

## Episode 15: Creating an Artist Resume

### Intro

Hello and welcome to Tonal Diversions. I'm your host, Lori Archer Sutherland, and this is my journey as a multifaceted musician. I'm a composer, clarinetist and more who is navigating the world of is classical music, and I'd love to share my adventures with you.

### Episode proper

I'm finishing up the application for a grant and thought I'd share a bit of the process with you. This is the first time I've applied for a grant as a composer, so I had to start from scratch. My previous work resume, which I hadn't updated in years anyway, wasn't applicable at all for this project. This particular grant required three documents: a resume, an artist statement, and a list of awards and other recognition.

By the way, I'm trying yet one more new place in my house to record. We'll see how this one turns out.

### Resume

Thanks to Google, I found a great resource for music resumes by the New England Conservatory. They had samples for vocalists, composers, instrumentalists and jazz performers. I'll admit I didn't search for much else after finding this site. I didn't want to fall down the rabbit hole of endless researching, which is something that I'm very prone to do. I'm sure there are other good examples out there, I just didn't spend the time to find them.

The template helped me get started, and I further tweaked the format so that it represented my career better. Understandably, I don't have all the same experiences that the fictional composer of the sample resume has.

### Commissioned works and in-progress

First off, our commissioned works. While I don't have many commissions, I wanted to still include these at the top to highlight that people have hired me to make music for them.

Next is in progress. Admittedly, this has just one original composition listed, but I still wanted to include it to show that I do have something I'm actively working on. I could have added arrangements that are in progress but decided to limit this section to original work.

### Selected works

Then I have selected works. This was one of my eye-opening sections. It's not that I don't know what I've written, but as I send things out into the world and focus on the next piece, I don't have a good mental picture of just how much I've done. I broke this section out into two subsections.

The first subsection is my original work. I started with a select list of original compositions. I have written more than I've realized! And it's not even my entire body of work, since I had to be mindful of the page limit. But this list is a great visual reminder to myself of what I've done.

The other subsection is where I shine a light on my arrangements. I really do love doing them, and they're what got me back into composing. I'm glad I had a spot where I could include some of them.

### Education and experience

The next major section is Education. Obviously, I have my Bachelor of Music in Theory and Composition listed on there, but I also decided to include my Master of Library Science. While no, that degree doesn't directly relate to my music career, I'm proud of it, and it explains the gap in my compositional work. I included Joseph Sowa's Wizarding School for Composers course that I took online last fall because that does directly relate, and it shows that I've continued my education.

The last resume section is experience. I put my performing, conducting, and teaching experience at the end because they're tangential to my work as a composer. Those experiences all influence me though, so I wanted to include them if I had space. Plus, composers are often called upon to conduct their own work, so this shows that I have that capability.

### Awards and recognition

The next document is awards and recognition. I had a little bit more in this document than I realized. But since it's still pretty sparse, I added notable performances as another section. I focused mostly on performances by groups I'm not directly involved with, and that helped me appreciate that some people out there are finding and playing my work.

### Artist statement

The last document is the artist statement. This was by far the most time-consuming part and the hardest. Big thanks to my husband for critiquing it and helping me make it much better.

My first draft was awful, and that's okay. It's similar to composing in that I just need to get something written down to start the process. That way I have something to work with that I can edit and improve.

I spent some time online finding examples of composer statements. Skimming through several of these helped me get started. It also showed me examples of what I *didn't* want to do. Frankly, some out there are quite pretentious, and I definitely didn't want to go that route.

After a fair amount of rewriting and taking into account the critiques that my husband gave me, I finally have something that I'm feeling pretty good about and that it sounds like me. The good news is that I shouldn't have to update it, and I can post it on my website

### Conclusion

Even if I don't win the grant. I'm glad I went through the process primarily because it really got me to look at all that I've done over the past several years. I'm not good at keeping track of that stuff, so it was easy for me to think that I haven't done a whole lot. And now I'm much more prepared if I try for another grant. It shouldn't take me nearly as long to update things.

I encourage others to go through this process, even if you're not at a point where you need to share it with anyone else, because it can help you define who you are as a musician. I hope you

enjoyed this peek into yet another aspect of being professional musician, and please feel free to let me know any comments or questions you have. Until next time.

#### Outro

Thank you for listening to Tonal Diversions! Subscribe wherever podcasts are found and share with a friend until next time. Bye!