

DES MOINES METRO OPERA

To: DMMO Audition Applicant

Fr: Mark Dorr, Orchestra Personnel and Operations Manager

Re: DMMO 2026 Orchestra Audition Information Letter

Dear Audition Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in an orchestral vacancy for the 2026 season of the Des Moines Metro Opera. Please carefully read-through the following materials posted on the DMMO web site:

- DMMO 2026 Orchestra Audition Information Letter (this document)
- DMMO 2026 Orchestra Audition Materials Submission Guidelines
- Required music excerpts lists
- Audition music

The Des Moines Metro Opera (DMMO) is a non-profit, professional opera company dedicated to bringing world-class opera productions and vital performing arts education to our region. Since its inception, the DMMO has auditioned and hired its own independent festival orchestra. Dr. Robert Larsen founded the Des Moines Metro Opera in 1973 and served as its first Artistic and Music Director. David Neely currently serves as its Music Director and Principal Conductor. Because of the DMMO's favorable schedule, extraordinary national reputation of the company, excellent repertoire, distinctive programming, and high artistic quality, it is possible to engage the very best of professional orchestral musicians from throughout North America and beyond to perform in the Des Moines Metro Opera Orchestra. A great majority of our orchestral musicians perform the remainder of the year with professional orchestras that typically do not have a summer season. Many players return to our festival year after year and have the potential to be promoted through our probationary / tenure ("Regular Member Status") process.

A majority of the DMMO summer festival takes place on the campus of Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa. Most members of the company are in residence there for the duration of the season. Indianola is a rural suburban community of approximately 15,000 people located 12 miles south of Des Moines (metro area population: 600,000). The college and small-town atmosphere of Indianola is friendly and relaxed, with ample opportunities for recreational and cultural activities, dining, and shopping. All of the DMMO's mainstage operas take place in the Blank Performing Arts Center Theater on the Simpson College campus. This contemporary style, 467-seat theater has a combination thrust and proscenium layout with an orchestra pit. Additionally, Second Stages Series productions and the "Stars of Tomorrow" concert are typically performed in various venues around the Des Moines metro area.

Orchestra services during the **2026 DMMO season** will take place from **Monday, June 15 through Sunday, July 19**. A complete schedule of services will be sent out to DMMO Orchestra members in the spring. Total number of services inclusive of all mainstage productions will be approximately 17 performances and 15 rehearsals. Musicians will be offered employment only for the actual number of services and productions needed. Mainstage repertoire will be *Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini; *Of Mice and Men* by Carlisle Floyd; and *King Roger* by Karol Szymanowski. There is also the possibility of additional work involved with Second Stages Series productions as well as the "Stars of Tomorrow" concert set.

Wages and conditions of employment are governed through a collective bargaining agreement between the Des Moines Metro Opera and the AF of M Local 75 in Des Moines. Minimum contract rates per service for the 2026 season will be \$142.54 for section and \$173.90 for principal players. When applicable, overtimes and any doublings will be paid in addition to the minimum per service rate. Total summer earnings for a section player offered all three mainstage shows during the 2026 season (with no overtimes or doublings) would be approximately \$4,560. For a principal player offered all three mainstage shows during the 2026 season (with no overtimes or doublings), the approximate earnings would be \$5,565.

Air-conditioned dormitory housing is provided by the company at no cost to an individual contracted musician traveling from over 100 miles away from the Simpson College campus. No children are allowed to reside in the dorms. Alternative apartment housing is also available (including units for contracted musicians' families) on a limited basis at a very reasonable cost charged to the occupants.

Each musician whose permanent residence is more than 25 miles from Indianola, Iowa, shall receive one travel reimbursement payment per season of twenty-five cents per mile up to but not exceeding the maximum payment of \$350 (2026 rate). A cartage fee will be paid for only one round trip from a musician's residence to Indianola for those individuals transporting harps (\$50), double basses (\$50), timpani (\$300), and percussion instruments (\$300). All musicians are to supply their own instruments.

Please note the following as it pertains to your particular instrumental vacancy:

The deadline for submitting all audition materials to the DMMO is January 9, 2026.

Applicants will receive a status update or be notified of their audition result by April 1, 2026.

Applicants must be able to provide written proof of legal ability to work in the United States.

Pursuant to federal law, employment with the Des Moines Metro Opera is contingent upon providing written proof of identity as well as authorization to work in the United States at the time any employment offer would be made.

All audition applicants are required to indicate in their submission materials the specific position(s) for which they are applying. This is particularly important when multiple vacancies occur within a section of the orchestra.

Assistant Concertmaster: This is a core orchestra position. The audition applicant selected for this position will undergo a two-year probationary process before the possibility of earning Regular Member Status with the orchestra. *Please designate "Assistant Concertmaster" within the application form when applying for this position.*

Section Clarinet (one-year, possibly permanent): This is a one-year replacement for the 2026 season. The audition applicant selected for this position will receive a one-year offer with the possibility of renewal or promotion if the musician currently on leave does not return. A performance evaluation process will take place during the season for this one-year musician. *Please designate “Section Clarinet” within the application form when applying for this position.*

Section Second Horn (one-year, possibly permanent): This is a one-year replacement for the 2026 season. The audition applicant selected for this position will receive a one-year offer with the possibility of renewal or promotion if the musician currently on leave does not return. A performance evaluation process will take place during the season for this one-year musician. *Please designate “Section Second Horn” within the application form when applying for this position.*

Section Third Horn: This is a core orchestra position. The audition applicant selected for this position will undergo a two-year probationary process before the possibility of earning Regular Member Status with the orchestra. *Please designate “Section Third Horn” within the application form when applying for this position.*

Section Fourth Horn (one-year, possibly permanent): This is a one-year replacement for the 2026 season. The audition applicant selected for this position will receive a one-year offer with the possibility of renewal or promotion if the musician currently on leave does not return. A performance evaluation process will take place during the season for this one-year musician. *Please designate “Section Fourth Horn” within the application form when applying for this position.*

Principal Timpani (one-year, possibly permanent): This is a one-year replacement for the 2026 season. The audition applicant selected for this position will receive a one-year offer with the possibility of renewal or promotion if the musician currently on leave does not return. A performance evaluation process will take place during the season for this one-year musician. The musician selected for this position will be required to provide their own timpani for the 2026 Des Moines Metro Opera season. From our Collective Bargaining Agreement: *“If the timpanist is not a resident of Indianola, Iowa, and does not own a vehicle suitable to the transport of their instrument(s) to and from Indianola for the summer festival season, DMMO shall reimburse the timpanist the reasonable cost of renting a mid-size cargo van or small box truck for such purpose.”* The timpanist will also receive the regular 2026 travel payment (up to \$350) and cartage (\$300) as per the terms outlined earlier in this document. *Please designate “Principal Timpani” within the application form when applying for this position.*

We think you will find the DMMO festival a pleasant and musically rewarding way to spend a few weeks of your summer. We look forward to receiving your application materials!

Sincerely,

Mark Dorr
Orchestra Personnel and Operations Manager
Des Moines Metro Opera



Des Moines Metro Opera Orchestra Audition Materials Submission Guidelines

Thank you for your inquiry regarding an orchestral vacancy for the **2026 season** of the Des Moines Metro Opera. In addition to this document, please also refer to the DMMO 2026 Orchestra Audition Information Letter, DMMO required music excerpts lists, and DMMO audition music for other details.

All audition application materials for each position must be contained within a 2026 DMMO Orchestra Audition Submission Form and completed no later than **January 9, 2026**. The link to this form is here: <https://forms.gle/4oUEQzK9ii3qbkbU6>. If a candidate is applying for more than one position, separate Submission Forms must be completed for each position. Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted. In some instances, an audition runner-up may be provided a one-year offer. All audition materials submitted by applicants become the property of the Des Moines Metro Opera.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Allen Perriello at orchestraauditions@dmmo.org or e-mail Orchestra Personnel & Operations Manager Mark Dorr at mdorr@dmmo.org.

Please be sure your audition / application materials are complete! Include the following:

- Submit **mp3 audio recordings of all audition excerpts** in the order indicated in the Submission Form. All excerpts should be performed unaccompanied. If a concerto is required as part of an audition, it shall also be performed unaccompanied. Concerto / recital recordings will *not* be accepted in place of the required DMMO excerpts. No video recordings of any kind will be accepted.
- A **pdf file of your educational / professional resume**. Only pdf format will be accepted.
- A **pdf file containing a list of operas you have performed and in what capacity** (*i.e.*, Principal, Section, Banda). Only pdf format will be accepted.

- **Conductor references.** A section for this information to be entered is provided within the 2026 DMMO Orchestra Audition Submission Form. Include in the reference section at least *two* conductors who are able to provide a professional recommendation / overview of your performance experience within their ensembles preferably, but not limited to, the opera genre. Please include complete contact information for these conductors including position, organization, phone number, and e-mail address.

Audition Materials Submission Process:

- Applicants will need to have a Google account to upload their files into the Submission Form.
- Complete the online 2026 DMMO Orchestra Audition Submission Form: <https://forms.gle/4oUEQzK9ii3qbkbU6>. If applying for more than one position, separate Submission Forms must be completed for each position. Contained within each Submission Form will be all DMMO audition materials specific to that position (mp3 audio recordings, resume, conductor references, list of operas performed, etc.).
- ***This is a blind audition. Do not include personal information on or within your mp3 audio files.*** Make sure that your name is not included in the metadata of your audition files. Your name, however, should appear on all other materials (resume, operas performed list, etc.).
- Please be sure each overall musical piece is recorded as a *separate* mp3 file and title information is clearly labeled between pieces (i.e., all *Falstaff* excerpts on one track, all *Magic Flute* excerpts on a separate track, etc.). Name each file with a track number (in the same order as the Audition Excerpt List), then the composer's last name followed by the music title.

Sample file titles:

1. Mozart Violin Concerto No. 4
2. Mozart Marriage of Figaro
3. Puccini Manon Lescaut

- Please submit recordings in an mp3 audio digital file format. No other formats will be accepted.
- After submitting the application materials to the DMMO, a confirmation and copy of your responses will be e-mailed to the address provided on your Submission Form.

General Information & Requirements:

- **It is extremely important that applicants look carefully through both the DMMO required excerpts lists and also the posted DMMO audition music to confirm exact locations, excerpt lengths, rehearsal numbers, etc.** Musical excerpts submitted that are inaccurate or incomplete may disqualify the candidate. To obtain a folder of the DMMO audition music, click on the corresponding link provided on the DMMO web site. Applicants may choose to play from their own editions of the excerpts provided they precisely match the DMMO musical parameters previously mentioned.

- Each musical piece should be recorded as one track / block, played down as though in a live audition (i.e., all *Boheme* excerpts contained within one track / block). For a piece that has multiple excerpts / phrases within it, do not break it up into separate tracks / clips.

- **Be sure that the excerpt recordings are of the highest quality possible in order to present an accurate hearing for the audition committee. Candidates should do their recording in a relatively smaller space with acoustically very little reverb. Microphone placement within 20 feet of the player is preferred.** Do NOT record in a live space such as a church sanctuary or recital hall that has severe echo or excessive reverb.

- Editing is not allowed within excerpts. Do not add any reverb or any other artificial / digital enhancements to the recording (i.e., no Auto-Tune).

- Play straight through each individual excerpt. Include rests and/or a tacet up to 4 (four) measures in duration; anything of greater length may be omitted.

- String bowings are solely at the discretion of the performer.

- **Failure to follow the above recording guidelines / requirements may result in disqualification of the candidate from the audition process.**

All applicants must be able to provide proof of legal ability to work in the United States.

Applicants will receive a status update or be notified of their audition result by April 1, 2026.



Orchestral Audition List
Section Horn III

Exposition to either Mozart Concerto no. 2 or no. 4
All excerpts listed at 3rd Horn excerpts

Puccini, *Tosca*

Act III, opening
Opening to 3 measures after rehearsal 1

Weber, *Die Freischütz*

Overture
Measures 10-25

Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*

Act I, opening
Measures 1 - 2 after rehearsal 5

Act III
Rehearsals 252 - 254

Act III, finale
5 measures before 291 - 5 after 294

Humperdinck, *Hänsel und Gretel*

Overture
Rehearsal F - 2 measures after J

Verdi, *Falstaff*

Act I
Rehearsals 26-28

Verdi, *Otello*

Act I
14 measures after OO - 15 measures before PP

Act II
13 measures after E - 4 measures after F

Wagner, *Götterdämmerung, Siegfried's Rheinfahrt*

Allegro before rehearsal 31 - rehearsal 31





Horn 3 Audition Excerpts

Puccini, Tosca

act III opening

ANDANTE SOST.^{to}

In MI Solt

sostenendo

1

The image displays a musical score for Horn 3, consisting of three staves. The first staff begins with the tempo marking "ANDANTE SOST.^{to}" and the instruction "In MI Solt". The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some with accents. The second staff continues the melodic line with a "sostenendo" marking. The third staff features a first ending bracket labeled "1" and concludes with a sustained note. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Weber, Die Freischütz

overture

Horn III in C.

Adagio.

solo

Viol. I.

mf

11

The musical score is written for Horn III in C, marked Adagio. It consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The tempo is marked 'Adagio.' and the dynamics are 'solo'. The second staff continues the melody, marked with a first ending bracket and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The third staff concludes the passage, marked with a first ending bracket and a repeat sign. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.

Der Rosenkavalier

1

von

Richard Strauss.

Erster Aufzug.

Einleitung.
Stürmisch bewegt.
Con moto agitato.

Corno III.

musical score for Corno III, measures 1-5. The score is written in 4/4 time and E major. It includes various dynamics (f, ff, p, mf, fff), articulations (accents, slurs), and performance instructions (agitato, accelerando, a tempo, sempre acceler.). Measure numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are indicated in boxes. The key signature changes to E minor in measure 2. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 5.

(in E)

1 agitato. 6 accelerando 2 a tempo 5 3

f f cresc. - ff sempre acceler. cresc. - - ff

4

4 p 5 Festes Zeitmass. In tempo mf

fff

Strauss, Der Rosenkavalier

act III

in F

252

253

254

1

Strauss, Der Rosenkavalier

act III finale

in F

cresc.

f *mf*

cresc. *ff*

Breit Allargando espr *f*

espr. *f*

espr. *dim.* *p*

1

Humperdinck, Hansel und Gretel

overture (F-J)

in E

p ausdrucksvoll

p *mf* *dim.* *p*

G

mf *p* *mf* *p*

p *p*

H

f *p*

J

pp

Verdi, Falstaff

(26-28)

26 *Lo stesso movimento. ♩ = 88*
in E Solo
P Stacc.

27 *f* *Sempre lo stesso tempo*

28 *ff*

Verdi, Otello

act I (OO - PP)



The main musical score for the piano accompaniment, consisting of two systems of two staves each. The first system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The second system begins with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic marking. The notation includes various chords and melodic lines, with some notes marked with accents (>). The score concludes with the word *tronea* written above the final measure of the top staff and below the final measure of the bottom staff. A final chord is marked with *Ab-* above the bottom staff.

Verdi, Otello

act II (E-F)

E
 In MI
 fin. **2** sciagurato! **10** spaventoso furor che si desta!
 In MI
F
 stacc.
1

Wagner, Götterdämmerung, Siegfried's Rheinfahrt

(allegro - 31)

Allegro. (♩ = ♩.)

in F. *ff*

sempre *ff*

31

The musical score is written for piano and consists of four systems. The first system begins with a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass staff is mostly rests. A key signature change to F major (one flat) is indicated by a natural sign on the F note in the bass staff. The tempo is marked 'Allegro. (♩ = ♩.)' and the dynamic is 'ff'. The second system continues the melodic line in the treble staff with various ornaments and the bass staff provides a steady accompaniment. The third system features a more active bass line and the instruction 'sempre ff'. The fourth system concludes the piece with a final measure marked with a box containing the number 31.