



2016-17 Season

Overview

“One of the world’s finest music academies” (BBC Culture), the Curtis Institute of Music pairs tradition and innovation, educating exceptionally gifted young musicians as artist-citizens who engage a local and global community through music-making of the highest caliber. Each year approximately 175 students come to Curtis, drawn by a tuition-free, performance-inspired learning culture. In this intimate environment, they are nurtured by a celebrated faculty and inspired by the school’s distinctive “learn by doing” approach, offering more than 200 concerts each year in Philadelphia, as well as performances around the world through Curtis on Tour.

Curtis reaches global audiences through Curtis Performs (curtis.edu/CurtisPerforms), the school’s dedicated HD performance video site. Online music courses and Summerfest programs offer lifelong learners further ways to listen, explore, and learn. And students hone 21st-century skills through social entrepreneurship programs that bring arts access and education to the community. The extraordinary young musicians of Curtis graduate to join 4,000 alumni who have long made music history. Curtis graduates are musical leaders, making a profound impact on music onstage and in their communities.

Admissions to the Curtis Institute of Music are based on artistic promise alone. Enrollment is limited to the number of musicians needed for a symphony orchestra, opera department, and select programs in piano, guitar, composition, conducting, and organ, plus a string quartet in residence.

With an average acceptance rate around 4 percent, Curtis is among the most selective schools in the United States, consistently ranked as among college-level institutions with the lowest acceptance rates by *U.S. News and World Report*.

Curtis provides full-tuition scholarships to all of its students and complete and diversified musical training, plus liberal arts courses. Students may pursue a Diploma or a Bachelor of Music degree. Vocal students may also pursue a Master of Music degree or a Professional Studies Certificate.

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Students at Curtis enjoy a wealth of opportunities to perform, listen, and learn. The school's high standard for entry ensures that students rehearse and perform alongside musical peers. The student body is international and multicultural, and there is no minimum or maximum age to audition. In its unique nurturing environment, the school's superb faculty encourages students at every step to grow as artists and as members of the Curtis community.

Faculty members at Curtis include a high proportion of eminent performing musicians who connect students to life as a successful professional musician today. Their unmatched musical lineage, in turn, links students to the classical masters. Curtis's 113 member faculty also includes highly credentialed instructors in musical studies, liberal arts, and career studies. Curtis frequently hosts world-renowned artists to work with its students in master classes, chamber music coachings, and residencies; in orchestra reading sessions; in the classroom; and in performances by the Curtis Symphony Orchestra and Curtis Opera Theatre.

Alumni of Curtis, having experienced extraordinary one-on-one training and valuable performance opportunities as students, go on to outstanding musical careers around the world. Curtis graduates have received Pulitzer Prizes, Guggenheim Fellowships, and Avery Fisher Awards. They are in the front rank of soloists, composers, and conductors. They are members of the world's leading orchestras, including principals in every major American symphony orchestra. They have sung with the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden, the Vienna Staatsoper, and the San Francisco Opera, among many others. Each season leading orchestras, opera houses, and chamber music series around the world feature Curtis alumni as guest artists.

Performances at Curtis grow from the school's "learn by doing" philosophy. Students enjoy constant opportunities to perform, with more than 200 public performances each year, including orchestra concerts, opera productions, and solo and chamber music recitals.

- The **Student Recital Series** offers free public performances most Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays during the school year. Students often perform with distinguished faculty, alumni, and guest artists.
- Praised by the *New York Times* for its "otherworldly ensemble and professional level of sophistication," the **Curtis Symphony Orchestra** performs a three-concert season in Verizon Hall at Philadelphia's Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Recent appearances outside Philadelphia include Carnegie Hall and the Dresden Music Festival.
- The **Curtis Opera Theatre** presents several staged performances and concert productions annually in various Philadelphia venues. All of the department's twenty-five voice and opera students are cast repeatedly each season, providing them a rare level of performance experience.
- **Curtis on Tour** brings the extraordinary artistry of the world-renowned Curtis Institute of Music to national and international audiences, with students performing alongside celebrated Curtis alumni and faculty.

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- **Curtis Presents** honors the school's unique performance culture, featuring alumni, faculty, and students in recital. All proceeds directly benefit current Curtis students with the hope of inspiring and supporting future generations of virtuosity.
- **Curtis Family Concerts** are designed as a fun introduction to classical music for children ages five to twelve. Through performance and audience interaction, Curtis students illustrate the basic elements of music and share their experiences as musicians.
- Flexible in size and scope, the **Curtis 20/21 Ensemble** performs a wide range of music from the 20th and 21st centuries, including works by Curtis students and alumni. It has presented portrait concerts of iconic composers in residence John Corigliano, George Crumb, Krzysztof Penderecki, Joan Tower, and Steven Stucky, among others, and appears frequently in Philadelphia and at major U.S. venues such as the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and Miller Theatre.
- **Special concerts and collaborations** take place throughout the year, including recitals at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Barnes Foundation, and Longwood Gardens.

Facilities at Curtis are housed in several stately mansions on Philadelphia's Rittenhouse Square that pair nineteenth-century charm with twenty-first-century amenities. In 2011 the school opened Lenfest Hall, which greatly expanded the school's spaces for teaching, rehearsal, and practice and provided student residences and a dining hall.

Financial Support for Curtis was initially provided by a \$12.5 million gift from founder Mary Louise Curtis Bok, which launched Curtis's unusual tuition-free policy in 1928 and provided financial support for much of the school's history. In the 1980s, Curtis instituted annual fund-raising to help pay a portion of the annual operating expenses. Curtis has successfully completed several endowment campaigns in subsequent years.

Curtis receives annual operating support from the Mary Louise Curtis Bok Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation founded by the Curtis board in 1932 to administer Mrs. Bok's endowment. A joint committee oversees the investments of the Bok Foundation and Curtis endowments.

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