



# FROM THE TOP

## SEEKING YOUNG MUSICIANS

**From the Top**, a non-profit organization that celebrates the passion, dedication and personal stories of the nation's outstanding young classical musicians, seeks talented young musicians, ages 8-18, to participate in its unique radio, television and education programs. Classical soloists, small ensembles, large ensembles and composers are encouraged to apply.

**RADIO:** *From the Top on NPR*, hosted by critically acclaimed concert pianist Christopher O'Riley, showcases America's talented young classical musicians through performances and interviews. The program also incorporates skits, games and other light-hearted fun in order to celebrate the personalities of its guests. From the Top's radio program is taped before live audiences at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall as well as at other important concert halls throughout the country. The program's weekly broadcasts began airing in January 2000 and are now being carried by more than 200 radio stations nationwide and online at [fromthetop.org](http://fromthetop.org).

**TELEVISION:** *From the Top at Carnegie Hall* is a 4-part prime time television series on PBS, hosted by Christopher O'Riley and produced by From the Top, WGBH and Don Mischer Productions in partnership with Carnegie Hall. The series is filmed at Carnegie Hall and captures backstage, rehearsal and hometown footage to reveal the music and personalities of its featured performers. Seasons I and II of the Emmy-nominated series can be seen online at [pbs.org/fromthetop](http://pbs.org/fromthetop).

**ARTS LEADERSHIP:** At the heart of From the Top's mission is the belief that young people can make a difference in the world by sharing who they are and what they love to do. From the Top's Arts Leadership program engages young musicians as role models and empowers them to give back to their communities. As part of the radio show, performers are invited to share their music, experiences, and related passions with their peers in schools and/or a variety of community settings. All performers participate in an Arts Leadership Orientation the morning following the show. This orientation introduces them to the range of opportunities that they might consider in their home communities, and to personal spotlights of From the Top alumni who are arts leaders. A From the Top network of support and materials is available to all arts leaders to help them develop their own interests and projects.

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Each year, From the Top selects approximately 25 young musicians for the **Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award**, a personalized scholarship opportunity of up to \$10,000 in financial support, which can be applied to instrument purchases and participation in music camps. Eligibility and selection criteria include exceptional musical achievement and unmet financial need (while there is no formal cut-off, 90% of past award recipients have come from families with an annual family income of \$60,000 or less). For more information, please see the FAQ section of this application or visit the scholarship portion of our website at [fromthetop.org](http://fromthetop.org) to download the application.

**New England Conservatory** is pleased to offer a scholarship of at least \$7,500 to any student who chooses to attend NEC and has appeared on From the Top. These funds will be awarded upon successful application, admission, and confirmed enrollment into any New England Conservatory college program. The NEC Offices of Admission and Financial Aid will send all From the Top performers a letter with details about this wonderful scholarship opportunity.



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## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS / Frequently Asked Questions

**When are *From the Top* programs produced?** Live tapings for each broadcast season take place throughout the year at venues across the country.

**Who is eligible to perform on *From the Top*?** Classical instrumentalists, vocalists, or composers, aged 8-18 who are not yet enrolled full-time in a college or conservatory. Musicians must live in the United States or have a significant training connection to this country. Soloists, small ensembles, large ensembles and composers are encouraged to apply.

**Are applicants considered for both the television and radio series?** Everyone who appears on radio is eligible for our television programs and vice versa. You are automatically considered for both radio and television when you apply.

**Can I reapply if I have already appeared on *From the Top*?** If you have appeared on *From the Top* as a soloist, you must either wait two years before reapplying or apply as a member of an ensemble. If you have appeared with an ensemble, your ensemble must wait two years before reapplying or you can reapply as a soloist or member of a different ensemble.

### **How can young musicians be considered for *From the Top*?**

- Complete all portions of the appropriate application, available for download at [fromthetop.org](http://fromthetop.org).
- Create an audition recording of current repertoire according to the requirements found below in the section titled, "What should I include on my recording". We prefer recordings of recent live performances or that are created specifically for From the Top and that have not been edited or enhanced. **The audition recording must be a regular size DVD (preferred), CD or VHS.** Recordings will not be returned.
- Clearly mark both your **DVD/CD/VHS and its CASE** with your name / ensemble name, instrument(s), composition titles and lengths (minutes and seconds), city/state of residence, and month/year of submission. **Please DO NOT apply labels to DVDs or CDs as these labels often cause them to jam in our equipment.** Please DO use a marker to write the information on the DVD/CD/VHS. We are not concerned with how interesting the item looks, just that it works in our machines.
- Attach a recent photograph labeled with your name / ensemble name. Photographs will not be returned.
- There **is a \$20 fee to apply as a soloist.** The fee is waived for applicants with financial need. However, these applicants must submit an application to our Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award Scholarship program (see our scholarship page online for guidelines and to download an application). Applicants may enclose a personal check made out to From the Top or pay through PayPal via our online store and include a copy of the receipt page: <http://store.fromthetop.org/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=APPFEE>
- Mail your completed application, audition recording, photograph, check or PayPal receipt and any other items in one envelope to the address at the end of these instructions.

**What should I include on my audition recording?** Audition recordings must include a minimum of two selections, though students are encouraged to include additional repertoire. Pieces can be of any length for audition purposes but we prefer selections under 5 minutes for soloists or 6 minutes for ensembles. Works of longer duration that are selected for the show will be subject to cuts. You may attach a list of additional repertoire. *Any piece selected for performance must first be heard by From the Top.*

**Is it okay if my audition repertoire is longer than the preferred length (3-5 minutes for composers/soloists; 6 minutes for ensembles)?** Yes, but if you are selected for the show, your performance must fit within our time limitations. That can mean making additional cuts to your existing piece or selecting an alternative movement or work. *From the Top* is a sixty-minute program that features more than just individual performances. Each show also includes interviews, games and other special segments. There is a lot to fit in an hour!

**Do I need an accompanist?** From the Top features both accompanied and unaccompanied repertoire. If the music you choose for your audition recording calls for piano accompaniment, we prefer that you submit an accompanied recording but this is not required. If you are selected for a show and your repertoire requires accompaniment, you will be accompanied by the host of *From the Top*, pianist Christopher O'Riley.

**How polished does my audition have to be?** If you think it's a good representation of how well you currently play, then you're ready to audition.

**What level of audio quality is required for the audition recording?** Of course, we need to be able to hear you, and the more clearly we can hear you, the better. But, that doesn't mean you have to spend money booking studio time. A recording prepared using a home machine is fine.

**When are deadlines for submitting application and audition material?** There are no specific application deadlines. This means that we select performers for all tapings on a rolling admission basis. If you wish to be considered for a specific taping location (such as one in your hometown), materials must be received at least three months prior to the taping date.

**What is From the Top's \$10,000 Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award and how do I apply?** The Young Artist Award is awarded annually to approximately 25 talented young musicians with financial need. Each student receives up to \$10,000 to support his/her artistic development, performs on a live taping of *From the Top's* National Public Radio show, and participates in *From the Top's* Arts Leadership Program. Student applicants must demonstrate (in order of importance): exceptional musical talent, unmet financial need (the average annual family income of past recipients has been \$40,000), and solid academic achievement. Please note that the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award has a *separate application form with separate deadlines*, and the application must be accompanied by a *From the Top* soloist, small ensemble, large ensemble or composer application. For more, please see the scholarship page at [fromthetop.org](http://fromthetop.org). It's free to apply.

**When will I hear if I've been selected?** Because *From the Top* works on a rolling admissions basis, it can take as many as three months before you will be notified.

**If selected, what expenses are provided by *From the Top*?**

- Lodging is provided for the performer/ensemble and one chaperone (see more below).
- Air or ground transportation for distances of 180 miles or greater (one way) is provided for performers.
- Money for instrument transportation (bass, cello, harp, etc.) is considered on a needs basis.
- Each soloist/ensemble must be accompanied by one adult chaperone. We are prepared to pay for the travel of one chaperone. However, as *From the Top* is a non-profit organization, we ask families who can afford to pay for chaperone and/or student travel to do so.
- Large ensembles are typically selected for tapings in their home area to avoid travel costs.
- Ground transportation, food and other sundry expenses are the responsibility of the performer.

**If selected, when will my program air?** Our shows are taped in front of a live audience. Each show is edited down from the 1.5-hour live taping and aired at a later date. You can find out when a particular show will air by contacting your local station.

**If my local public radio or television station doesn't carry *From the Top*, is there anything I can do?**

Yes! You, your family and your friends can write, phone or email the station's program director and encourage the station to carry *From the Top*. But don't forget that *From the Top* broadcasts are also available for online listening.

**MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS (In one envelope):** Application Processing  
From the Top  
295 Huntington Ave, Suite 201  
Boston, MA 02115

**Questions:** (617) 437-0707, send us a message at [fromthetop.org](http://fromthetop.org) or [auditions@fromthetop.org](mailto:auditions@fromthetop.org)

**[fromthetop.org](http://fromthetop.org)**



# FROM THE TOP

## 2011-12 Soloist Application

Please read the attached instructions/FAQ before applying. Each applicant must submit a completed application, an audition recording, an application fee payment and a current photograph. The recording must be a DVD (*preferred*), CD or VHS that includes current repertoire. Print legibly in pen (**no pencil**).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Initial Last

Gender (Circle one): M F Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Expected HS Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument/Voice Type \_\_\_\_\_ Years of Study \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Parent/Guardian Name(s) 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Relation(s) 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Home Phone Number(s) 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Cell Phone Number(s) 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email Address(es) 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Music Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address (Street, City, Zip) Phone Email

Music School/Program \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address (Street, City, Zip) Phone URL

Academic School \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address (Street, City, Zip) Phone URL

What type of school do you attend (Circle)? a) Public b) Private c) Home school Closest large city to your hometown \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been accepted to a post-high school program (Circle one)? a) Yes b) No If yes, please list \_\_\_\_\_

I listen to From the Top on (Circle one) a) Radio station (Call sign) \_\_\_\_\_ b) Website c) Haven't had a chance yet

How did you hear about From the Top? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever applied to From the Top (Circle one)? a) Yes b) No Have you ever appeared on From the Top (Circle one)? a) Yes b) No

Do you have a parent/guardian who is a veteran or is active in the military, National Guard or reserves? a) Yes b) No

From the Top has been funded, in part, by grants from the United States Government. **We need to keep representatives apprised of your participation on our program. Please list them below.** If you do not know this information, it can be found at congress.org.

US Senators (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ US Representative \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you eligible/interested in our need-based \$10,000 Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award Scholarship (Check one)?**  
\*Please see FAQ section of this application or visit fromthetop.org to find out if you are eligible.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I am eligible and my scholarship application and materials are attached.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I am eligible and would like more information.  
\_\_\_\_\_ No, I am not eligible/interested.

**The soloist application fee of \$20 is due at the time of application.** Fees are waived for applicants with financial need. These applicants must also apply to our Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award program. If you choose to pay through PayPal please include a printed copy of your PayPal receipt. If you choose to pay by personal check, please enclose your check made out to From the Top and write its number here: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Revised 4/30/08  
Log-in Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Audition # \_\_\_\_\_ If Live Audition date/location \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

**Audition Recordings** must include a minimum of two selections, though students are encouraged to include additional repertoire. Pieces can be of any length for audition purposes but we prefer selections under 5 minutes for soloists. Works of longer duration that are selected for the show will be subject to cuts. You may attach a page listing additional repertoire but *any piece selected for performance must first be heard by From the Top*. We are unable to return audition recordings. Please review the instructions for submitting recordings. (Attach an additional repertoire list if necessary.)

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Title	Composer	Length: minutes and seconds
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Title	Composer	Length: minutes and seconds
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**Getting to Know You.** We would like to know more about you. We're always looking for unusual stories as well as stories that are typical for a kid/teenager. You are encouraged to ask your family and friends for help. Essays are not necessary. If you wish to write more, feel free to attach additional pages.

1) How did you become interested and involved in music? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) Do you have a web site or any online videos showcasing your music? (e.g. *Myspace, YouTube*) URL: \_\_\_\_\_

3) What other instruments and/or styles of music do you play? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Do you play in an ensemble, youth orchestra, or sing in a choir?\* If so, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5) Have you participated in summer music festivals, special programs, or master classes?\* If so, please list highlights: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*\* The above two questions are used as background information and have no bearing on the selection process.*

6) Other than music, what commitments or passions fill your time? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7) Putting aside achievement, what is really fun for you? What do you look forward to? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8) List four memorable personal life experiences (good, bad, ugly or funny...at least two should be non-music related):

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

9) What is the strangest thing about you? \_\_\_\_\_

10) About what do your friends and family tease you? \_\_\_\_\_

**Once you have completed this application, please obtain these signatures:**

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Your name (Printed)	Signature	Date
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Music Teacher (Name printed)	Signature	Date
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Parent/Guardian (Name printed)	Signature	Date
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**MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS (In one envelope):** Application Processing • From the Top • 295 Huntington Ave. Suite 201 • Boston, MA 02115