

## 2024 NYC *songSLAM* NYC RULES:

The *Sparks & Wiry Cries songSLAM* is a unique and energizing community event for composer/performer teams to premiere new art songs and compete for cash prizes. Fashioned after poetry slams and storytelling events, teams of composers and performers compete for \$2,000 in audience-awarded cash prizes with new art song premieres.

Building on the success of the last four years' added virtual component, we will incorporate both recorded and live elements into the 2024 NYC *songSLAM*. For this hybrid format, all teams will have their entry professionally recorded on **November 20-21, 2023**, AND all teams will perform in the **live *songSLAM* event on January 19, 2024, at 7:30 pm**. The recording will take place at the Blue Building in NYC and the live performance will take place at National Sawdust.

On **January 19th**, each team will present a new song of no more than 5 minutes for voice and piano, in any language, for the LIVE voting audience, who—in the poetry slam tradition—will then vote on their favorite and award \$2,000 in prize money as follows:

**\$1,000 for first place**

**\$600 for second place**

**\$400 for third place**

Virtual voting for the NYC *songSLAM* will also open January 19th at 10 pm EST and will remain open through January 29th, 5.00pm EST. As in the last three years, there will be a text-to-vote function on the *Sparks & Wiry Cries* website via Give Lively for as little as \$1/vote. Each team will have a unique text code linked to their account. **The funds that each team raises during the virtual event will be split 50/50 with the respective team members and *Sparks & Wiry Cries*, who will use their portion to reinvest into larger commissions, future competitions, and new art song initiatives.** On January 29th, we will announce total funds raised, along with our prize winner for the 2024 *songSLAM* commission prize, on our website and social media platforms.

For their \$20/team registration fee, the first 15 teams who successfully register will have their song recorded and premiered, and will also have the chance to win both the live cash prizes and earn further funds through the 50/50 crowd-sourcing initiative. Further to this, *Sparks & Wiry Cries* may also pick a song for publication in the *Sparks & Wiry Cries songSLAM* Songbook. *Sparks* also reserves the right to choose one composer from the competition to award a commissioning prize for the following season.

*Sparks* strongly suggests that teams be made up of at least three people (composer, singer, and pianist), and urges teams to select poetry for their text, either by an added poet team member or other person. This format allows for a wider collaboration between parties, and centers the musical and performative interpretation of poetry in the work each team premieres.

**Please note that registration historically fills up in under 30 minutes – be ready to sign up just as it opens!**

**Competition Rules:**

- 1) Registration is \$20 and opens on Monday, October 16, 2023, at 6 pm EDT on a first-come, first-served basis. There is NO age limit.
- 2) Performance/Recording slots will be open to the 15 teams who register first; there will be up to 3 additional ‘alternate’ slots in the event of cancellations. Teams who do not successfully register in time to at least be an alternate will have their money refunded. Those on the alternate list will not have their fee immediately refunded; instead, they will have the choice to either stay on the list or be taken off, in which case their fee will be refunded.
- 3) Original compositions presented at the 2024 NYC *songSLAM* must:
  - Be composed for voice and piano
  - Feature texts that are in the public domain or have written and signed permission from the author/trust
  - Receive their world premiere on January 19, 2024
- 4) Songs should be approximately 5 minutes in length or fewer.
- 5) A composer can only submit ONE song for the event. Performers can only perform in ONE song for the event. While the composer **may** also be a performer and teams may also include a poet, we strongly advise that teams be made up of at least three people (composer, singer & pianist).
- 6) Texts may be in any language. Be advised that if your registration is successful, and if your text will not be in the public domain on or before January 1, 2024, you will need to obtain permission from your poet, or from the trust of the poet if deceased. You must receive this permission before the recording dates of November 20-21, 2023, and present proof at or before your recording date.
- 7) Prize money is as follows: \$1,000 for first place, \$600 for second place, and \$400 for third place. These prizes will be awarded by audience vote. See description of voting process above. Funds raised in the Virtual *songSLAM* (from January 19-29, 2024), will be split 50/50 between the respective team members and our organization.
- 8) Further prizes may be granted at the discretion of the Co-Artistic Directors of *Sparks & Wiry Cries*, including but not limited to: online publication and sales of selected songs, hosted through *Sparks & Wiry Cries*’ website; a commission prize for the composer of their choice; and possible inclusion in a *songSLAM* Songbook published through [New Music Shelf](#).
- 9) Please note, regardless of premiere, publication, and recording, *Sparks & Wiry Cries* nor any partner institution will ever claim ownership of the music premiered at any *songSLAM*. The rights to the premiered works will remain solely with the artistic team that applied, and they can further decide how to divide any assets. *Sparks* **may** ask for permission from the entire team to use the recording in their promotional materials.

10) Composers must be present during the live performance.

**Teams are encouraged to invite their friends and share the event as widely as possible, as all monetary prizes will be awarded by audience vote.**

Further guidelines for the November 20-21 recording sessions:

- 1) Teams will be allowed to record up to three takes of their piece; from those takes, teams may indicate their preference for online publication. Edits will not be made.
- 2) Teams will retain the rights to their video content after the conclusion of the competition (January 29, 2024) and not before.