

Prospective Choreographer Meeting
Music for Your Choreography
By Dr. Don Nichols

If we will be streaming our concert, or you just want more flexibility in music use beyond the Dance Center, you have options that adhere to copyright license restrictions

Acceptable approaches to finding music:

1. Create your own soundscore (with or without Don's help)
2. Collaborate directly with a composer
3. Select music from <https://sonata.media/> The Department has created a subscription account at Sonata.Media, which has really good music choices for dance. Because of our license, you can pick anything from the site and we can register its license to use in your final piece. Please send me the track link when you've made your final decisions.
4. Select music from Free-to-Use, Royalty-free sites:
<https://freemusicarchive.org/home> - Literally *tens of thousands* of options
<https://mobygratis.com/> - Music from iconic artist, Moby

Be aware that "Royalty-Free" doesn't always mean "Free," as many stock music "clearinghouses" (like sonata.media) require a subscription or individual license fees. This alone doesn't mean you cannot use it, but it does include additional university approvals and needs to fit within our production budget. If you find music from any royalty-free site (even those below), please contact me right away. Examples of 'clearinghouses' you can peruse:

<https://www.bensound.com/royalty-free-music>
<https://licensing.jamendo.com/en/royalty-free-music?jmm=catalog>

5. Receive permission from an independent artist you know personally or can contact via social media. You should attempt to contact them and ask for permission to use their music, BUT be prepared with a plan B in case you do not hear from them or they say "no." You should keep ALL documented conversations with the artist (screenshots/emails). I can suggest things to say in your message to the artist if you want my help.

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Unacceptable approaches to finding music:

1. Select pre-existing, mainstream commercial recordings. Online ID tools will flag commercial music and potentially shut down our show or open us up to lawsuits. Because of the overload of requests to the big 3 major record labels (who own over 80% of all recorded music) depending on approval for a license is risky, so we cannot support this option for you at this time; we are unlikely to receive even a response to our license request, much less get approval. Ultimately, we want to make your process a smooth one, and so we don't want you to find out a week before the show that you cannot use music you assumed you could.

2. Simply altering pre-existing commercial music is typically NOT good enough to evade online ID tools, such as using only a LITTLE bit of the song, layering other sounds on top of the music, changing the tempo, raising/lowering pitch, etc.

Please contact me via email Don.Nichols@csulb.edu if you would like to meet to discuss options, brainstorm ideas, or ask specific questions or concerns. Good luck!