s performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating.

| STANDARD  | Lowest 70-79   | Average 80-89  | Best 90-100   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Tone:</b> Singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt*, mix*, and/or legit*), and has the ability to make subtle changes appropriate to the style and character. Changes in registration are relatively smooth and even. Refer to the FAQ for additional explanation.</p> <p><b>Belt:</b> This high-energy sound is often described as “called,” or “brassy,” an outgrowth of mix. While it must be possible to be vibrant in a belt, vibrato is a stylistic choice.</p> <p><b>Mix:</b> This sound is often described as “speech-like,” and may be light or heavy based on the needs of the character. This sound is clearly distinguishable from typical classical timbre.</p> <p><b>Legit:</b> This sound is often described as “lyrical,” “sweet,” and “round,” employing similarities to classical singing, but able to move easily to “mix” as needed.</p> <p><b>For audio examples of each style, refer to: <a href="http://nats.org/nsaresources.html">nats.org/nsaresources.html</a></b></p> | <p>The singer shows little mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes few appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are abrupt or uneven much of the time.</p>                      | <p>The singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for some of their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes some appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are smooth and even some of the time.</p> | <p>The singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for all of their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are smooth and even.</p> |
| <p><b>Breathing/Alignment:</b><br/>Inhalation is easy, full and efficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. The alignment assists a balanced engagement of the tone and is appropriate for the character.</p>  | <p>Inhalation is often insufficient. Exhalation does not provide stability, and the singer tenses or collapses in the body. The singer requires extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy is occasional or may not be appropriate for the character.</p>                                   | <p>Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy some of the time, with some collapsing in the body at the ends of phrases. Buoyancy is developing or somewhat appropriate for the character.</p>                   | <p>Inhalation is easy and sufficient all of the time. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Alignment is buoyant and appropriate for the character.</p>   |
| <p><b>Language/Diction:</b><br/>The text is sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style or vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer displays thorough understanding and communication of the lyric.</p>   | <p>The text is pronounced inaccurately or with articulation inappropriate to the character. The singer communicates little of the meaning of the lyric.</p>  | <p>The text is pronounced well and articulated easily as appropriate to the character some of the time. The singer communicates the meaning of the lyric some of the time.</p>   | <p>The text is pronounced well and articulated easily as appropriate to the character all of the time. The singer fully communicates the meaning of the lyric.</p>  |
| <p><b>Musicianship:</b><br/>Pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer are observed and presented with idiomatic style. Performance is easily sung from memory.</p>   | <p>Many pitches and rhythms are inaccurate. Attention to the score is unclear or lacks understanding. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete.</p>  | <p>Pitches and rhythms are accurate most of the time. Most of the markings in the music are observed, and much of the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with some errors.</p>   | <p>All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the music are observed, and the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete.</p>  |
| <p><b>Artistry/Expression:</b><br/>The physical life, musicality, and vocalism of the singer fully express the music and story, and engage the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic experience.</p>  | <p>The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer often do not communicate the intentions of the character, and do not engage the listeners in the entire performance; gestures are missing or resemble mannerisms and are not integral to the character and situation.</p> | <p>The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer communicate the intentions of the character some of the time, and engage the listeners in part of the performance; gestures are sometimes genuine and integral to the character and situation.</p>    | <p>The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer clearly communicate the intentions of the character, and engage the listeners in the entire performance; gestures are genuine and integral to the character and situation.</p> |
| <p><b>Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY</b><br/>The singer and pianist are well rehearsed, and coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.</p>   | <p>The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized, and the artistic goals of the performance are unclear.</p>  | <p>The singer and pianist are coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance some of the time.</p>   | <p>The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.</p>  |



**National Association of Teachers of Singing  
Student Auditions Adjudication Form  
WEST CENTRAL REGION**



Singer Name or # \_\_\_\_\_ Category \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if singing for comments only

**REPERTOIRE**

|    | Title | Larger Work | Composer |
|----|-------|-------------|----------|
| 1. | _____ | _____       | _____    |
| 2. | _____ | _____       | _____    |
| 3. | _____ | _____       | _____    |
| 4. | _____ | _____       | _____    |
| 5. | _____ | _____       | _____    |

**ADJUDICATION**

*Offer constructive evaluation and score taking into consideration the criteria below as appropriate to category of the singer.*

|                         | <i>low</i>        | <i>high</i> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Tone                    | -----/-----/----- |             |
| Breathing/Alignment     | -----/-----/----- |             |
| Language / Diction      | -----/-----/----- |             |
| Musicianship / Accuracy | -----/-----/----- |             |
| Artistry / Expression   | -----/-----/----- |             |
| <hr/>                   |                   |             |
| Ensemble (comment only) | -----/-----/----- |             |

**COMMENTS**

Adjudicator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**SCORE**

If singing for comments only  
place an X in the score box