

The Azrieli Music Prizes

2020 Edition
Chamber Music

THE AZRIELI COMMISSION FOR JEWISH MUSIC 2020 CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Focus: Chamber Music (up to 16 musicians)

Established in 2014 by the Azrieli Foundation, The Azrieli Music Prizes (AMP) offer opportunities for the creation, performance and celebration of new concert music.

Performance Partner:

Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne

Deadline: Sunday May 5, 2019

Applications accepted online at www.getacceptd.com/azrielifoundation

The Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music

The Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music is open to composers worldwide with the aim of encouraging creative and critical engagement with the question “What is Jewish Music?”*

(*Please see below for the Foundation’s definition of ‘What is Jewish Music’ to ensure that the proposed work complies with this definition.)

A commissioning prize of \$50,000 CAD is awarded biennially to the composer who proposes a response to this question that displays the utmost creativity, artistry and musical excellence.

The musical work resulting from the Commission will be:

- Premiered by Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne at the AMP Gala Concert in October 2020;
- Given a subsequent international premiere; and
- recorded and released on the Analekta label.

The winning composer is expected to attend the rehearsals, performances and recording of their prize-winning work, and will be publicly honoured at the AMP Gala Concert in Montreal, scheduled for the fall of 2020.

The total prize package for the Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music is valued at over \$200,000 CAD.

Eligibility

- Composers of all nationalities, faiths, backgrounds and affiliations, ages and levels of experience are eligible to submit a proposal for consideration.
- Eligible composers must prove within the body of their submission the relevancy of their proposed composition to the Prize theme – a celebration of excellence in new Jewish music.

The Proposal Package

Please note: all documents and supporting media must be submitted electronically via the AMP online application portal on or before Sunday May 5, 2019.

All proposal packages must include:

- a completed application form;
- a current curriculum vitae (CV) highlighting relevant training, experience, performances and awards;
- a works list detailing a key selection of original and completed musical works, their premiere dates and recordings, where applicable;
- a written proposal (not to exceed 1,000 words) describing the proposed work, including pertinent technical and aesthetic details, as well as an explanation of the proposed work's relevance to the field of Jewish music;
- where a proposed work contains text not written by the applicant, provide proof of the right to use the selected text; and
- scores and audio recordings for two examples of the applicant's musical works:
 - Selected examples should demonstrate the applicant's aptitude for writing chamber music for larger forces (i.e. a mixed ensemble of 14-16 musicians) and/or Jewish music.
 - Scores must be submitted in PDF format, audio recordings in MP3 format.
 - MIDI or piano reduction recordings may be submitted where live audio recordings are unavailable.
- Optional: Submissions may be accompanied by no more than two letters of reference.

Guidelines for Proposals

All proposed works must meet the following guidelines to be given consideration by the Jury.

Any proposed work that does not meet these guidelines will be disqualified.

- Proposals must be for new works yet-to-be-written (i.e. the work may not be completed at the time of submission.)
- Proposed works are to be a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes and a maximum of twenty-five (25) minutes in duration.
- Proposed works may be scored for up to fourteen (14) instruments as follows:
 - Brass: 1 trumpet, 1 trombone and 1 horn
 - Winds: 1 flute, 1 oboe, 1 clarinet and 1 bassoon
 - Strings: 2 violins, 1 viola, 1 cello and 1 double bass
 - Piano
 - Percussion

In addition, works may also include:

- Up to two (2) soloists (vocal and/or instrumental); and/or
- pre-recorded digital media.

Proposed works must not exceed sixteen (16) musicians in total.

The composer who wins the Azrieli Commission agrees to:

- engage in the composition of their proposed work during the time allotted between their announcement as the Commission Winner and the deadline for submitting the score and parts to Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne for the AMP Gala Concert;
- Report to the Manager, Music Initiatives any major deviations from the original proposal over the course of its composition, so that such deviations may be adequately discussed and addressed;
- Have their work premiered as part of the AMP Gala Concert; premiered as part of an international concert; and professionally audio recorded, mixed and mastered for commercial release on the Analekta label;
- Be available in person for the rehearsals and performances of their winning work;
- Grant the Azrieli Foundation the right to serve as primary commissioner, thereby retaining performance rights for the premieres as well as first recording rights;
- Participate in outreach events, workshops, press conferences, media interviews and other such promotion and education activities as they relate to the Azrieli Music Prizes and its objectives to educate the general public about the enduring appeal and artistic importance of the works that result from engaging with the topic of Jewish music.

Letters of Reference (optional)

No more than two referees may submit letters on behalf of the applicant. All letters should clearly indicate the applicant's name as follows:

“(Candidate's Name) Letter of Reference, Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music”

All letters of reference should be received via the AMP application portal online at www.getacceptd.com/azrielifoundation.

Some Considerations for a Successful Submission

In addition to the guidelines and requirements stated above, the AMP Juries have provided the following considerations to help shape a more successful submission:

- Don't worry about how 'Jewish' you are (or are not) before considering a submission to one of the prizes. People from all faiths, backgrounds and affiliations are equally welcome to apply their artistry, creativity and musicality in response to the Prize theme. In fact, one of the Foundation's hopes for AMP is to generate productive intercultural understandings through a rich consideration of what Jewish music is and can be.
- Carefully consider the guiding notes below in addressing the questions and reflections on what constitutes Jewish music. A successful submission will suggest an interesting, appropriate yet compelling potential response to these questions and reflections in the shape of a musical work. We are calling on composers to extend their own creativity, inquisitiveness and thoughtfulness in seeking out this potential response. It also calls for a deeper, purposeful and conscious consideration of Jewish values and experiences that extend beyond simple representations of Jewish people or subjects, or simple incorporations of Jewish secular, sacred and/or traditional musical materials, depending upon the guideline requirements.
- A submission package must be conceptually and musically balanced. Strong, wonderful musical examples accompanied by an insubstantial and/or ill-researched proposal or explanatory note will not succeed within the competition. The inverse is also true: a strong proposal and/or explanatory note will not compensate for weak musical examples. The two must go hand-in-hand.

- Please note that the quality of submitted scores and recordings greatly affects the Jury's ability to evaluate your application. Please be sure that submitted scores are easily legible and that recordings are as clear and undistorted as possible. If the quality of the score or sound is so low that it's difficult to ascertain the artistic product, this will impact an evaluation.
- In the case of the Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music, please be certain that the CV and musical examples demonstrate an ability to compose for the available musical forces described in 2020 Prize guidelines (i.e. chamber music for large forces up to 16 musicians.)

Review Process and Criteria

Once received, submissions are first registered and screened by our staff for eligibility and completeness.

Submissions are then pre-screened by a small team of staff and Jury members to evaluate their fit and relevancy to the Prize theme. Those submissions that clear the pre-screening stage are then delivered as qualified submissions to the respective AMP Jury for their evaluation.

The Jury reviews and grade the qualified submissions using the following three main criteria: Artistic Merit, Technical Merit and Thematic Fit. These criteria are separately weighted based on their level of importance to arrive at a score out of 100 for each evaluated submission.

In the case of the two commissioning prizes, the Jury will also apply a fourth unscored criteria (Capacity), which is important to their deliberations in selecting the best candidate to win each Prize.

Artistic Merit (70 points)

This is the most important criteria the Jury applies in evaluating each submission. It is directly tied to the composer's proven ability to write original concert music of high artistic merit.

The Jury will determine:

- the level of creativity displayed in the conceptual, formal/structural and musical ideas of each qualified submission;
- the ability of the submitted musical examples to sustain a listener's attention over their entire length;
- the level of authenticity and distinctiveness displayed in the composer's artistic voice;
- the composer's ability to work successfully within the complex format of chamber music for large forces (i.e. up to 16 musicians); and
- the composer's capacity to generate high quality, original and professional musical material based on the AMP guidelines for instrumentation and duration.

Technical Merit (20 points)

The Jury will evaluate each qualified submission with the aim of identifying how well thought-out it is in regards to its use of rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, texture, dynamics and orchestration. They will evaluate these elements especially in regards to how well they express or positively reinforce the composer's purpose and intentions for the proposed work, and as they relate to the objectives of the Azrieli Music Prizes.

Thematic Fit (10 points)

The Jury will evaluate whether the qualified submission offers a topical and original fit to the objectives of the Azrieli Music Prizes based on the approved guidelines of what can constitute Jewish music.

Capacity

The Jury will evaluate the qualified submissions for the candidates' ability to execute the project as proposed.

Given the circumstances of requesting a commission and its premiere performance, can the proposal be realistically and successfully achieved? Does the composer demonstrate enough previous experience to assure the Jury that they will deliver on their proposal in the time allotted and with high artistic and technical merit? Those proposals for which the Jury can answer these questions in the affirmative will advance in the competition.

What is Jewish Music?

For the purpose of the Azrieli Music Prizes, the Azrieli Foundation defines 'Jewish music' as broadly as possible, taking into account the rich and diverse history of Jewish musical traditions, as well as music by Jews and non-Jews, which may be said to incorporate a Jewish thematic or Jewish musical influence.

Jewish themes may vary broadly, and can include biblical, historical, liturgical, secular and/or folk elements.

Fundamentally, the Foundation encourages an understanding of Jewish music as deeply rooted in history and tradition, yet forward-moving and dynamic. As such, it encourages themes and content drawn from contemporary Jewish life and experience.

Jewish music can*:

- Be based purposefully and consciously on musical materials traditionally perceived as belonging to a specifically "Jewish melos" – sacred or secular;
- Incorporate actual liturgical melodies or secular folk tunes from any one of numerous distinct geographic or cultural Jewish traditions;
- Be based on Jewish historical or biblical subjects, events, or characters, or Jewish legends or literary themes;
- Include or be founded upon Jewish texts or Jewish literature (prose, poetry, or drama);
- Incorporate specifically Jewish languages such as Hebrew, Yiddish, or Ladino;
- Depict in musical terms, with or without sung or spoken text, visual images of Jewish connection (landscapes in the land of Israel, for example) or scenes of Jewish religious or folk life (a Hassidic gathering, a Yemenite Jewish wedding, or daily life of Jews in an eastern European market town, or shtetl, to cite three examples);
- Express moods of Jewish life-cycle events or holy days;
- Give voice to Judaic ideas or concepts; and/or
- Have been composed expressly for a Jewish commemoration, celebration, ceremony, or other occasion conceived in some way to represent the nature of that occasion.

**excerpted from Dr. Neil W. Levin, The Milken Archive of Jewish Music*