

An Annotated Curriculum Vitae for Composers

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The purpose of this document is to familiarize emerging composers with the various aspects of our *curriculum vitae* (which differs from that of any other academic discipline), to model their clear presentation, and to explain the rationale behind their inclusion.

As any search committee member will attest, there is no single standard practice for the layout, typography, organization, or length of the composer's *c.v.* But trends do emerge.

General Notes

1. The academic CV is not the right moment to show off your cutting-edge taste in typography. A well-formatted, thoughtfully-organized, and thoroughly-proofread document set in 11 or 12 point Palatino, Times New Roman, or a similar serif typeface will be appropriate in all situations. In the United States, it is not customary to include photographs or biographical data (year or place of birth) on the *c.v.*
2. Early in your career, you may not have any items to populate some of these sections. Omit them for now. It's still good to know they exist as you begin to make plans for the future.
3. It cannot be stressed enough that you must combine, eliminate, subdivide, and reorder the various sections in order to highlight your strengths and minimize your weaknesses.
 1. If you only have one item in a particular category, consider combining that category with another.
 2. If you have a prestigious accomplishment in a particular category, consider putting that first in Tier 2. The principle of peer review governs the magnitude of prestige: the more difficult something is to achieve, the more prestigious.
4. Unlike a business resume, which is constantly trimmed, edited, and revised, an academic CV is a "living document" that chronicles all of your professional accomplishments, and to which you add continuously throughout your career. While you may occasionally remove early-career items as you progress and they become irrelevant, you will mostly just add to the CV. As such, it can become long and unwieldy. That's ok. Many opportunities will request a one or two-page resume, which is something else all together.
5. Notice the regular list of dates running down the left-hand side of the document. This allows the reader to see, at a glance, your productivity over time. Many opportunities value steady, consistent output and growth.

Your Name

Curriculum vitae

Title, if applicable
 Department, Institution
 Professional Address
 City, State ZIP
 E-mail | Phone | website

Tier 1 (Education and Professional Appointments) always goes first and in that order. Specify only the year when the degree was conferred (or is expected). Also include any additional formal training in composition, which includes attendance at summer festivals, workshops, and seminars. If you worked closely with a particular faculty member, you may include a line that reads "Composition studies with Jane Doe".

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Degrees

2013	Ph.D. in Music Composition; Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ (<i>anticipated</i>) <i>Fellowship Title</i>
2008	M.M. in Music Composition; Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ <i>Fellowship Title</i>
2006	B.M. in Music Composition; Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ <i>Merit-Based Scholarship Title</i>

Other Training / Summer Programs / Masterclasses

2011	Summer Festival; City, State
2010	Summer Festival; City, State
2009	Summer Festival; City, State
2008	Summer Festival; City, State
2007	Summer Festival; City, State

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

• You should choose a title for this section that reflects the nature of your professional appointments. Acceptable variants include "Academic Appointments"; "Teaching & Research Positions"; "Professional Experience" or similar. If you work in more than one professional area (composition and performance, or composition and arts administration, for instance), you may wish to subdivide your appointments by area.

Area 1

2017—	Current Title; Institution; City, State
2014–17	Former Title; Institution; City, State

Area 2

2011–2016	Former Title; Institution; City, State
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The sub-groups within *Tier 2 (Peer-reviewed accomplishment)* should be *combined, sub-divided, and ordered* to highlight your strengths and minimize your weaknesses. If you've only received one small award, you shouldn't have a section titled "Awards" with just that in it. You might instead choose to make a combined section called "Commissions and Awards" with your many commissions blended together with your single award.

A good rule of thumb: the more competitive and sought-after a given thing is, the higher it should appear on your CV.

Remember: always list the year of the item on the left, with the item indented as in Tier 1.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION (for creative work)

- In addition to brand-name national awards, this section might include awards from your department (e.g. Music Department), school (e.g. The XYZ School of Music), or university (The University of ABC). Awards for teaching and service should go elsewhere. Never include pre-undergraduate activity on an academic C.V.

COMMISSIONS

- Any time you are asked to write music for a *specific performer or ensemble*, you may list this as a commission. Whether, how, or how much you are paid as part of this request is private information between you and the commissioning party.

COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS

Title of Work. Title of Album; Performing Artist(s); Record Label; Catalogue Number; Date of Release.

- If you make a studio recording of your own work and release it via an established streaming platform (iTunes, Spotify, etc) you may list this as a self-released Commercial Recording. Informal streaming recordings of live performances via Soundcloud, YouTube, your personal website, etc. do not constitute Commercial Recordings.

PUBLICATIONS

- Including both published sheet music and published writing. Do not include self-published sheet music. Your published writing should be sub-divided according to category and may include: a) peer-reviewed academic writing; b) book reviews in journals, magazines, or newspapers; c) program notes for other organizations (excluding those for your own works); interviews; any other time your work appears in print.

- If digital publication is a significant part of your work, you may include it here as long as it has been reviewed or curated by someone else. If your writing is published on an established blog, you should include it.

- Writing on your own blog is a great thing to do, but does not constitute a publication.

FELLOWSHIPS

- An amorphous category. These can include: a multi-year graduate school funding package (e.g. Graduate Teaching Fellow, University of Oregon; Benjamin Franklin Doctoral Fellow, University of Pennsylvania); short-term fellowships as part of summer festivals (such as the tuition awards given at the Aspen Summer Music Festival); longer-term fellowships through universities; prestigious national fellowships such as Guggenheim, Fulbright. If the title of the award includes the word "Fellow", it should go here. It is common to combine this with "Grants" into a single section entitled "Grants and Fellowships".

GRANTS

- Any monetary award given to support you or your work. These can include: local and regional arts councils; national organizations such as NewMusicUSA or the American Composers Forum; your home department or institution if funding is given for a special project.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCES

2018 **Title of Work.** Performers. Name of Venue; City, State. 01/16

2017 **Title of Work.** Performers. Name of Venue; City, State. 06/27

- Any time your work is performed in a public setting. No performance is too small or insignificant to list here (and your CV should reflect every performance you've ever had - yes, this can get quite long as your career develops). List in reverse chronological order with the year aligned on the left (to match other entries in the CV) and the exact date at the end. This allows the reader to quickly ascertain whether or not you have consistent performance activity.

- Once you accrue a significant number of performances, you should migrate this session to the end of your CV as an Appendix.

JURIED ARTIST RESIDENCIES & ARTIST COLONIES

- These include juried residencies at artist colonies such as Yaddo, MacDowell, Brush Creek, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Djerassi, Willapa Bay AiR, the Kimmel Nelson Harding Center, etc.

COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE POSITIONS

- Any time you have been composer-in-residence with an ensemble or institution.

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

- Academic presentations, conference presentations, appearances on academic panels.

Tier 3 (non-peer-reviewed professional activity) is the “everything else” part of the CV. This is where you put things that are relevant and good, but not formally reviewed by a group of your peers. As in Tier 2, these should be ordered and combined so as to highlight your strengths and draw attention away from your weaknesses.

TEACHING (not your teaching positions—those go in Item 2—but your teaching content).

- Normally, a list of courses taught, subdivided by institution. If you've taught private lessons, or at a community music center, this is OK to include until you have something to replace it with.

INVITED TALKS & GUEST LECTURES

- Instances in which you have been invited to speak about your work or another subject. These can include pre-concert lectures at professional music organizations.

- The phrase “invited guest lecture” usually refers to an invitation to speak at an academic institution or other professional gathering.

- Don't include regular presentations to your home institution.

MEDIA COVERAGE

- Use your best judgment as to whether a review / publication will make you look better or worse. A rave review in a minor blog might look good; a very brief mention in a major publication might look good. Don't include minor mentions in minor publications. Use your best judgment. Not all CVs will include this section.

COMPLETE CATALOGUE OF WORKS WITH TITLES, INSTRUMENTATIONS, DURATIONS

Include title, instrumentation, duration. List by genre, then by reverse date of composition.

Orchestral Works

2018 **Title.** Large orchestra [15 minutes]

Chamber Ensemble

2017 **Title.** String quartet [35 minutes]

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

• *Committee service, review boards, student government service, elected leadership positions, departmental service positions; etc. If you have organized a call for scores and adjudicated the results, you should list that here.*

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

• *Membership in professional organizations: ASCAP, BMI, American Composers Forum, Conductor's Guild, SCI, College Music Society, etc.*

LANGUAGES

• *Include all languages spoken, written, and read. You can indicate levels such as beginner; intermediate; advanced; fluent; native; can read with dictionary; or any other distinction as appropriate.*

REFERENCES

Always on the last page. Do not refer to references as “Dr. Jane Doe” or “Professor John Doe.” Just use their full name. Academic titles should be listed on a separate line exactly as they appear on that individual’s department website. If their website does not specify a title, contact your reference to determine their exact current title. Likewise, you should be certain to use the correct title for institutions and departments, many of which have similar but distinct naming formats.

Academic job titles have VERY specific meanings, and you don’t want to casually use the wrong one. Here is a quick glossary of what academic ranks and titles mean:

Professor = (referred to verbally as “full professor”) is an additional promotion beyond the level of Associate Professor

Associate Professor = full time (with tenure)

Assistant Professor = full-time, tenure-track (before tenure)

Instructor, Lecturer = can be full time or part time, but are not part of the tenure system

Adjunct = part time, hired on a per course or hourly basis

References can either be ordered alphabetically or in “contact order.” Keep in mind that the best references are those that know you best. You won’t be helped much by a letter from a famous composer that says: “I met this person once three years ago in a masterclass. Their work was above average.” You would do better to have an enthusiastic, well-informed letter from a person that knows your work well. This isn’t to say that the status of the referee doesn’t matter—it does—but only to the extent that the person knows your work and is willing to go to bat on your behalf.

There is no rule governing who can or cannot serve as a reference for whom. Typically, though, academic references are NOT peer references. They should be from teachers, mentors, or other established professionals at a higher rank than you. At the undergraduate and master’s level, you may have only a few options—that’s totally fine. As you advance in your career, though, you will start to have more potential references to choose from, and then a bit of strategy comes into play. You should think of your references as peers with the person reading your c.v. If you are applying to graduate school, the readers will be professors in a graduate program. Therefore, your references would ideally be other people who teach in universities with graduate programs who can speak to the committee members “colleague to colleague.”

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