



Welcome to the Highwood Lions Music Festival 2021 Virtual Festival!

We're excited to try out this new format this year and know that there may be a few opportunities to learn along the way. We appreciate your patience as we iron out any issues, and encourage you to contact our help team at help@highwoodmusicfestival.com with any questions.

OVERALL FESTIVAL INFORMATION

Where can I find the festival syllabus?

The complete Alberta Music Festival Association 2021 syllabus can be found [here](#). If you'd like to access individual listings instead of the complete syllabus, you can find those options [here](#).

Please note that the syllabus has been extensively updated for 2021. There are some exciting changes. Please read through the area for your discipline(s) carefully.

VIRTUAL FESTIVAL INFORMATION

How do I register for the festival?

The festival registration process will remain the same as in years past. Our festival uses Music Festival Suite as our registration platform. You can login to your account or create your account [here](#). Each entry will need an 'entrant' profile, and 'parent' profile and a 'teacher' profile linked to their account. More information, resources and help can be found on the [registration page of our website](#).

One important change is that each teacher, entrant and parent requires a photo release and consent form to be completed this year. The first time you log into your profile you will see the release form which all parties linked to the entry will need to approve before a video can be submitted.

Why did the Highwood Lions Music Festival decide to hold a virtual festival this year?

This was a difficult decision for our festival board. We understand that there are many aspects of the festival that are just so special and valuable in person. In 2020, we were very sad to have to cancel our festival at the last minute. We were disappointed that the hours of work our volunteers, teachers and performers had put into the festival were not able to come to fruition.

As we evaluated the changing situation in our communities in regards to the COVID19 pandemic, we were not confident that we could hold an in-person festival safely, especially with the

unknowns of what the Alberta Government and Alberta Health Services requirements on gatherings would be at the time. We didn't know if we would be able to hold an in person festival, but we did feel confident that we could plan and prepare a virtual festival. We all agreed that we would rather have a virtual festival than no festival at all.

In addition to that, the Alberta Music Festival Association, of which we are a member, is holding their Provincial festival virtually and we feel confident with that same decision.

How will a virtual festival work?

Registration will happen in the same way it has in the past. Entrants, their parents, and their teachers will have a profile in the Music Festival Suite platform. They will enter their pieces in the classes as usual prior to January 31. In February and March, Music Festival Suite will be open for students to upload or enter their videos. These videos must be a YouTube link (see more information below) and there is a place to insert the link in entry in MFS.

Following the cut-off date for video link submission, our adjudicators will take some time to carefully listen to each performance, assign a grade and create some written feedback for each student. This feedback will be collected by our team of volunteers and sent by email to students by the end of May along with their festival certificate.

The last piece of the puzzle for our virtual festival is our virtual masterclasses that will take place in April (dates to be confirmed). These masterclasses are included in your registration for the festival. The adjudicators will decide whether they address individual performances in the group or whether they talk about overall themes and techniques.

We are hoping to hold an outdoor Adjudicators' Showcase in the late spring, but more details on that will be confirmed closer to the date.

What are the dates for the festival?

REGISTRATION:

Friday, January 1, 2021: Registration opens.

Sunday, January 31, 2021: Registration closes.

VIDEO UPLOADING:

Monday, February 15, 2021: Video uploading opens.

Friday, March 19, 2021: Video uploading closes for piano, guitar and speech disciplines.

Friday, March 26, 2021: Video uploading closes for musical theatre and voice disciplines.

Thursday, April 1, 2021 (no joke!): Video uploading closes for fiddle, strings, woodwinds and percussion disciplines

EVALUATION & MASTERCLASSES

Early April 2021: Adjudicators listen and evaluate performances

Mid-late April 2021: Online Masterclasses are held and marks and comments are released to students

What are the costs for the online festival?

Fees differ from class to class. When you register, you will notice that we reduced our registration fees (for this year only) by about 20% from the previous year. This reflects the reduction in costs that we have for venue rentals, etc. We hope this is yet another added incentive to take advantage of this virtual festival opportunity this year.

What are my payment options for the online festival?

We have expanded our options for payment this year to accept e-transfers as well as credit card payments.

Credit Card:

You can click 'pay invoice' in your student, parent or teacher account to pay charges via PayPal using a credit card.

E-transfer:

You can send an e-transfer to treasurer@highwoodmusicfestival.com. Please put your last name and the class number(s) that you are providing payment for in the 'memo'. If you are paying for several students/entries, please send an email to the same address that has the entrants names and class numbers for our record. E-transfers must be submitted by midnight on January 31, 2020 to avoid late charges.

If you have any problems submitting your payment, contact help@highwoodmusicfestival.com.

How will the festival handle students playing on different quality instruments?

We understand that having students send in their own recording creates some challenges, and one of those challenges is the wide variety of instruments that students will be playing on, particularly in our piano classes. Our adjudicators know that they will be evaluating a variety of instruments and will strive to evaluate fairly based on what they can hear. We trust the professionalism of our adjudicators and their ability to make fair decisions based on what they can hear. That being said, for piano students a 88-key fully weighted digital piano or tuned acoustic piano is highly recommended.

How will students receive feedback from the adjudicator?

There are two ways students can receive feedback from the adjudicator. First, all entrants will receive an adjudicator sheet with a mark and written comments on their performance. These will be uploaded and emailed to you in the weeks following the festival. Secondly, entrants will receive a link for a virtual masterclass with the adjudicator in which the adjudicator will either address specific performances or teach on overall concepts and technique.

How and when will the Provincial Festival be running?

The Alberta Music Festival Association will be running their festival virtually as well, with written adjudication and certificates supplied online. YouTube video links (preferably unlisted) will also be required for every entry in Provincials. Entrants who qualify will submit their links in the week following our local festival and results will be posted by June 21, 2021.

VIDEO CREATION AND UPLOAD INFORMATION

What type of video will I need to submit?

You will need to submit a YouTube link. When you upload the video, we suggest that you upload it as an 'unlisted' video as opposed to public or private. If you upload it as a 'public' video, anyone can search for it online. If you upload it as a 'private' video, our adjudicator will not be able to watch and evaluate it.

Video submissions can be submitted starting on February 15, 2021 and will be accepted until the deadline for each discipline.

For more information on creating and uploading your videos, see a tutorial video located [here](#).

How can I prepare for filming my video?

Practice, practice, practice! Work with your teacher to be ready in time for your recording submission deadline, to ensure that you are putting your best work in front of your adjudicator(s), so that their feedback is truly pertinent to your level of ability!

To be eligible for awards, pieces must be performed by memory. Please have the music stand at your piano empty so it is clear that you are playing from memory. Students may perform with music but will be eligible for adjudication only.

Do you have any tips for creating these videos?

There are no official rules for how your video is created. You can use something as simple as an iPhone video to something more complex as an external microphone and professional camera. You will not be penalized or receive favor for the quality of your video. That being said, there are a few things that will help your performance to be easier for the adjudicator to evaluate. If you have the ability to use an external microphone, that will give a better audio quality as long as it's completely lined up with the video. One thing to keep in mind with the video angle is the 3 F's: face, fingers, and feet. If you can include a shot (especially for piano) where those three things are visible, it will be easier for the adjudicator to evaluate all aspects of the performance.

If possible, please film in 1080p HD so your video will have the best quality for our adjudicators to watch.

Please film your video at least a few days in advance of the submission deadline in case you have any technical difficulties in the filming or uploading process. Our help team can offer advice and help troubleshoot, but will need some notice.

The **videos must be filmed in one shot** (no videos that are spliced together will be allowed). Concert and recital classes must be one continuous video, not two or three shorter videos.

Where do I send or upload my video?

Once you have uploaded your video to YouTube, you will log into your MusicFestivalSuite account--either the parent, student or teacher's account can access their registrations. You can click on the picture of the video/camera and then insert the YouTube link and click save. Please note: this feature will not be available until February 15th.

For more information on how to upload your videos, see a tutorial video located [here](#).

If you have issues getting your YouTube linked into your MFS account, email help@highwoodmusicfestival.com.

Where do I send or upload the score of my music?

In some cases, the adjudicators may already have copies of your piece to refer to. If we need a copy of your music, we will let you know and in early-mid February you will receive an email from our festival with instructions on how to submit it.

MASTERCLASS SCHEDULING

When will the online masterclass schedule be finalized and available?

We aim to have the schedule finalized in early-mid March. You will be able to log into your Music Festival Suite account and view your schedule and link for the virtual masterclass. The full schedule of events will be posted to the website in mid-late March.

The Festival schedule is quite complex and is determined based on many moving parts. The fine tuning of the final schedule does not happen until after late registration closes after the first week of February, and takes a few weeks to finalize, as we have 3 weeks of classes and over 1000 participants to coordinate! When the finalized schedule is ready, you will have access to your "Competitor Cards" in your profile on Music Festival Suite (that you used to register). These cards will contain the date/time and link for your virtual masterclass. Competitor cards are only enabled once the schedule is fully finalized, which will likely be sometime around the middle of February. You will be notified via email when your Competitor Card(s) are ready to view. Note that one card will be generated for each class - if you are in multiple classes, there will be multiple cards.

Can I make changes to my scheduled masterclass if the date/time given does not work for me?

Due to the complex nature of scheduling such a large event, we cannot accommodate schedule changes or requests. The only exceptions for accepting scheduling requests are for school groups (choral, etc.) and for musicians requiring specialized accompaniment - in these cases, forward notice is required (prior to registration deadline), or we may not be able to accommodate.

Can I make changes to my registration(s) after registration has closed?

You will not be able to make the changes yourself once registration deadline has closed (but up until that point you can). If you must make a change after the deadline, you will have to contact our tech support at help@highwoodmusicfestival.com. We can easily make simple changes, such as piece length updates, etc. If the change necessitates an entire class change (whether due to a mistaken registration or a changed mind), it may not be possible. We will try to accommodate if possible, but please note that this is not always possible and that a refund cannot

be given. It is up to the registrant or teacher to ensure that the registration is done correctly before deadline.

DURING THE VIRTUAL MASTERCLASSES

How will the virtual masterclasses work?

We are so excited to be able to offer these masterclasses as a way for students to have real-time interaction with their adjudicators and we believe they are the next best thing to being in person. Our registrants will be grouped with other entrants of a similar ability or entry style and the adjudicator will interact with them for 20-30 minutes. The adjudicator may choose to address specific performances or may teach on overarching themes and techniques that apply to all of them. We are eagerly anticipating the opportunity for interaction and learning that these masterclasses will provide.

Can someone else watch the masterclasses?

Yes! The Masterclasses will be set up in a Zoom webinar format. This means that anyone can click on the link to observe the adjudicator interacting with the students. As students, you will use the same link to join the webinar, and then the Festival Host will 'promote' you so that you are a part of the video and audio with the adjudicator.

How will I access the schedule and the link to join the masterclasses?

The schedule and link to join the masterclasses will be available in mid-March. You will be able to view the schedule both on our website and in your profile in Music Festival Suite. The links to join the masterclasses will also be available in both of those places.

What do I need for the online masterclass?

You'll need a device with a camera and microphone. Having Zoom pre-installed is helpful but not required. Please set up the device so that the camera has a view of you and your instrument. Have the music that you performed with you at your instrument. Other than that all you need is a readiness to listen and learn from the adjudicator.

MARKS, AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What is the Festival showcase?

The Festival Showcase is a public and celebratory performance at the very end of the festival. Adjudicators will select their favourite performances and selected participants will be contacted soon after to confirm their participation in the Showcase. This event features a wide variety of categories, instruments, ages and levels of ability - something of a variety show. It is considered an honour to be selected to play in the Showcase!

In 2021 we are hoping to offer an outdoor Showcase in the late spring if restrictions allow. More info to come in April-May.

What can I get out of participating in the festival?

Besides having a concrete reason to work towards a personal goal, participants can also benefit from the professional adjudication and feedback provided in each session. Some students may also be selected for our Festival Showcase (see above) and/or to represent the Foothills at the Provincial level. We also award a variety of plaques, certificates and scholarships to students in a variety of categories, see below for details.

Marks & Seals:

All students will be given a mark by their adjudicator at session-end. This mark will be reflected by a seal (sticker) on a participation certificate. Marks are not announced publicly.

GOLD SEAL = First Class Honours with Distinction: 90 and over

SILVER SEAL = First Class Honours: 85-89

RED SEAL = Honours: 80-84

NO SEAL = Satisfactory: 70-79

Provincial Recommendations.

Provincial Recommendations are given to very select students who have high marks in at least two classes (except Musical Theatre), and who qualify based on AMFA rules. Students who receive a Provincial Recommendation will be recognized with a certificate at our Festival Showcase and will have their entry fee to the Provincial Festival paid for.

Scholarship of Excellence.

A Scholarship of Excellence is awarded to students with the highest mark or excellence in one entry, but must have performed in at least two classes – doesn't have to be the same discipline (could be a Provincial Qualifier). Students who receive a Scholarship of Excellence will be recognized with a certificate at our Festival Showcase, along with a cheque for \$50 (junior students) or \$100 (senior students).

Most Promising

Most Promising awards are given to students who are recognized by their adjudicators as being particularly teachable or engaged in the workshop experience. These students may also have shown excellence, but only had one entry and may not have qualified for a Scholarship of Excellence as a result. Students who receive a Most Promising award will be recognized with a plaque/trophy at our Festival Showcase.

Adjudicators Showcase Selection:

Adjudicators will select their favourite performances and selected participants will be contacted to confirm their participation in the Showcase. Students who perform in the Adjudicators' Showcase will be recognized with a certificate as well.

A FEW LAST QUESTIONS....

Are there opportunities to be involved in the festival aside from being a participant?

We are ALWAYS looking to add more volunteers to our roster. It takes a village to run this festival! In years where we run in person festivals, we particularly need volunteers for the weeks of the actual festival, as door greeters and as secretaries (who assist the adjudicator in the session).

If you want to be involved in an even greater capacity and want to add your voice and expertise in a more direct way, please contact our board president at highwoodlionsmusicfest@gmail.com to find out about opportunities to serve as a board member!

Where do I find released schedules, updates and all other important information?

Go to www.highwoodmusicfestival.com and you will find everything you need to know! We also send the occasional email with important reminders, such as newly released schedules and the like. You can also find us on Facebook, where we post important updates.

Who do I contact if I need help in any way?

Email help@highwoodmusicfestival.com and we will be happy to help! Please give us 24-48 hours to respond to your inquiries.

See you at the Festival!

