

Dawn's Dawnings, Part IV

Even though "Dawn's Dawnings" have been more specifically written for piano teachers, just remember all instruments, and voice are encouraged to take part in our once a year competitive festival.

Just a few reminders regarding registration for the March 2-3, 2019 competitive festival:

Entry on-line, deadline is Friday, February 1, 2019, at 5:00 pm.

1. Teachers mail checks and one agreement form per student to
Holly Aldridge, 220 Crystal Hills Blvd. Manitou Springs, Co. 80829
(address in CSMTA directory is incorrect) All forms and checks MUST be received by deadline.
2. For piano, check the sonatina list pp. 38-43 in PPMTA Handbook. There are new classes based on age of student. Please register based on this 2018-19 list.
3. When registering, round timings off to the higher number. Time limits for piano entries are on page 33 of the handbook, and on page 34 for voice, instrumental and ensembles.

Today let's focus on the actual audition. Each student has an assigned time for their audition. It is helpful to do an actual audition during a lesson time or have a performance class where students pretend it is the real deal! Don't assume the student remembers from one year to the next. My students enjoy judging each other, getting familiar with what the judge is listening for that makes for a winner!

1. Students arrive 15 minutes before scheduled time of his/her audition.
2. The first page of the piece should be tagged in their book
3. The teacher at the registration desk will tell you where your assigned room is and when to go to the room.
4. The teacher/monitor outside your assigned room will take the music to the judge and introduce the student to the judge when the judge is ready. Yes, Students perform for one judge only in a private room.
5. Students should get into the position to play or sing, but wait until the judge tells them to begin. Piano students should play a prepared scale and cadence first, then wait for the judge's signal to begin.
6. The judge will tell the student when to sing or play the first piece, or for sonatinas or sonatas, play the first movement. Then stop and wait.
7. The judge will then tell the student when to begin the next song, or movement. Then stop and wait. Should students be playing three movements, this will be repeated again. Take time to prepare for the next song or movement.

8. The student should stay in the room unless the judge tells them they may leave. Remember to wait outside the room to receive your music from the judge.

Since there is no applause, there could be some silent moments between songs, or movements, it is good to talk about this at a lesson. What should the student be thinking about to prepare for the next song or movement? How should they “let go” of the finished piece and prepare for the next?

From the time they sit waiting to audition it may be good to have a realistic goal to think about like, “I’m going to enjoy sharing this sonatina with the judge.” Each movement could have a realistic goal! I don’t like using the word perfect in a goal, rather “I am going to master those two legato phrases” or “dramatic dynamics” “singing melody” etc. These are just some ideas for students to think about while waiting. Teachers, don’t wait until audition time to start to practice these ideas! Should they begin in the lessons and practice time and/or at the performance class? Students, enjoy sharing this music you have enjoyed and worked hard to perform!

When I started to enter students in the PPMTA competitions, I was ready for a new challenge as a teacher. I needed some good solid input about how I was preparing students to play in public.

Over a period of four or five years it became so helpful to me to review my student’s evaluations. It helped me see the strengths of my teaching but also the weak areas-ouch! where I need to do a better job of teaching.

It was also well worth the money invested to have such a thorough evaluation of the student’s playing. Often the judge said something in a different way that I thought I had said to the student but didn’t seem to bring about change in their playing. Hmmm....It helped me learn new ways of communicating a musical concept.

I often was encouraged too when the judge not only affirmed the student but me as the teacher. Judges know if a student has prepared well and they are playing or singing in a manner that puts the listener at ease. When the judge says “I so enjoyed listening to you play so musically” it truly is encouragement to not only the student, but also the teacher!

In our PPMTA competitions, there are no first, second, or third place winners- a student is a Winner, or an Honorable mention.

Winners MUST be present to perform in the Sunday afternoon “Winner’s Recital.”

Honorable Mentions receive a trophy too but time doesn’t allow for them to play. Even if you do not have a winner, go and encourage your students to go and listen even if they have NOT been the winner-it helps them prepare for the future! It is truly **inspiring** to hear the accomplishments of these students! You too will learn and enjoy listening!