

# NNMTA Youth Piano Festival and Young Artist Medalist

sponsored by the  
Northern Nevada Music Teachers Association

*Revised August 2020*

The NNMTA Youth Piano Festival and Young Artist Medalist are held annually in the spring. The dates will be announced in the NNMTA monthly newsletter and posted in the calendar on [nnmta.org](http://nnmta.org).

## Purposes of the Festival:

1. To promote and foster interest and participation in performance by students from elementary through high school, on all levels of achievement.
2. To inspire teachers toward higher standards through observation and application in preparing their students annually for the Festival.
3. To provide well-qualified and impartial adjudicators to assess the performers and provide constructive and encouraging appraisal of each student's work.

It is the hope of NNMTA that the Festival will inspire students and teachers alike to continue their musical studies and strive to attain the highest level of musical growth.

## Levels and Divisions:

The NNMTA Youth Piano Festival is divided into 12 levels. In general, the following guidelines will help teachers know the appropriate level for a student:

|                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Preparatory</b>           | Early to Late Elementary |
| <b>Level 1-2</b>             | Early Intermediate       |
| <b>Level 3</b>               | Intermediate             |
| <b>Levels 4-5</b>            | Late Intermediate        |
| <b>Levels 6-7</b>            | Early Advanced           |
| <b>Levels 8-11</b>           | Advanced                 |
| <b>Young Artist Medalist</b> | Advanced                 |

The Festival consists of three divisions:

**Lower Division** consists of Levels Preparatory through 4

**Upper Division** consists of Levels 5 through 11

**Young Artist Medalist** is for advanced students playing 3- or 4-piece programs

Most students progress yearly from one level to the next; however, it is possible for students to repeat or skip a level. Students repeating a level should not repeat repertoire used previously. A student may enter in only one level in a given year.

## **General Format:**

Students prepare pieces to perform from memory for adjudicators from whom they receive feedback – either written or oral, depending on the format for which the student registers. Students are adjudicated against a standard of artistic excellence rather than competing against other students. Awards are given, based on the evaluation of each student's performance. Lower Division ratings criteria are given on pages 8-9; Upper Division ratings criteria are on pages 10-11. All Superior-rated students are invited to participate in the Command Performance recitals to follow within one week of the Festival, playing the piece chosen by the judges.

## **Repertoire:**

The Festival Syllabus contains the pieces currently accepted for Festival performance and is available either digitally for free to NNMTA members or for hardcopy purchase at [nnmta.org](http://nnmta.org).

**Level Preparatory through Level 10:** Students perform two syllabus pieces in the same level, from different musical eras (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Contemporary), and written by different composers.

**For Level 11:** Students perform two advanced, memorized pieces from different musical eras by different composers. One or both pieces may come from the syllabus Levels 9 or 10. Concerto movements are not accepted. Pieces must be submitted for approval online in the fall.

**For Young Artist Medalist:** Students perform three or four memorized pieces, representing a variety of musical eras and styles. One of the pieces may be a concerto movement. Repertoire must be submitted for approval online in the fall.

A student may not change repertoire once submitted in registration. If a student plays repertoire for which they were not registered, the student will receive feedback from the judge(s) but will not receive a rating.

## **Participant Requirements:**

Students must be 19 or younger by the date of Festival. If they are academically enrolled at the college level, they must not be a music major or minor. Actively studying students from Nevada and the California counties bordering Nevada are eligible to enter.

A student must have studied with the teacher under whom she or he enters for at least six months prior to the Festival. Exceptions (such as the death of the teacher, relocation of teacher or student, etc.) are to be approved by the Festival Chairman.

## **Session Formats:**

The NNMTA Youth Piano Festival and Young Artist Medalist are performance evaluations, not competitions. Students in all formats are adjudicated against a standard of artistic excellence rather than competing against other students.

**Preparatory Level Format:** Preparatory level students perform two pieces from memory for one or more adjudicators, usually NNMTA member teachers, who provide written comments and make suggestions for improvement. Ratings are not given, and all students receive a participation certificate and award.

**Traditional Format for Levels 1-11:** A student performs two pieces from memory for one or more adjudicators who provide written comments and suggestions and determine a student rating (Superior, Excellent, Needs Attention). Students given a Superior rating receive a trophy and perform in the Command Performance recital. Students receiving Excellent ratings are awarded ribbons. All students receive a participation certificate.

**Masterclass Format Levels 5-11:** Students in Levels 5-11 have the option of entering a masterclass session. In the masterclass sessions, a student performs two pieces from memory for one adjudicator who conducts a brief masterclass with the student. The adjudicator does not give the student a rating but designates whether or not the student will perform in the Command Performance. (The criteria for performance quality are the same as for the traditional format sessions.) Students selected for the Command Performance receive a trophy. All students receive a participation certificate.

**Young Artist Medalist Format:** Each session involves only one performer who plays a memorized program of 3-4 advanced pieces for an adjudicator. The adjudicator then conducts a masterclass session with the student, focusing on one or more of the pieces played. Sessions range from 45 minutes to 75 minutes, depending on the length of each student's program. Adjudicators also assign a rating, and Superior-rated students receive a medal and are invited to play in the Command Performance recital. All students receive a participation certificate.

**Noncompetitive Format:** Noncompetitive entrants at Level 1 and above perform for one or more adjudicators who provide written comments and suggestions; however, a rating is not given, so these students will not have an opportunity to play in the Command Performance. Pieces need not be memorized. All students receive a participation certificate. In the event a masterclass or Young Artist student desires a noncompetitive format, the adjudicator will work with the student but will not give a rating.

The noncompetitive format exists to allow students who are under-prepared or have performance anxiety issues to participate in the Festival without the pressure of being given a rating or playing from memory. Students may register for the noncompetitive format or the teacher may request a change to noncompetitive up to one week before the day of performance. The Festival chairman may designate students as noncompetitive on the day of the Festival if they cannot provide valid music for the judge, play pieces other than those for which they were registered, or have a major memory lapse requiring them to use the music to finish.

## Theory Test:

All students in Levels Preparatory through 11 are required to take and pass a theory test, and scores are reported during the registration process. The tests include written, performance, and listening portions and are available online at [nnmta.org](http://nnmta.org) under the Members tab.

- Theory tests at each student's corresponding Festival level are to be administered in the teacher's studio. Tests are not take-home.
- A score of 70% or above is required in order for a student to participate in Festival.
- Students who score 85% or more on the theory exams will receive a special Musical Merit seal on their certificates.
- Theory tests are not "open notes" tests, nor are teachers allowed to help students other than to clarify what questions are asked. At their discretion, teachers may make accommodations for very young students or students with disabilities.
- If multiple versions of the tests are available, teachers may give any version of the test and use the other versions as practice tests.

Theory requirements and vocabulary lists by level are in the back of the Festival Syllabus and are available online at [nnmta.org](http://nnmta.org).

**Alternate Theory Test:** In addition to the required theory test, a student may also take the optional alternate test, available online. The alternate test requires a student to conduct a detailed analysis of one of their Festival pieces. Teachers will indicate in the registration process if a student has completed the additional test, and an extra seal will be placed on the participation certificate for completing both tests.

Young Artist Medalist students should complete an analysis of one of their pieces in lieu of the theory test. Teachers may design their own analysis format or may use the alternative test available online.

## Student Registration Fees (as of fall 2020, subject to change, and nonrefundable):

|      |                   |       |  |
|------|-------------------|-------|--|
| \$30 | Preparatory Level | \$65  | Levels 7 & 8                                   |
| \$40 | Levels 1 & 2      | \$75  | Levels 9, 10, 11                               |
| \$45 | Levels 3 & 4      | \$125 | Young Artist Medalist solo repertoire program  |
| \$55 | Levels 5 & 6      | \$150 | Young Artist Medalist with a concerto movement |

Teachers who are not members of NNMTA are assessed an additional fee of \$75.00 for each Festival division (Lower, Upper, Young Artist) in which they enter one or more students.

The registration deadline will be approximately 2-3 weeks prior to each event. Registration is online with the form completed and payment submitted by the parent. The teacher then completes an online form indicating session format, pieces played, and timing of pieces. Teachers who are not NNMTA members must complete the online teacher registration and pay the \$75 non-member fee before student registration opens.

Teachers and parents will receive performance schedules by email approximately one week prior to Festival. Parents and teachers should notify the Festival chairman of any last-minute cancellations. Registration fees are not refunded for cancellations.

### **Scores and Publishers:**

Students are required to furnish adjudicators original scores of the music played. Measures are to be numbered. Use of unauthorized photocopied music is not allowed.

The editions/publishers listed in the Syllabus are only recommendations. Any published music is acceptable.

If a student wishes to use music that is legally printed from an internet website, the student must provide a cover sheet showing payment for the music or the website's legal authorization to provide the music without charge.

### **Performance Considerations:**

Students should bow before and after their performances. Stage presence is an adjudicating factor, except for students with disabilities. Performers are not to announce their pieces.

**Repeats:** All repeats should be observed in Levels 1 and 2. At Level 3 and above, longer pieces should be performed without repeats due to time limitations. Exceptions to this guideline will be at the teacher's discretion, based on the form or nature of the piece.

Editorial changes made by the teacher must be indicated on the music provided to the judge(s). Appropriate tempo is expected for the style and character of the piece. (Note: Burgmuller's metronome markings are considered unreasonably fast for this Festival. Students are not expected to play at those tempi.)

### **Teacher Participation:**

Teachers entering students in Festival are required to work during the Festival (set up, clean up, greeting, proctoring sessions, etc.) in proportion to the number of students they have participating.

### **Miscellaneous Matters:**

The decision of the judges is final and may not be challenged by a teacher, parent, or student.

In order to maintain impartiality, judges are not allowed to conduct private master classes for teachers' studios a) immediately before or after Festival, as this compromises NNMTA's funds for travel reimbursement or b) 4 months preceding the date of the Festival, as this can compromise judging objectivity.

The Festival Chairman reserves the right to refuse a participant who has not complied with the rules. An appeal may be made by a teacher to the NNMTA Board on any of the Festival matters.