



Submission Guidelines, Process, & FAQ

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a writer on ContemporaryMusicalTheatre.com! We love discovering and lifting up new writers and songs. The following document will explain more about who we are, the services we offer, how we engage and collaborate with our theatre creators, and information about our submission guidelines and process.

About Us

Founded in 2013, ContemporaryMusicalTheatre.com is the largest online database of contemporary musical theatre writers and songs. Run by Laura Josepher (she/her) and David Sisco (he/him), the site currently represents over 180 writers and 600 songs, searchable by a number of different classifications (voice type, genre, etc....). Because we are a subscription-based site (with 3-day, monthly, and annual subscriptions available), we are able to pay our writers 100% of their sheet music sales. We are the only company to do this. We are also non-exclusive - we want you to sell your songs anywhere you want to, in addition to our site.

At ContemporaryMusicalTheatre.com, we see you, celebrate you in all your diversity, and want to make sure you belong. We are working hard to ensure you know this. [Click here](#) to read our current Allyship Statement.

What We're Looking For

We're looking to collaborate with a diverse array of theatre creators who are change-makers: who use their knowledge and craft to move the genre of contemporary musical theatre in new and illuminating directions. We're looking for more than a transactional relationship, where we simply sell your music. We want to develop a relationship with you so we have a better context for how to support you and your work.

What We Expect from You

You're busy, and we don't want to monopolize your time. Our goal is to make it easier for you to focus on writing because we're handling some of your day-to-day business. That said, we want you to be an active part of our community. This means responding to infrequent email communications, sharing your ideas about our site and blog, reposting social media posts we've made about your work, and joining us in creating a more inclusive theatre community.

What You Will Need to Complete Your Submission

We have greatly simplified our submission process to make it easier for you to share your work while also encouraging you to bring your full self to the table. Here is what you will need to complete your submission:

- **A photo of yourself**
- **A bio** (around 100 words)
- **URL/Links to audio or video recordings of the songs you want us to enjoy** (they do not have to be studio quality). We ask for a minimum of 5 songs to review but will accept up to 8 songs. If your recordings are not currently online, you can create a free SoundCloud.com page and upload them there ([click here](#) to read how to use SoundCloud.com).
- **Pdf's of the lyric sheets** (no scores necessary at this time)
- **A brief description of the songs** (either the set up the song in context of the show, or anything you'd like us to know about the song)

Once you are ready, [click here](#) and begin submitting your materials online. You will be asked to answer a couple questions about who you aspire to be as a theatre creator and talk about what/who inspires you. You will then upload your mp3's for up to 8 songs before submitting your work. If you make a mistake or want to edit something, you will have an opportunity to login and update your responses.

When you've completed your online submission, you will see a confirmation email with your responses. You will be able to go back in and edit your responses if you need to. We will also receive notice when your materials are submitted and look forward to reviewing them with our diverse industry panel.

Our Submission Process

All songs on the site go through the same submission process because, in addition to maintaining an inclusive approach, we want to uphold a high level of quality in the work we share with subscribers, which include students, educators, and musical theatre professionals from around the world.

Once you have completed the online submission process, David will tell you when your materials will be reviewed by the diverse submission panel of industry professionals (you will find more about our current submission panel in a separate document).

What we're listening for:

1. **Musical and Lyrical Structure:** We're looking for songs that utilize a clear musical and lyrical structure. This does not mean they have to be in AABA form or use only perfect rhymes. We recognize rules were meant to be broken, especially when there's a dramatic reason for it. Still, we want to be able to grasp how each song's structure supports the story being told. We celebrate the music and languages of all cultures and look forward to expanding our perspective by seeing your work as you describe it to us.
2. **Vocal Responsibility:** Contemporary musical theatre continues to ask a tremendous amount from the singing actor. We are looking for songs that show an understanding of what the voice can consistently produce. For example, if a song's melody lives in the upper register of the voice for long periods of time, we might flag this as a concern. It is our goal to provide to our subscribers songs they can sing while maintaining their vocal health.
3. **Playable Accompaniments:** We promote the songs on our site as being appropriate for auditions, cabarets, and other performances. To that end, we want to make sure the accompaniment of each song is reasonable, whether it be for piano, guitar, or another instrument. Once a song is approved, we will label the difficulty of the accompaniment.
4. **Songs that Inspire:** We are always looking for that next song that makes our eyes light up, that song that we can immediately imagine on stage because it's so well-written. One of the many things that inspires us is songs that put different kinds of people in the center of the story, creating more equity as a result. We look forward to having our eyes and ears opened wider!

We will communicate to you the panel's decisions, which will be made on a song-by-song basis (meaning: if one of your songs is not accepted, others will still be considered).

Once approved:

1. **We will collect sheet music for the songs you submitted.** We recognize that, for some people, producing publishable sheet music is a logistical and financial challenge. If you do not have sheet music for a song or songs you have submitted, we will work with you to come up with a solution. Please be patient.
2. **We will create your writer and song profiles** based on the information you submitted, we will create your writer and song profiles, which you will have an opportunity to edit.
3. **You will be sent a writer's agreement and addendum** for you (and your collaborator(s)) to sign. This is not legalese - it's all very easy to understand and we're happy to address any questions/concerns you have. We will countersign and send the agreements back to you for your reference.
4. **You will tell us the sale price of your scores** (we recommend \$6-8 because we add a \$1.95 surcharge on each song to cover our expenses, like sales tax and credit card fees).
5. **You will be assessed a one-time \$40 initial fee** to cover the time and expense of curating your material on the site. *We will invoice you via PayPal, which is also how we pay you. If you don't have a PayPal account, please create one (you can read about how to do that [here](#)).*
6. **We will create a unique login for you** based on the information you provide. Once on the site, you will be able to make any last-minute updates to your profile.
7. **We will welcome you to the site via social media.** And, voila! You're on the site! Yay!

Other Things You Should Know

You've made it this far, which is impressive! Just a couple other things:

- **We have a very active blog and a new radio show.** We work very hard to promote our writers' work through our blog (located [here](#)) and our new radio show on MusicalTheatreRadio.com (Saturdays at 10 AM, EST). You can listen to previous radio shows on our SoundCloud.com page.
- **We charge writers a \$15 annual fee.** This covers our growing expenses to update the site and make any changes you would like us to make over the course of the year.
- **If you need help with any step of this process, we are happy to make an appointment with you.** Please don't hesitate to reach out to David Sisco (david@contemporarymusicaltheatre.com) for any questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

If ContemporaryMusicalTheatre.com wishes to be inclusive, why have a submission process at all?

We have a submission process because we want to uphold a high level of quality in the work we share with subscribers, which include students, educators, and musical theatre professionals from around the world.

Why do I have to submit URL/links to my work?

It makes it easier for us to share your work with our diverse submission panel. Also, once approved, we will embed that link into your song's profile so subscribers can hear the whole song prior to purchasing it.

If accepted, can I/we only sell our scores through you?

No, you can sell your songs anywhere you'd like. We are non-exclusive because we believe writers should be able to make money on their songs any way they can. So, keep selling your music on your website and other places. We love that!

What happens if my work is not approved?

As previously mentioned, we accept songs individually. If one or more of your songs has not been approved by the submission panel, we will notify you. You can opt to proceed with the process with the approved songs or remove yourself from the process, whichever feels right for you.

Can I change my song selections once approved?

Yes. You will have an opportunity to add and remove songs on your writer profile after you are live on the site. Any new songs will need to go through the same submission process.

Can I make edits to my writer profile and song profiles?

Yes. Once you are on the site, you will have the ability to edit your profiles. Please keep in mind that, once you do, they will be temporarily removed from the site until we can approve the changes. This is a built-in safeguard to protect your work.

How do you pay your writers? Will we be notified each time a song of ours sells?

We pay our writers at the end of each month via PayPal. We will notify you of which song sold at that time. We do not share contact information about the subscriber who purchased your song. Your email address will be on your writer profile should they wish to reach out.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to email David Sisco: david@contemporarymusicaltheatre.com.