

## Oberlin Conservatory Harp Department

### HARP APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

The following are Ms. Kondonassis's answers to frequently asked questions.

**1. What will my audition be like?**

Auditions are scheduled for approximately one half-hour each so that there is plenty of time for listening to prepared repertoire and getting acquainted. Questions about the program may also be answered at that time.

**2. Is there a harp that I can use for my audition?**

Yes. Oberlin owns an assortment of harps, including a Lyon & Healy Salzedo model, several Lyon & Healy Style 23s, and a Lyon & Healy Style 85CG. Most applicants choose to use the Salzedo model. A warm-up harp will be available for your use in a nearby practice room prior to your audition. Please stop by my studio (Robertson, Room 124) prior to your scheduled audition time to pick up a key to a practice room for warm-up.

**3. Is there a harp I can use for practice before or on my audition day at times other than my scheduled warm-up?**

We are not able to provide harps for practice at times other than your warm-up period prior to your audition. Oberlin's harps and practice facilities are in constant demand by currently enrolled students and must be reserved for their use. We suggest that you plan to arrive no earlier than the day before your audition so that practice time will not be an issue. Applicants are also welcome to audition on their own instruments.

**4. May I send a tape instead of auditioning live?**

In cases where students live outside the U.S., or when extreme circumstances exist, I do allow applicants to audition with a DVD or VHS video. (Audio tapes without an accompanying DVD or video will not be accepted.) However, it is always to the applicant's advantage to schedule a live audition.

**5. How do I schedule my audition?**

Oberlin auditions are arranged on an individual basis directly through me. (The Oberlin admissions office will provide you with my contact information.) Please contact me as soon as possible after submitting your application so that there is ample lead time for scheduling. I hear Oberlin auditions from December through early March.

**6. What if I am applying to both The Cleveland Institute of Music and Oberlin Conservatory?**

If you are applying to both schools where I teach, you only need to audition for me once. That audition must be scheduled through the CIM admissions office. Once you receive confirmation of your CIM audition date, please notify the Oberlin admissions office that your Oberlin audition has been arranged and give them your scheduled date at CIM. If you only plan to audition for Oberlin, please contact me directly through the Oberlin admissions office to schedule your audition at Oberlin.

**7. May I schedule a visit and lesson with you prior to my audition year or date?**

I do my best to accommodate anyone who wishes to schedule a lesson in the year(s) or months prior to an audition. I cannot, however, schedule a lesson with an applicant in the days before or on the day of an audition. Since I receive so many requests for lessons from out-of-town students, please contact me as soon in advance of your preferred time frame as possible so that we have the best chance of coordinating schedules. Weekends rarely work for me since I often travel and play concerts during the Thursday-Sunday period of the week. My teaching days are normally Tuesdays and Wednesdays and are usually the best days for me to schedule extra lessons. My fee for a one-hour lesson is \$100.

**8. What repertoire is appropriate for my audition?**

I ask that all applicants prepare the Advanced/Professional Warm-Up (from my book, *On Playing the Harp*, published by Carl Fischer and available through all harp music retailers or my website: [www.yolandaharp.com](http://www.yolandaharp.com)), one orchestral excerpt of choice, and two solos of contrasting style. I prefer that the two solos be memorized. Music may be used for the Warm-Up and the orchestral excerpt. There are no other guidelines regarding repertoire other than the expectation that music prepared should accurately reflect the applicant's level and ability.

**9. I know that harp students at Oberlin are trained in the Salzedo tradition of technique. I have not been trained in the Salzedo method up to this point. Do you accept such students and/or is this a problem?**

I encourage students of all training backgrounds to audition. Applicants should keep in mind, however, that technical training is an essential part of the equation in a conservatory education since one's technique is a critical tool in achieving artistic results. Students who come to Oberlin from other traditions of study must be open to making technical adjustments that are appropriate to individual

needs and are informed by the Salzedo method of playing. If this is not the case, Oberlin might not be the “right fit.”

**10. I am planning to major in another field at Oberlin College. May I still study with you in the Conservatory?**

Unfortunately, I only have time in my schedule to teach harp performance majors enrolled in the Conservatory. However, Oberlin has an active secondary harp program that utilizes Oberlin harp performance majors in a teaching capacity with me as supervisor. Sign-up and teacher assignments for Secondary Harp are done at the beginning of each semester, whether lessons are requested for credit or non-credit. Please see Ms. Memmott in the Conservatory Office for more information on enrollment.

**11. What are some of the accomplishments that your students have achieved?**

I am very proud of my current and former students' accomplishments. My students have won Silver and Bronze Medals at the USA International Harp Competition, Grand Prize at the ASTA National Solo Competition, First Prize in the American Harp Society's National Solo Competition (Advanced Division), the American Harp Society's Grandjany Prize and Anne Adams Prizes, First Prize in the WAMSO Young Artists Competition, First Prize in the Corpus Christy National Young Artists Competition, and First Prize in the Midland-Odesa National Young Artists Competition. My students repeatedly win auditions for all the major summer music festivals, including Tanglewood, National Repertory Orchestra, Pacific Music Festival, National Orchestral Institute, Festival Hill at Round Top, and Spoleto, among others. Most recently, my students have won principal orchestral positions with the New World Symphony, the Youngstown (OH) Symphony, and the Milwaukee Symphony.

**12. What is your philosophy of teaching?**

Playing the harp well is very important to me. Teaching my students to play the harp well is equally important to me. I strongly believe in a disciplined, creative, and organized approach to making progress and reaching one's potential.

I approach technical concerns from the viewpoint of the Salzedo technique and by applying common sense and experience in each situation. I approach musical concerns in a “whole-thinking” manner through many means. Both elements of the equation, technical and musical, must be thoroughly and attentively cultivated in order to achieve great results. Teaching and learning are opposite sides of the same coin and, as in any effective partnership, success depends on good communication, trust, and mutual respect.

For a more detailed discussion of my philosophies on playing and teaching, please refer to Part I of my book, *On Playing the Harp*. For more information on my background, recordings, and publications, please visit [www.yolandaharp.com](http://www.yolandaharp.com).

**All further questions regarding admissions procedures, applications, financial aid, and other general questions regarding the Oberlin program and facilities should be directed to the Oberlin Admissions Office.**