

Two Songs?

The jury is out on this, as it affects the reaction of some casting reps and not others. Here is the official StrawHat stance:

Two songs show only that you can sing in two styles, or in two registers -- it does not show whether you have the acting skills to make and display strong, clear emotional choices when working with a script. Accompaniment provides all kinds of emotional clues, note value determines a good deal of the intended stress on a given word. A monologue requires that you provide all the detail of emotion and intent, with no supporting clues beyond what you've read and interpreted from the page.

Very often, we have seen that people doing two songs are genuinely stronger on one of the two pieces, and our reaction becomes the question of "why did she bother?" either because the singer is either not really a pop belter, or because she rocked the pop belt so well that the legit soprano ingenue piece was a) boring or b) her voice was fatigued from the belting, so her chops were slightly busted.

Finally, our system of seeing 700+ people in 21 hours over 3 days requires that the accompanist is speaking to the next performer regarding tempo, cuts, etc. *while the previous person is performing the monologue*. One auditioning actor is entering the stage just as the other is making her exit -- when we have to pause for the next person to talk with the accompanist, we slow down, we go over time, we lose important break periods for the casting reps, the reps get grumpy. It is helpful for all if people prepare an audition as requested.

Ultimately, the decision is yours and as stated earlier, we have mixed response from the casting reps -- what really matters is that you do a *great* audition. Speaking for StrawHat, we know what we prefer, what we respond best to, and what we hope to see. But we don't hire, we just coordinate the opportunity for you to shine. Do your preparation from top to bottom: *practice* how you plan to instruct the accompanist (don't rest on the familiarity bred from working with your regular coach -- ask him/her precisely what you need to be able to communicate in 20 seconds); *practice* your introduction, what we call your slate; *practice and time* the whole package of two pieces to a stop watch so that you know you are inside 90 seconds; *practice* your end slate. Be prepared, be awesome, have fun, and regardless of your choice of pieces, you will leave the stage confident that you did your very best.