

Manhattan School of Music Study Guide for Composition Audition

The audition is two days. The first day has a 3 hour exam covering the following subjects:

- sight singing
- dictation (intervallic/melodic/ four part and rhythmic)
- scales (diatonic and non-diatonic)
- set theory and serial transformations
- 16th C. counterpoint analysis
- 4 part harmonic analysis - instruments (ranges and transpositions)
- a historical composition exercise (e.g. the continuation of a binary dance piece)
- "20 Questions" a brief survey of composition related information in Column A/B matching format.

The exam is given in the morning. At its conclusion each candidate is given the same composition exercise which is to be completed in time for presentation to the faculty during the candidate's scheduled audition interview time on the second day of the audition. This exercise is to be composed in the candidate's own style and is general in its guidelines, therefore not demanding of a specific stylistic solution.

The audition interview with the faculty begins with the submission of the composition exercise that was assigned at the exam. The applicant will then be asked to present an example of what they consider to be their most representative work. This could be either a work from their portfolio (it could be, but does not have to be one of the three works submitted for the application) or the composition assignment written since the entrance exam. (If the candidate can perform the composition assignment on the piano or some other instrument this is encouraged but not required. MIDI versions of the piece are acceptable as well.) The faculty will then proceed to ask the applicant questions regarding their musical background and knowledge.

Applicants must bring all of the following to their audition:

1. the **composition assignment**, written since the Monday exam;
2. **bound score copies** of all the works they intend to present to the faculty (three copies per work is ideal);
3. **recordings** of those works, on CD, laptop or other device. It is highly recommended that applicants have their recordings prepared in more than one format (for example, both CD and laptop or other device) and immediately ready for listening at the start of the interview. Undergraduate applicants must have at least *one* acoustic recording with live musicians performing their work. Graduate applicants are expected to have more than one such recording.