



2025 All-Virginia Guitar Ensemble (AVGE) Audition Information & Materials



Auditions will take place September 13 and 14 2025 at sites across the Commonwealth. Site locations and sign ups will be posted by Labor Day,

Eligibility: In order to participate in All-Virginia Guitar Ensemble, students of qualified directors must be enrolled as an incoming 9 - 12 grade student, be regular participants in the guitar program. If the student attends a school where the guitar program and/or class curriculum is limited to an Intermediate Level or lower (*defined by the Virginia Department of Education Standards of Learning: HII.12 - 16), the student may be eligible to audition as long as they are registered in another music class at their school. If there is no guitar program at the student's school, the student must be a regular participant in another music class at their school. *<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/2030/637949943128000000>

AVGE Performance: The 2025 AVGE will perform for the VMEA Professional Development Conference in Norfolk, VA (tentatively scheduled) Nov. 21, 2025 with rehearsals starting on November 19. Should you win the audition to participate in the AVGE, you will be required to pay a fee of approximately \$400 to cover food and lodging. This price may drop as sponsorship increases. Some school districts may give financial assistance for this event. You are encouraged to discuss this ahead of time with your teacher and administrators.

Sight Reading

- 10 Points (out of 100)
 - 4 Points Notes
 - 4 Points Rhythm
 - 2 Musicality

E Major Scale - 3 Octaves

(See music included in this packet)

- 15 Points (out of 100)
 - 5 Points for correct notes
 - 5 Points for fluid, steady rhythm
 - 5 Points for tone quality (left and right hand techniques)

Solo: *Lagrima* by Francisco Tárrega

(Included in this packet)

- 35 Points (out of 100)
 - 10 Points for correct notes and rhythms
 - 10 Points for tone quality from right hand and left hand techniques
 - 10 Points for musicality: dynamics, phrasing, interpretation
 - 5 Points for overall quality of preparation

Ensemble Excerpts

(Included in this packet)

Prepare 4 short excerpts from *D'Bootsy Bass Baby* by Darin Au. You will be asked to play two of these excerpt at the audition (not free choice).

- 40 Points (out of 100)
 - 10 Points for correct notes and rhythms
 - 10 Points for tone quality from right hand and left hand techniques
 - 10 Points for musicality: dynamics, phrasing, interpretation
 - 10 Points for overall quality of preparation

2025 All-Virginia Guitar Ensemble Conductor



Darin's compositions are performed by guitar ensembles around the country, including the NAFME All-National Honor Ensemble in 2018 (*Chasing Dragons*), 2020 (*Gävlebocken*) and 2022 (*D'Bootsy Bass Baby*). His works are published by the Theodore Presser Company and Les Productions d'OZ. He also has published *Beginning Ensembles for the Next Generation of Guitarists* which was written to accompany any guitar method series. In 2023, he conducted and composed *The Proving Ground* for the Clark County (NV) School District Honor Guitar Ensemble. In January 2025, Freedom High School (Orlando, FL) performed the world premiere of *Ramble On an Irish Folksong*, at the prestigious Florida Music Educators Association President's Concert. Earlier this year, Darin conducted a concert

of several of his pieces with the Nevada All-State Honor Guitar Ensemble.

Darin teaches at Punahou School in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he directs the Guitar Ensembles, Creative Music Studio, and served as Music Department Head (2005 – 2016). During his time as Department Head, the Punahou Marching Band was in a high profile position and participated in two Tournament of Roses Parades (Pasadena, CA), two Presidential Inauguration Parades (Washington, D.C.) and a London New Year's Day Parade. He also led the way in proposing and creating new courses including Hawaiian Music Ensemble, Creative Music Studio, Creativity and Composition, and a complete line of Guitar Ensembles.

In his teaching, Darin encourages student independence, leadership, and autonomy. His students make programming decisions, rehearse themselves, create their own arrangements, and compose and record. In 2022-23, his students composed and recorded an all-original soundtrack for their senior class musical involving over 40 musicians and 350 of their classmates. *Bread (Original Cast Recording)* can be found on all major music services. In 2024, his students wrote, rehearsed, and performed a concept piece comprised of nine original songs titled *Eclipse*.

In recent years, Darin has been involved with Virtual Guitar Orchestra as a co-producer and composer and Teaching Guitar Workshops as a clinician. Most recently with Virtual Guitar Orchestra and the Alaska Native Heritage Center, he connected students to Alaska Native music and Yup'ik composer/singer/dancer Andrew Weaver and together they produced a music video and documentary. The piece was called *Niicugniaqa Nunakilili* and the recordings can be found on YouTube.

Darin has taught high school classroom music for over 25 years. Since 1996, he has maintained a successful private teaching studio, 7th Fret Guitar Studios, specializing in small group instruction in guitar to children ages 5 and up. Darin earned a Master of Music in Composition from the University of North Texas College of Music and a BA in Music from the University of Redlands where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa. He has presented sessions on creativity, collaboration, and music and guitar education at state and national conferences. Darin currently serves as the Western Division representative on the NAFME Council for Guitar Education.

He performs professionally on classical, acoustic, and electric guitars (and some 'ukulele) ranging from classical music to rock and reggae.

Sight Reading Examples from 2024



E Major Scale

All-Virginia Guitar Ensemble Audition 2025
Virginia Music Educators Association



There are no required fingerings as the audition is an audio recording only.

Recommendations:

Alternate right hand fingers

Avoid audible glissandi

Solo: Lagrima

by Francisco Tárrega (1852 - 1909)



Francisco Tárrega composed approximately 80 original pieces and 120 transcriptions, mostly for his own use and that of his students. He began publishing his work when he was nearly 50 year old.

He is well known for his compositions *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* and *Capricho Árabe*. One of his tunes was made popular in 2002 when Nokia used an excerpt from his *Gran Vals* as a ring tone.

The inspiration for *Lagrima* came from his time in London where he did not like the language or the weather. After a concert there, he was asked about his low spirits and was encouraged to capture that moment in music. The result was *Lagrima* (teardrop).

Lagrima

Preludio

Francisco Tárrega
(1852 - 1909)

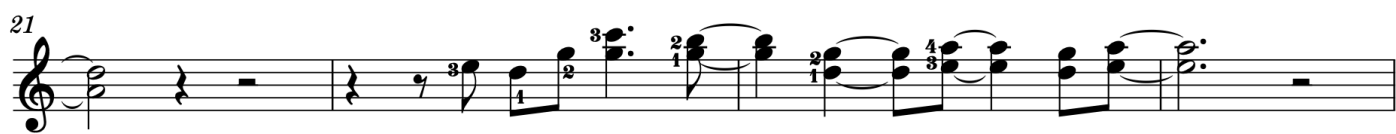
Andante

The musical score is written for guitar in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The second staff includes a measure marked 'rit.' (ritardando). The third staff contains a measure circled in red with the instruction 'Do not repeat' in red text, followed by a measure marked 'Fine'. The fourth staff includes a measure circled in red with the instruction 'D.C. al Fine' in red text, followed by a measure marked 'rit.' and a final measure circled in red with the instruction 'Do not repeat' in red text. The score includes various guitar-specific notations such as natural harmonics (indicated by '0' on the staff), fingerings (numbers 1-4), and slurs. Section markers 'C IX', 'C VII', 'CII', and 'CVII' are placed above the staff with dashed lines indicating repeat sections.

The fingerings in this edition are based on the 1909 edition by Ildefonso Alier. Feel free to change fingerings as you and your teacher deem appropriate.

Excerpts from: *D'Bootsy Bass Baby* by *Darin Au*

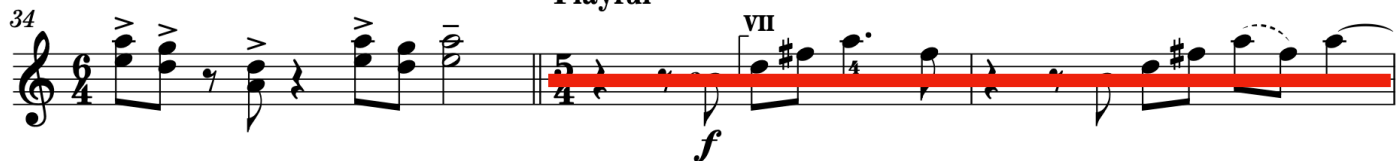
Excerpt 1: Guitar 1 mm. 18 - 34



Mysterious



Playful



Excerpt 2: Guitar 2 mm. 103 - 123

102

$\text{♩} = 146$
hard strikes

f

105

The drop

f

109

114

118

Mysterious

123

Playful

f

Excerpt 3: Guitar 3 mm. 51 - 69

48 **Mysterious**

mp

52 **Playful**

f

55

f

59

4/4

62 **Gentle and mysterious** **Playful**

p **1** *f*

67

Excerpt 4: Guitar 6 mm. 95 - 117

87 Drifting downstream in the rapids ♩ = 132

97

100

102

107 The drop

111

115 Mysterious