

HOFF-BARTHELSON

MUSIC SCHOOL

2026 Compose Yourself! Workshop Dr. Derek Cooper, Coordinator

Call for Submissions of Student Compositions

It's that time of year when we begin looking forward to the annual *Compose Yourself! Workshop* at Hoff-Barthelson! This is a special opportunity for our students to share their compositions with an audience and then to receive feedback from a panel of visiting professional composers.

When? The *Compose Yourself! Workshop* will be held on Saturday, February 28th, 2026, from 1:00-5:00 pm, in the Joan Behrens Bergman Auditorium.

- 1:00-4:00 pm – Students receive feedback about their compositions from our esteemed guest composers.
- 4:00-5:00 pm – Each guest composer will give a short presentation about their music.

Who is eligible to submit compositions for consideration? Any HBMS student who composes her/his own music is eligible.

When and how can students submit their compositions for consideration?

- Send materials directly to Dr. Derek Cooper, dcooper@hbms.org.
- All submissions must be accompanied by a COMPLETED [online submission form](#).
- Submissions are due by February 14, 2026. No late submissions will be accepted.
- Students may submit works that are in-progress.

Then what? Student submissions will be reviewed by HBMS composition faculty. Students whose compositions are approved will be invited to participate in the *Compose Yourself! Workshop* on February 28th, 2026. Following the workshop, students may be invited to share their compositions on the *Compose Yourself! Recital* (part of the Music of Our Time Festival) on Thursday, April 16th, 2026, at 6:00 pm. These students will be given the opportunity to revise their selected compositions before this concert to incorporate what they learned during the workshop.

Guest Composers:

Haralabos (Harry) Stafylakis is a New York City–based, JUNO-nominated composer from Montreal whose music blends classical tradition with the intensity of heavy metal. Critics have described his work as “dreamy yet rhythmic” (*The New York Times*) and “ferociously expressive” (*Times Colonist*), marked by visceral energy and bold harmonic language. He is composer-in-residence with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and co-curator of the Winnipeg New Music Festival. Stafylakis has collaborated with leading classical and metal artists and ensembles worldwide. His album *Calibrating Friction* (New Amsterdam Records) received a 2024 JUNO nomination, alongside major honors from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, ASCAP, and SOCAN.

Max Grafe is a composer whose music harnesses modernist vocabularies to create striking dramatic and narrative impact. Described by *Gramophone* as featuring “jagged declamations and muffled filigree,” his works have been commissioned by ensembles including the New York Philharmonic and presented at festivals such as Tanglewood and RED NOTE. Grafe is a founding member of ICEBERG New Music and his compositions appear on recordings by major ensembles and soloists. He has received numerous honors from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, BMI, and ASCAP. Grafe teaches at Montclair State University and the Kaufman Music Center and is Composer in Residence at Kinhaven Music School.

Questions: If you have any questions, you can email me at DCooper@hbms.org.

Looking forward to a great *Compose Yourself!* and to hearing all of your creations!

Dr. Derek Cooper
Coordinator, *Compose Yourself!*