



## COMPOSITION AT KINHAVEN

### Senior Session

Composer-in-residence, Nicolas Scherzinger

This brief information packet includes information about Composition at the Kinhaven Music School Senior Session. In addition to performing in chamber music ensembles, orchestra, and large ensembles at Kinhaven, there are many opportunities related to the study of composition at Kinhaven. The composition program at Kinhaven is unlike many other composition programs at other summer music programs. All students, regardless of emphasis, who wish to study composition must participate in chamber music, symphony orchestra, string orchestra, and large ensembles on a primary instrument, and they also take private instrumental instruction with a studio teacher. In addition, all students who wish to study composition take private composition lessons. As such, there is no separation between composers and performers at Kinhaven. Composer-in-residence Nicolas Scherzinger, as well as the directors and faculty at Kinhaven, believe strongly that the best way for a young composer to learn is through the act of composition combined with performance.

The Kinhaven senior session accepts 90 students who are 13 to 18 years of age. The first year of eligibility is the summer following eighth grade; the final year of eligibility is the summer following high school graduation. For more detailed information about the senior session in general visit the following link:

<http://www.kinhaven.org/our-programs/senior-session/description/>

### THE COMPOSITION EMPHASIS

For students who wish to have a **composition emphasis**, it is possible to focus on composition studies while still taking advantage of the full Kinhaven experience. Students enrolled in the composition emphasis must still perform in chamber music and large ensembles/orchestra, though their performance load is lighter than the average performance student (single assigned chamber music as well as a lighter large ensemble load). As such, these students take private composition lessons more frequently and attend additional composition seminars dealing with composition related topics.

## LESSONS IN COMPOSITION

**Lessons in composition** are available to any student who is interested. Both individual and small group lessons are available, depending on the level and interest of the student. Advanced students can opt to take private composition instruction and usually meet once or twice weekly, depending on the intensity that the student would like. For beginners, no previous experience composing music is necessary and no previous experience in music theory is necessary.

Each year there is a **beginner composition class** for any Kinhaven student who is interested in studying composition, but has no prior experience composing music or studying theory. We will meet once or twice per week, depending on the enthusiasm of the group.

## COMPOSITION SEMINAR (MASTER CLASSES)

Each week there is at least one **composition seminar** related to issues of composition and new music, which is open to all music students. These seminars often examine the music and composers of pieces that will be performed at an upcoming faculty or student concert. Additional **composition seminars** are offered to students who are serious about composition and cover such advanced topics as instrumentation and orchestration, preparation of score and parts, techniques in analysis, notation, score study, repertoire, etc.

In addition to the composition seminars, music students who are interested in **score study and analysis** can meet with composer-in-residence Nicolas Scherzinger in a small group setting to learn about how to study a score. Works discussed in these analysis sessions are often related to pieces or composers that will be performed at Kinhaven that summer.

## STUDENT COMPOSERS' CONCERT

Every summer there is a **student composers' concert** (always during the 5th week of senior session). This concert is dedicated to the performance of student composers' works. Works on this concert can be composed before coming to Kinhaven (i.e., the most recent winter or spring, etc.), or during a student's time at Kinhaven that summer. Students do not need to study composition to have a piece on the concert (the concert is open to all students). The student composers' concert is limited to **chamber works only** (maximum of 8 performers). The concert is recorded. Students enrolled as a composition emphasis are guaranteed up to a total of 15 minutes of music on the composers' concert. (could be 1-3 pieces, depending on length). All other Kinhaven students can submit works to be performed on the student composers' concert, with emphasis given to students who study composition at Kinhaven. Although the student composers' concert is completely student run (works by student composers performed by student ensembles), all works on the concert must be approved by the faculty (composer-in-residence).

In addition to the student composers' concert, there are opportunities throughout the summer to have **new works read and recorded**, and there is no limitation on instrumentation for such readings. Student composers work closely with the composer-in-residence, studio teachers and fellow students in the organization of such readings.

Below is a list of a few things students interested in composition should consider bringing to Kinhaven:

1. Manuscript paper
2. Pencils, erasers and a ruler
3. A binder or folder to store your sketches and compositions
4. Any previously composed pieces you might want to have performed or read at Kinhaven (bring 2 copies of the score, and copies of the parts) – these can be printed out using a computer at home before you come to Kinhaven.

Kinhaven has a strict policy against the use of computers, smart phones, and tablet devices during senior session. The exception is if a student is using a device for listening to music (with permission). Student composers will be working with manuscript paper and pencil during the entire Kinhaven senior session. Senior session is 6 weeks in length, and the composers' concert is in the 5<sup>th</sup> week, so it is quite possible to notate with pencil and paper a complete score and parts, and have it performed on the concert.

Here is a message from Nicolas Scherzinger, the composer-in-residence:

*Here is a message I often get every before Kinhaven Senior Sessions starts:*

***“My daughter/son works a lot on composing using a computer. We have reviewed the electronics policy and certainly understand it and support it, but we are wondering if she/he will have the ability to access that type of software while there at camp.”***

***– anonymous parent***

*Students who study composition at Kinhaven during senior session do not have access to a computer to compose. We do all our work away from the computer, using pencil and manuscript paper primarily. Students will have access to a computer to notate their piece for generating scores and parts, but the computer is only used to engrave final versions of music (we print scores and parts on campus). Students will not have access to the computer to compose at.*

*In this technology age, many young composers start by composing on the computer. The computer is a great tool and I use it in my own work. But as composers, it is important that we develop many different ways and methods of composing our music. Learning to hear music internally or by playing it on an instrument before we go to the computer is a very important skill to develop. If you are interested in studying composition at Kinhaven, I ask that you keep an open mind and use this opportunity to explore new ways of thinking and working in music composition for the 6-week session. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to learn and grow, and to form new ways of thinking and hearing music. I have been teaching composition for over 20 years, to elementary, high school and college level students, and I have seen significant growth and development by working with students away from the computer.*

*I hope this eases any anxiety you might have about studying composition at Kinhaven this summer.*

***– Nicolas Scherzinger***

If you have any additional questions about the composition program at Kinhaven, you are encourage to contact composer-in-residence, Nicolas Scherzinger and/or the directors, Deborah Buck and Tony Mazzocchi.

Nicolas Scherzinger, composer-in-residence (2006-present)  
[nscherzi@gmail.com](mailto:nscherzi@gmail.com)

Senior Session Directors  
Deborah Buck & Tony Mazzocchi  
phone: (973) 378-5854  
[admin@kinhaven.org](mailto:admin@kinhaven.org)

<http://kinhaven.org>