

Your name and song title \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out this checklist as a response to your preparation and performance. Please do NOT simply answer yes or no, but instead give specific reflections based on each questions asked. In some cases, I've rephrased the question to make it easier to answer more completely. The extent that you do this is up to you, but I am looking for complete and thoughtful responses to each question. For instance, your response to the first question might be something like "there are two fermatas in my song that at first I wasn't observing. I think the reason the composer put them there was . . . etc."

### **Music**

- Was it accurate in pitch, rhythm, tempo, and other indications from the composer such as fermatas, tenutos, caesuras, dynamics, etc.?
- How does the music relate to the lyrics?
- How does music help to tell the story?
- Am I aware of what the orchestra<sup>1</sup> is doing and the ways my melody interacts with the orchestra? Discuss a few of these places.
- Are there significant changes in the music<sup>2</sup> and is my character motivating those changes?

### **Lyrics**

- Am I completely secure with the lyrics to the extent that I could start anywhere in the song without becoming confused?

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<sup>1</sup> "Orchestra" refers to the piano if you are singing with only piano accompaniment.

<sup>2</sup> These changes could be tempo, mood, orchestration or other similar changes.

- Am I aware of and understand the poetic structure (rhyme, alliteration and onomatopoeia) and integrated that understanding into my performance?
- Do I know the meaning of all the words in the song and can visualize the images? What are the important images?
- Am I phrasing on the lyrics<sup>3</sup>? For this question, you might want to mention ways where the the musical phrasing and the lyrical phrasing might be different.

### **Vocal**

- Am I singing in the appropriate style<sup>4</sup>? What is the appropriate style? Helpful hint in answering this question: You will need more than a single word to adequately respond.
- Are there a variety of vocal colors that respond to the situation, story and music? Can you describe those colors and how they help to tell the story?
- Am I singing with the proper articulation (*legato, non legato, staccato, etc.*)?
- Is my diction strong enough that every word is understandable?

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<sup>3</sup> Phrasing on the lyric, as opposed to phrasing on the music, pertains to making the lyric the highest priority when choosing when to take breaths as well as possible subtle changes in rhythm in an effort to communicate the lyric more effectively.

<sup>4</sup> Every song you sing fits into a stylistic genera based on when it was composed, the tempo and the content of the lyric.

### **Text analysis**

- Whether the song is being sung in context of the show or in the context of a situation I am creating, have I fully completed and digested the actor's homework? You might also discuss how the actor's homework helped you.
  
- What is the sequence of actions and which lyrics do they come with? List your actions. Was I able to perform that sequence of actions?
  
- What is the super-objective? What other possibilities did you consider?
  
- What is the conflict?

### **Physicality**

- How did my physicality help to tell the story<sup>5</sup>?
  
- What is the physicality of your character? Where you able to accomplish that physically?
  
- Did I respond physically moment-to-moment rather than "setting" my actions?
  
- Did I close my eyes? Yes or No is okay here.

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<sup>5</sup> Physicality includes the actions you have created as well as considering the song's important images.

- Did I have tension anywhere in my body<sup>6</sup>? You might discuss how you overcome tension.

### **Performance**

- Did my performance have appropriate dynamics, both in actual volume as well as dynamics in the physical life?
- Did it have appropriate stakes?
- Did I affect my partner? In what ways?
- Briefly describe the beginning, middle and end of your song and how they each differ?
- Did my performance have the proper scale<sup>7</sup>?
- Did I make my performance more than an assignment<sup>8</sup>?
- What other things would you like to comment on?

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<sup>6</sup> Check especially for tension in the forehead, hands and arms.

<sup>7</sup> Some songs are smaller in scale while others are larger. This question also pertains to the size of the room you are performing in as well as the number of people in your audience. Don't confuse a smaller scale with lower stakes.

<sup>8</sup> Ask yourself if you are doing more than trying to do things "correctly." Instead, your work in and out of class should be about living the life of your character and pursuing his/her objectives from your point of view and through your own unique filter.