



Congratulations on your selection as a Finalist for the first-ever *High School Honors Performance Series* at Sydney Opera House! This is sure to be an exciting musical adventure that you'll remember for a lifetime. In preparation for your participation, the *Series* will send frequent updates and information, and we will be asking you to provide us with some additional information, as well. Enclosed in this booklet you will find a number of important updates:

Page 1 Important Program Updates Confirmation Needed	Page 3 While in Sydney: Hotel, Rooming & Chaperones Tickets to the <i>Honors Performance</i>	Page 5 Tentative Program Itinerary
Page 2 Travel Logistics Program Payment Information	Page 4 Preparation & Performance Instrument Travel & Rental Information Meet other Finalists on Facebook	Pages 6-7 Scholarships & Fundraising
		Page 8 Family & Friends – Join in the Fun!

Important Program Updates

Over the next few months, the *Series* team will have lots of important information to share with you. It's extremely important that you receive and carefully review each of our updates so you are fully prepared for your performance in Sydney. The *Series* cannot be responsible for missed email communications or updates, and it is the responsibility of the Finalist to respond to requests for information leading up to your *Series* experience on or before the communicated deadlines. Here are two important ways to ensure you have all of the information you need:

1. Update Your Email Settings

Nearly all program updates will come in the form of email communication. It is critical for you to add honors@honorsperformance.org to your list of "approved senders" with your email client to avoid missing important updates from the *Series*. This is particularly important if you did not receive an email from us regarding your acceptance. If you change your email address, please be sure to let us know.

2. Check the Finalist Update Page

All updates will additionally be posted on our password-protected webpage created specifically for Finalists and Family Package participants. In addition to updates, you'll find reminders about upcoming deadlines, as well as quick links to helpful resources as you prepare for your time in Sydney. Please bookmark the below page and check it regularly!

Finalist Update Page: www.honorsperformance.org/sydneyupdates

Case-Sensitive Password: OperaHouse

Confirmation Needed

As we continue to make plans on your behalf for your amazing Sydney Opera House experience, there is some additional information that we will need from you. **Please visit the web page below and provide the requested information as soon as possible and no later than November 30.** After this, we may not be able to accommodate special requests.

www.honorsperformance.org/sydneyconfirm

Travel Logistics

Booking Your Own Travel: Finalists (and Family Program participants, if selecting the 6-Day program) should schedule their flights to arrive and depart from the **Sydney Airport (SYD)** in order to take advantage of the *Series* airport transportation. Only registered participants (Finalists and registered Family Package participants) may ride the airport shuttles.

Arrivals: Flights should arrive between 7:00a and 11:00a on July 7, 2017. *Important note: Due to travel time and time zone differences, travelers from the United States will need to depart home no later than July 5 to arrive in Sydney on the 7th.*

Departures: Flights should depart for home after 8:00a on July 12, 2017. Shuttles will depart the hotel for SYD airport on July 12 from 4:00a-8:00a.

Participants arriving or departing outside of these windows (on these two specific days) or at a different location will be responsible for arranging their own transportation to or from the hotel at their own expense.

Chaperoned Group Flight from the US: The *Series* has made arrangements for a limited block of seats on direct flights between Los Angeles to/from Sydney to escort participants on the international leg of their journey. Participants may choose to meet Series staff in (and then say goodbye from) Los Angeles instead of traveling the entire journey on their own. These arrangements are optional and the cost thereof is not included in the program cost. Complete information, including cost, Terms and Conditions, and registration for the chaperoned flights are available at www.honorsperformance.org/sydney-air. Reservations for the chaperoned flight will be made on a first-come, first-served basis.

Required Travel Documentation for Non-Australian Citizens: Finalists and any Family Program participants (who are not Australian citizens) must possess a current passport and arrange for an Australian visa. All passport and visa fees are the responsibility of the participant. Please note, it can take 4-6 weeks to obtain or renew a passport, we strongly encourage you to obtain your passport as soon as possible. Additionally, most countries require that a passport be valid for at least six months beyond the completion of your trip. The *Series* is not responsible for processing delays or decisions on visa applications made by the relevant embassies or consulates.

If you are unfamiliar with the process to obtain a visa, we recommend Visa Central, www.visacentral.com, for comprehensive overview of the procedure and access to an efficient, safe, and secure transaction.

Program Payment Information

Our program logistics partner, WorldStrides, will be managing all of our program payments. Celebrating 50 years of experience conducting student programs, they make paying for your program convenient and easy. You can expect your credit card or check payments to be processed by WorldStrides.

The complete program cost for each student performer is \$2,249. For a complete list of what is included in this cost, please visit www.honorsperformance.org/sydney-performer. Performers have the option to satisfy this full expense at once or may follow an optional payment plan:

Date	Payment Due
November 30, 2016	\$325 US
December 30, 2016	\$325 US
January 30, 2017	\$325 US

Date	Payment Due
February 28, 2017	\$325 US
April 7, 2017	\$325 US
Final Payment Deadline: May 19, 2017	Any remaining balance

Please note that you will not receive an invoice for your next payment due on November 30. To remit payment, please visit www.honorsperformance.org/sydney-performer or call +1 800-503-0807. You will need to provide your Customer Account Number, which is listed on your acceptance email/letter.

While in Sydney: Hotel & Rooming

Honors Performance Series Hotel: Finalists and registered Family Program Participants will stay at the 5-star **Intercontinental Sydney Hotel** at 117 Macquarie St, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia. The property is positioned on the edge of the Sydney Harbour and is within walking distance of the Sydney Opera House and Royal Botanical Gardens. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Due to overwhelming interest in our Honors Family Packages, and in order to keep Finalists and Family Package participants in the same hotel, we have upgraded the program accommodations from the original hotel communicated in October. This upgrade comes at no additional cost to you.**

Honors Performance Series Rooming: Finalists are automatically assigned to stay three to a room with three single beds. You do still have the opportunity to request double or single occupancy (additional costs apply) and these requests must be submitted online in the abovementioned Confirmation Form **by November 30, 2016**. All requests will be handled on a first-come, space-available basis. Please note: If you have not paid in full or made appropriate payment arrangements before the Final Payment Deadline (listed above), you will be assigned to a triple room with two other Finalists.

Rooming with Other Finalists: Finalists are automatically assigned to room with other Finalists of the same gender from the same ensemble. On the Confirmation Form, you have the option to identify up to two other Finalists with whom you wish to share a room (must be from the same ensemble). We will do our best to accommodate all roommate requests submitted **prior to November 30**.

Rooming with Registered Family: Finalists are able to room with family members who are registered for the 6-Day Family program only. Since the Family program is based on double occupancy, an additional rooming charge will apply for Finalists unless there are three occupants in the room. If you wish to request to room with family, please select the appropriate occupancy option and indicate the name(s) of your desired roommate(s) under "Roommate Preference" on the Confirmation Form **prior to November 30**.

While in Sydney: Chaperones

Finalists will be chaperoned during rehearsal and during all sightseeing activities. Music teachers will be invited to apply to be a *Series* Chaperone. The *Series* will begin accepting Chaperone applications in mid-December 2016.

Please note: Applications from parents, family, and friends who are not music professionals will not be considered. We know many parents are boosters and chaperone school programs, but due to the nature of the program, we depend upon the music expertise of our Chaperones to assist with music education on program.

Tickets to the Honors Performance at Sydney Opera House

Please note that the Finalist package does not include a ticket to the *Honors Performance* for friends or family members. While each loved one participating in an *Honors Family Package* receives one priority ticket to the performance, we recognize that other family and friends may want to purchase individual tickets. Individual, non-priority tickets may be purchased online through the Sydney Opera House Box Office website. Tickets will go on sale 60 days before the performance. We are unable to accommodate requests for individually purchased tickets to be seated with Family Package participants.



Preparation & Performance

Music Preparation: Selected Finalists will receive sheet music no later than the end of May so you will have ample time to rehearse. As soon as the sheet music is ready for you to begin rehearsing, you will receive an email with links to PDFs of the sheet music online, as well as confirmation as to which specific part to prepare. Vocalists are expected to arrive prepared for a “memory check” of the music. It is expected that each Finalist will arrive in Sydney having prepared all pieces to the best of their ability. To help you feel confident and ready, we will provide regular notes and suggestions, but don’t wait to start preparing!

Rehearsals: Because they are working sessions for the performance, all rehearsals are closed, except on Sunday when registered Family Program participants are allowed to observe during a designated time slot. Rehearsal sign-ups will be available on-site.

Music Folders: All performers must bring a plain black music folder to hold their sheet music during rehearsals.

Finalist Dress Code: Performing at Sydney Opera House is an honor, and the Finalist Dress Code was established to provide a formal, uniform look for the *Honors Performance*, without requiring students to purchase robes. Clothing items should be neat, dressy, and modest, reflecting the formal nature of the event.

Female performers must wear:

- A white, collared blouse with long sleeves and a modest neckline.
 - Shirts must be tucked in.
 - No low-cut shirts or exposed midribs will be allowed.
- Black slacks (not jean-style).
NO skirts or dresses.
- Closed-toed, flat or low-heeled, black dress shoes (no higher than at 2” heel will be permitted).
- No scarves or embellished headwear will be allowed.

Male performers must wear:

- A long-sleeved, white dress shirt.
 - Shirts must be tucked in.
 - Undershirts must be white without any graphics or writing.
- Black straight tie (no bowties).
- Black dress slacks.
- Black dress shoes and socks.
- No scarves will be allowed.

General guidelines:

- If a belt is worn, it must be black.
- Clothing should not be casual in appearance in any way.
- There is no specific dress code for the rehearsal days, though Finalists are encouraged to dress appropriately for the Broadway show. Sweatpants, hats, and pajama pants should not be worn at rehearsals.

Instrument Travel & Rental Information

Finalists are expected to make arrangements to bring or rent their instrument while in Sydney. Music stands and sheet music will be provided. The *Honors Performance Series* encourages instrumentalists to bring their own instruments to Sydney. We have found that students perform their best when playing the instrument that they practice with year-round, which helps ensure the quality of the performance. We will provide a list of suggested rental companies and additional information about traveling with your instrument in the spring.

Meet Other Finalists on Facebook

We’ve created a Facebook group for Finalists and their family members to connect and receive program updates. We recognize that not all participants have Facebook accounts, so while this is a great resource, all of the information shared in the group will also be shared through email updates and on the Finalist Update Page. We invite you and your parents to join our group “**2017 High School Sydney Opera House Finalists**”. Here’s how:

- Login to your existing Facebook account or create an account.
- Search for “2017 High School Sydney Opera House Finalists” in the search box.
- The group will show up in your search results. Click “Request to Join”.
- We will confirm your membership within two business days. For safety reasons, the *Series* will admit only Finalists, Responsible Parties listed on Finalists’ accounts, and Family Package participants. If your Facebook name is different than your real name, please message us so we can properly consider your request to join.

Tentative Program Itinerary

The below itinerary reflects the general order of events for the 2017 *High School Honors Performance Series* and is subject to change. A detailed itinerary will be distributed to all Finalists and Family Package participants in June.

Friday, July 7

- Morning arrival in Sydney (please reference page 2 for travel guidelines)
- Airport greeting and transfer to the *Series* hotel (for those taking advantage of *Series* airport transportation) to check-in to the program and meet your Chaperone.
- Enjoy a sightseeing tour of Sydney. Our tour will include highlights of the city, magnificent views of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and a stop at Bondi Beach.
- Return to the hotel to check in to your room.

Saturday, July 8

- Breakfast near the hotel with your Chaperone group
- Morning seating and rehearsals
- Free time for lunch: Chaperones will accompany Finalists to nearby locations
- Afternoon rehearsal
- Dinner with your Chaperone group
- Evening Sightseeing: Explore and take a ghost tour of Sydney's famous historic district, the Rocks

Sunday, July 9

- Breakfast near the hotel with your Chaperone group
- Morning rehearsal
- Free time for lunch: Chaperones will accompany Finalists to nearby locations
- Afternoon rehearsal
- Dinner with your Chaperone group
- Finalist Celebration Cruise in Sydney Harbour (includes breathtaking views of your performance venue!)

Monday, July 10

- Breakfast near the hotel with your Chaperone group
- Final Rehearsal
- Free time for lunch: Chaperones will accompany Finalists to nearby locations
- Sound check and *Honors Performance* at Sydney Opera House!

Tuesday, July 11

- Breakfast near the hotel with your Chaperone group
- Blue Mountains day tour (ride the steepest passenger railway in the world, drive to Echo Point to view the Three Sisters rock formation, encounter Australian wildlife up-close at a wildlife park, and more)
- Dinner with your Chaperone group

Wednesday, July 12

- Breakfast near the hotel with your Chaperone group
- Program check-out (shuttles provided for those taking advantage of *Series* airport transportation)
- Morning departure for home (please reference page 2 for guidelines about booking your travel)



Scholarships & Fundraising

Honors Performance Scholarships: Partial, need-based scholarships are available to Finalists. If you are interested in applying, please contact our office at +1-800-503-0807. Scholarships are limited and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and are based off of your family's Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) as reported on your 2016 taxes.

Fundraising Tips: Fundraising is a great way to help raise a portion of the program cost, while also giving performers a sense of ownership in making their *Honors Performance Series* experience a reality. With this in mind, we are pleased to share a few tips on getting started and ideas for activities that other students have found successful.

**Fundraising Really Does Work:
Just Send a Few Emails and Watch the Donations Come In!**

Many Finalists take advantage of fundraising to make their participation possible. Our Gift of Performance E-Cards make raising money for your program easier than ever!

Visit www.honorsperformance.org/fundraising for additional information about sending E-Cards to request program donations that go directly into your *Series* account.

One past Finalist from Mississippi raised more than enough to pay for his entire program and flights. He sent donation requests to relatives and businesses and received nearly 30 individual contributions – many of which were \$25 and \$50 each. Before he knew it, he was performing on stage!

Finding Fundraising Success:

1. **Start Early:** It may take more than one fundraiser to reach your goal, so allow yourself plenty of time to try different ideas.
2. **Establish Goals:** Set a goal of how much you'd like to fundraise. Percentages often work best.
3. **Set a Timeline:** Ensure that your fundraising timing matches the program payment deadlines.
4. **Pick a Fundraising Activity:** Choose the activity that is right for you. You can choose more than one, but the most important part is to develop a plan of action and get started!
5. **Promote Your Fundraiser:** Your fundraiser will be more successful if people are aware of what you are doing and why. Suggestions for promoting your fundraiser include:
 - Post signs, flyers, and posters at school and around the local community.
 - Write a press release or story to pitch and send it to local newspapers, television, and radio stations. The *Series* offers a template to help you get started.
 - Check with your school's newspaper or e-newsletter to see if your fundraiser can be included in parent communications or posted to your school's website.
 - Set up a table at school sporting events to present information or sell items.

Fundraising as an Individual: As an individual fundraiser, you need to pick the activity that matches your interests and is best for you. What works for a group won't always work for a single person. There are many activities that students conducted which have proved quite successful. Check out the following page for some ideas from past Finalists!

Ideas for Fundraisers:

- **Ask for Contributions & Gifts:** Ask your friends and family to contribute to your fundraising, perhaps in lieu of gifts for your birthday or the holidays. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! A copy of a fundraising letter template can be downloaded from www.honorsperformance.org/finalistupdates.
- **Send Gift of Performance E-Cards:** Requesting donations is even easier with our electronic cards. Visit www.honorsperformance.org/fundraising to access the cards. Enter the requested email information and send! Those closest to you will enjoy their special e-greeting and the opportunity to be a part of your unforgettable experience!
- **Try iGive.com:** Set up an iGive account and ask your family and friends to do their holiday and online shopping through iGive.com. iGive allows users to shop online at top stores, including Barnes and Noble, Staples, Amazon, Best Buy, Gap, and many more. When customers shop, a portion of each purchase is donated to the cause of their choice, in this case, you!
- **Contact Local Businesses:** Write letters to businesses and individuals in the community. Often when people are aware of an opportunity like the *Series*, they are willing to help.
- **Product Fundraisers:** Popular examples of product fundraisers include cookie dough, pizza kits, magazines, and wrapping paper.
- **Host a Dinner at Restaurant:** Talk to a local restaurant about donating 20% of the receipts to your fundraising. Make sure to tell your community members and be present during the dinner.
- **Organize a Dinner on-the Go:** Organize a drive-through spaghetti supper or barbeque dinner and sell meals to hectic parents on their way home from work.
- **Record and Sell a Holiday CD:** Put your talents to work by recording and selling a CD of holiday classics.
- **Sell Advertising:** Ask if you can sell advertising space in your school concert program to parents and local businesses for a percentage of the profits.
- **Perform for Tips:** Sing or perform for tips at your local farmer's market or community gathering space. Make sure to tell people that you are earning tips to perform at Sydney Opera House!
- **Host Snack Shop at your School:** Get permission from your school to sell snacks after school and before practices.
- **Create a Cookbook:** Collect recipes from your family and friends, making sure to hit all major categories. Combine the recipes into a book and have them printed either at a local printer or online printer. Shop around for the best price, before selling them for a small profit.
- **Offer Pet Care:** Offer to take care of your friends' and neighbors' pets. Charge based on the different services, such as walking, feeding, or playing. You can do this when people are on vacation or during work.
- **Organize Yard Sale:** Gather items from your neighbors and friends to have a benefit yard sale. You'll need to organize the items, set prices, and make posters to advertise. Talk to a local paper to see about putting an ad in their paper. If you tell them what it's for, they may reduce the cost!
- **Do Yard Work:** Neighbors always need help with leaves, grass cutting or snow removal – offer to help you neighbors and let them know that you're working to fundraise!
- **Start Babysitting:** Tell friends and community members that you are interested in babysitting to help raise funds for your program.

**These are just a few suggestions of ideas that have worked before, but there are many more options!
Just remember, the hard work will be worth it when you are performing at Sydney Opera House!**

Family & Friends – Join in the Fun!

We are pleased to offer two Family Program packages to allow family members and friends to share in the *Honors Performance Series* experience. All Family Program options provide a hassle-free experience for family members to share in select activities and events of the *Series*.

Loved ones can rest easy knowing that all details are taken care of for them, while also gaining access to exclusive *Series* events. Since some *Series* rehearsals are closed, activities and free time to explore Sydney are included in the packages. Each itinerary provides an opportunity to experience the best of the sights and the culture in Sydney.



Exclusive access and activities can include (*dependent upon which program is chosen*):

- Receive one **priority ticket** to the Sydney Opera House performance, including transportation (see page 3)
- Sit in on a select **Honors Performance Rehearsal**
- Take in the breathtaking views at **Sydney Tower**
- Visit **Bondi Beach, The Rocks** historical district, and the **Royal Sydney Botanical Garden**
- Participate in **guided tour** at Sydney Opera House
- Attend the **Finalist Celebration Cruise** with your Finalist
- Receive tours of the **Art Gallery of New South Wales** and the **Sydney Aquarium**
- And much more!

Please note: Many of the exclusive admissions and activities are available only through participation in a Family Program Package; Family Package activities cannot be purchased a la carte.

Register Today!

To sign-up online, view the itinerary, and get additional program and pricing information, please visit www.honorsperformance.org/sydney-family

*Registrations received after **November 30, 2016** will be accepted on a space-available basis.*