

# Auditions for the *Morning Music Club*

## Joseph Maerz Award

### 2026

The Morning Music Club of Macon sponsors this award, annually. The purpose of this \$4,000 scholarship award is to encourage and reward achievement and excellence in musical performance. The Maerz Award was started in 1969 and is named for Professor Joseph Maerz, a member of the Wesleyan College faculty, who was widely known as a teacher, music critic and performer. In 2021, we were able to add a \$2000 award. Winners of both awards are expected to continue music studies in college, though it is not required to major in music.

Attached you will find an intent to audition form, application form, application guidelines and rules governing this competition. Please forward this email to prospective high school senior contestants, music teachers and school college counselors.

***The intent to audition form and entry fee must be postmarked by  
Saturday, February 14, 2026***

**Video audition must be received by  
Saturday, February 28, 2026**

***Live Final Audition Friday, March 13, 2026 at 7:00pm***

Contact [maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com](mailto:maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com) or [reesemccurry@gmail.com](mailto:reesemccurry@gmail.com)

**Reese M. McCurry, Joseph Maerz Award Chair**

2025 \$4000 Joseph Maerz Award Winner:

Caleb Pope, French horn – Perry High School, Houston County – Student of Anna Schmitz

2025 \$2000 Peggy Timberlake Award Winner:

Ka Wai Hui, piano – Stratford Academy, Macon – Student of Ian Altman

# *Morning Music Club of Macon*

## Intent to Audition Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, intend to audition for the Morning Music Club Maerz scholarship award. I will play the following instrument or am a vocalist: \_\_\_\_\_. I will submit a video audition, as per the rules of the competition, by Saturday, February 28, 2026.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ signature

\_\_\_\_\_ phone number

\_\_\_\_\_ email address—print clearly!

\_\_\_\_\_ home address

\_\_\_\_\_ parent's name/phone number

\_\_\_\_\_ private teacher name/phone number

\_\_\_\_\_ private teacher email address

\_\_\_\_\_ high school

Please print, fill out this form and mail postmarked by Saturday, February 8th.

Please enclose an entry fee of **\$15** made out to **The Morning Music Club of Macon**.

Mail to:

Mrs. Reese McCurry  
Maerz Committee Chair  
2045 Vineville Avenue  
Macon, GA 31204

Please call me with any questions: 478-361-2717.

## **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

### **2026 Morning Music Club Joseph Maerz Award *Sponsored by the Morning Music Club of Macon, Georgia***

The purpose of this award is to encourage and reward achievement and excellence in music. The Maerz Award was started in 1969 and is named for Professor Joseph Maerz, a member of the Wesleyan College faculty, who was widely known as a teacher, music critic and performer. Our second place Peggy Timberlake Award is named in memory of our beloved club member and long-time chair of the Maerz Award competition.

A panel of three (3) judges adjudicates the competition. These judges are musicians who are not members of the Morning Music Club. The winner of the competition will receive a \$4,000 scholarship. The winner of the second place award will receive a \$2000 scholarship. There is a possibility of runner-up awards at the judges' discretion.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants must be high school seniors (or graduating juniors, or first year graduates who have taken a gap year) who will be entering college at the end of the current school year and will continue their applied music studies in college the following school year.

Applicants must be:

1. Residents of Bibb, Jones, Monroe, Houston, Crawford, Peach, or Twiggs Counties
2. **or** students of a teacher who resides in Bibb, Jones, Monroe, Houston, Crawford, Peach, or Twiggs Counties
3. **or** students of a member of the Morning Music Club.
4. Applicants should be students who will continue applied music studies in college, though a music major is not required.

### **Application Procedures and Deadlines**

1. An Intent to Audition form and entry fee of \$15 must be postmarked no later than Saturday, February 14, 2026. You will receive a confirmation by email.
2. Video auditions must be received by midnight Saturday, February 28, 2026.
3. Video auditions – A web address of your unlisted YouTube video is to be submitted via email to [maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com](mailto:maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com) and [reesemccurry@gmail.com](mailto:reesemccurry@gmail.com) along with the application form (can be sent in a separate email or attached to the video link email). Please carefully read rules regarding YouTube video submission in the Rules attachment (no musical scores needed). Judges will have one week to return a decision.
4. **Finalists will be chosen to audition live Friday evening March 13, 2026, 7:00pm, Macon, Vineville United Methodist Church.** Guest audience welcome. If chosen as a finalist, you must provide your own accompanist and *two additional* published musical scores per piece for judges.
5. **The winner must be able to perform for the club Thursday morning April 9, 2026 at 10:30am, with accompanist as needed.**

# 2026 JOSEPH MAERZ AWARD APPLICATION

**Video Auditions-by Saturday, February 28**  
Midnight

**Live Auditions-Friday, March 13, 7:00pm**  
Vineville United Methodist Church  
2045 Vineville Avenue  
Macon, GA 31204

**Application deadline is February 28, 2026**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Address, Email and Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

School college counselor, name and email \_\_\_\_\_

**Competition Pieces:** (title, composer, and length of piece – in performance order)

1.

2.

3. (vocalists only)

**Note:** Please refer to the **Rules Governing** the competition for literature requirements.

***I certify that the information on my application is true and that I have intentions of continuing my applied music studies in college at the end of the current school year. If I am selected as the winner of the 2025 Joseph Maerz Award or the second place award, I understand that, in order to receive the award money, I must perform at the April 9, 2026, 10:30 a.m. meeting of the Morning Music Club at Wesleyan College, and that the award money will be sent directly to the college of my choice for applied music studies.***

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Email completed application and unlisted YouTube video link to:

Reese McCurry  
[maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com](mailto:maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com) and [reesemccurry@gmail.com](mailto:reesemccurry@gmail.com)  
Telephone: 478-361-2717

**\*\*This application may be sent via email with the video link.\*\***

# **Rules Governing**

## **The 2026 Joseph Maerz Award**

### **Eligibility Requirements**

1. Applicants must be high school seniors (or graduating juniors, or first year graduates who have taken a gap year) who will be entering college at the end of the current school year.
2. Applicants must be either residents of Bibb, Jones, Monroe, Twiggs, Crawford, Peach or Houston County or students of (1) a member of the Morning Music Club or (2) an applied music teacher who resides in Bibb, Jones, Monroe, Twiggs, Crawford, Peach or Houston County.
3. Applicants should be students who will continue applied music studies in college, though a music major is not required.

### **Literature Requirements**

4. All applicants (keyboard, instrumental, and vocal) must be prepared to perform two solo pieces from ***two contrasting periods***: (a) Baroque, (b) Classical, (c) Romantic, (d) Impressionistic, (e) contemporary (in the classical or serious music genre). Vocal applicants may perform a third piece, time permitting.
5. Memorization of audition pieces is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged, especially in those disciplines where it is the general practice to perform from memory. (e.g. pianists, vocalists)
6. The combined length of the audition pieces must not exceed a total of ***eight minutes***. The judges will stop the performance at the end of the allotted time. Excerpts of pieces will be acceptable.
7. All applicants should have reached a level of proficiency in music acceptable for college course work. Vocalists should present repertoire comparable to ***Twenty-four Italian Songs and Arias of Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries***. ***Organists should present repertoire comparable to Bach's Preludes and Fugues***.

## Competition Procedures

8. Applicants must submit an Intent to Audition form and entry fee of \$15 postmarked no later than Saturday, February 14, 2026. Applicants will receive an email confirmation.
9. Applicants must produce a video of their audition and upload the video to YouTube. This video must be **unlisted**, but **not private**. A link to this video must be emailed to [maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com](mailto:maconmorningmusicclub@gmail.com) along with the completed application. If the piece has an accompaniment, it is strongly recommended that instrumentalists and vocalists have an accompanist when making the video. The video should be the full audition and same pieces that will be performed at the live competition, if chosen as a finalist. Please do not mark the video 'for children' as that will prevent it from being added to a playlist for the judges. (Cell phone video is preferred and easy to upload to YouTube.)
11. Applicants auditioning on more than one instrument must submit a separate video and application for each instrument. **Each contestant must provide his/her own accompanist if needed.**
12. A panel of three professional musicians from outside of the Morning Music Club will serve as adjudicators. These judges will select finalists from the submitted videos who will audition live on Friday, March 13, 2026, 7:00pm, Vineville United Methodist Church, Macon.
13. Applicants must provide at least **two published musical scores per piece for judges** on the day of the live competition. Use of photocopies will disqualify the applicant. Public domain copies must be submitted one week in advance of the competition for approval by the Maerz Committee. Music purchased online and printed out must be submitted with proof of purchase. **Measures must be numbered on all the scores.** The pieces performed live must be the same as those in the submitted video.
14. There will be a \$4,000 prize awarded to one winner and a \$2000 prize awarded to one second place winner. This will be sent directly to the college of his/her choice. **If, in the opinion of the judges, a desired standard is not reached, an award will not be made.** Runner up awards will be given at the judges' discretion. A tie decision will result in a split award.
15. The winner is expected to perform at the **April 9, 2026, 10:30 a.m.** meeting of the Morning Music Club at Wesleyan College with accompanist as needed. Receipt of the monetary award is contingent upon performing for the Morning Music Club at this meeting. A tie decision will result in a split award.
16. Any comments regarding the competition must be addressed by email or phone to the Joseph Maerz chairperson. Decisions regarding unforeseen questions are made by the Maerz chairperson, often with input from the Maerz Committee.

### Dress Code

17. The contestant, as well as the accompanist, should wear business attire.
18. There should be no gum, candy, etc. in your mouth during your performance.

### Video

19. Production of the video is entirely at the contestant's discretion. Judges will be judging the ability of the contestant, not the quality of the video. If the piece has an accompaniment, it is strongly recommended that instrumentalists and vocalists have an accompanist when making the video. The contestant must upload the video to YouTube and designate it ***unlisted but not private, and not 'for children.'*** The combined length of audition pieces must not exceed a total of eight minutes. A cell phone video works very well. (Sound will be better if the phone is held and not propped on a shelf.)
20. **Remember that this video is an audition.** Approach or carry your instrument correctly. Announce your name and the pieces you will be performing. Choose an appropriate location. Bow at the end of your last piece. You will be judged on your stage presence as well as your performance.
21. Please label the video with the name of the selection pieces and the contestant's name. The video must be ***unlisted, but not private.*** The web address of the video, or link, must be submitted by email with a completed application. All judges will have one week to view and judge the first round of competition from the video. Finalists will be notified no later than Sunday, March 8, 2026.

### Conduct

22. At the live audition, there will be a recital-like atmosphere.
23. At the live audition, you will be called when it is your turn to perform.
24. Give your music to the club member who will hand it to the judges. Inform them of any cuts you have pre-planned. Wait to enter until instructed.
25. Approach or carry your instrument correctly. Announce your name and the pieces you will be performing.
26. Bow at the end of your performance.
27. After your performance, you may sit outside or in the audience and wait for the judges to complete your score sheets. You may sit through all of the auditions or some of them. Enter and leave at the end of a student's performance, but not while he or she is performing.
28. You will be judged on your stage presence as well as your performance.