



C4 Commissioning Competition

2014-2015 Guidelines

Overview

The C4 Commissioning Competition will give three finalists the opportunity to compose new works for C4: the Choral Composer/Conductor Collective. All three new works will be premiered in March, 2015, in New York City. Prior to the performance, first, second, and third place winners will be chosen, with awards of \$1,500, \$1,000, and \$600 given respectively. C4 welcomes stylistic diversity, and encourages composers with fresh ideas for choral writing to apply.

About the ensemble

C4 exists to enrich artists and audiences alike, through passionate advocacy of new choral works, performing pieces written within the last 25 years, premiering and commissioning new choral works, and mentoring emerging singers, composers, and conductors of today's choral music. C4 is collectively run by its members, and is one of the few choruses in America dedicated exclusively to performing contemporary music. C4 performs adventurous contemporary programming at a professional level, with stipends to its members making it a semi-professional ensemble. In addition to presenting the music of its own composer members, C4 programs the music of other emerging composers along with that of more established composers, filling an important niche in the cultural life of New York City.

Eligibility

To ensure the broadest possible participation in the competition, there is no entry fee. Any composer may apply, regardless of age, career level, or nationality. Current and former C4 members, and former winners (including honorable mentions), are not eligible for the competition.

Procedure

All submissions should be anonymous. Composers should submit materials electronically, as explained below, by February 1, 2014. A panel of judges consisting of C4 members will select approximately twenty semi-finalists. The semi-finalists will be notified of the theme chosen for the concert on which the winners' commissions will be premiered, at which point they may choose to withdraw from the competition if the theme is not of interest to them. A second panel judges from outside of C4, consisting of Eric Banks, James Bassi, and Aaron Jay Kernis, will select three finalists. The finalists will be notified by April 1, 2014.

The three finalists will then compose new works for C4, to be completed by August 1, 2014. The works should be a cappella and between four and seven minutes long. Composers must show proof that they have secured rights to any texts used, or that the texts are in the public domain. The works should fit a specific, yet to be chosen theme, as explained above. A finalist wishing to make an exception to those guidelines for the commissioned works should discuss his or her idea with C4. Finalists will be expected to remain in active communication with C4 throughout the composition process. Finalists are encouraged to attend rehearsals or listen to rehearsal recordings, and may revise their compositions during the process as they see fit. C4 rehearses on Thursday evenings in Midtown Manhattan and will begin rehearsing the new works in January 2015.

Prior to the performance, the second (external) panel of judges will review the new works and select first, second, and third place winners (receiving awards of \$1,500, \$1,000, and \$600, respectively). The finalists will be notified of which designations they receive before the premiere of their works.

All three new works will be premiered by C4 in early March, 2015, in New York City. Both concerts will be recorded, and the composers will receive copies of those recordings.

All finalists are strongly encouraged to attend at least one of the performances of the commissioned works. A travel stipend of up to \$500 per composer will defray the cost of travel for the winning composers; all additional travel costs are the responsibility of the composer. Accommodations with C4 members will be provided as needed. The finalists should submit receipts for all of their travel expenses to Melissa Wozniak, treasurer, by one week following the concert.

Rules

Scores and recordings submitted must not contain the composer's name, nor should they contain any identifying marks such as a publishing company owned by the individual, the name of the performing ensemble, or dedications. Please make sure to remove identifying marks from all pages of the score. Submitted scores may be published or unpublished. Applicants must provide proof of permission for any non-public domain texts used in the submitted scores.

C4 reserves the right to perform the commissioned works indefinitely. The commissioned works may not be premiered by another ensemble in advance of C4's March 2015 performances.

How to Apply

C4 welcomes stylistic diversity. Submitted works will be judged according to the following criteria:

- Freshness/originality of ideas
- Proficiency in choral writing
- Sensitivity to/skill in setting chosen text
- Clarity of notation

Please do the following by February 1, 2014:

- Submit two recent contrasting works, one of which must be for a cappella chorus, representing the composer's current style or approach. Both scores must be in PDF format, and must have the composer's name and identifying marks removed. The a cappella choral work may be for any choral voicing, and an unlimited number of parts. The second work may be for any instrumentation, and may or may not be for chorus.
- Submit proof of permission for non-public domain texts used in the submitted scores, in PDF format.
- Complete the online application form (available at www.c4ensemble.org/competition).
- Optional: submit recordings of the submitted works, in mp3 format. MIDI recordings will be accepted, provided that they have been converted to mp3 format. The composer's name must not appear in the mp3 file names.

Email submissions to competition@c4ensemble.org, with links to the PDF and mp3 files in the body of the email message. There are a number of online services that allow you to upload PDF and mp3 files and then share links to those files, such as google drive (www.drive.google.com) and soundcloud (www.soundcloud.com). Please do not send the scores, recordings, and proof(s) of text permission as attachments. Please make sure to allow anyone with the link to access the files, not just specific users.

There is no application fee.

Please note: C4 will retain the submitted scores to consider for possible future performance.

Questions: Please email questions about the competition to competition@c4ensemble.org.