

## **Musician Bio Guide**

### **DePaul School of Music Career Services**

#### **What Is a Bio?**

A "bio" is a written biographical statement describing your best credentials. Unlike a résumé, a bio is written in complete sentences and paragraphs. It should include your most impressive accomplishments as well as personal facts to help the reader connect with you.

#### **Why Do I Need a Bio?**

Nearly all music professionals will be asked at some point in their career to submit a bio. They are considered promotional material, used in printed programs, newspaper or magazine concert listings, summer festival applications, and concert flyers. The goal of a bio is to give the reader a great impression of you before they meet you, work with you, or hear you on stage. Your reader is likely to be a potential employer, a competition judge, or the general public.

#### **What Should I Include in a Bio?**

There is no "right" way to write a bio, however there are a few ways to make yours stand out from the crowd. Musician bios should be brief, include relevant information to the intended audience, and should answer the following four questions:

1. Who are you?
2. How did you get to be who you are?
3. What are you doing now?
4. What are your future plans?

You can draw on your master résumé list (see the Résumé Handbook for more information on this) to decide what accomplishments to include in your bio. For performance bios, this includes competitions, awards, scholarships, notable solo, ensemble, and orchestral performances, opera and choral performances, and summer festivals you have participated in, etc. It should also include some personal information such as where you live now and where you grew up, as well as where and with whom you have studied.

Other things to potentially use in a bio include: quotes from reference letters, famous artists you have performed with, well-known venues, professional organization affiliations, published articles, and upcoming projects. Be cautious and use your best judgment in deciding what to include. You want your reader to know you are proud of your accomplishments while not exaggerating or sounding arrogant or boastful.

#### **How Do I Write a Bio?**

A bio will always be written in third person (she/he and Ms./Mr., not "I"). Alternate the use of these in your paragraphs. It is good to have different versions of your bio including a long version, a medium version (5-10 sentences), and a minimal version (3-6 sentences) so you are able to provide options on request.

Remember, your bio, like your repertoire list and résumé, is always a work in progress. The last step is to proofread, proofread, proofread!