

# STAGE DEPARTMENT

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## I. Introduction

- A. What is deportment?
  - 1. Physical presentation of a performer on stage during a performance
  - 2. Includes attire, physical demeanor, and stage presence
- B. Why is this important?
  - 1. Many people hear with their eyes
  - 2. Gives you confidence in knowing what to expect (thinking ahead), thus allowing you to perform free of non-musical worries
  - 3. Allows you to look and feel more natural on stage
    - Any uncertainties translate to the audience as uneasiness
  - 4. Respectful to the audience
- C. Be a salesman – you want the audience to buy *all* of what you are selling, not just part of it

## II. Preparation

- A. Be prepared for the performance. Make sure you are confident with your music and the ensemble.
- B. Arrive early to set the stage, get comfortable, tune, organize music, etc.
  - 1. Performance space
    - a. Stand a few steps in front the crook of the piano
    - b. Position music stand slightly off to the side so the audience can see you and the bell of your trumpet
    - c. Angle your body *slightly* toward the pianist for good peripheral eye contact
    - d. Mute stand – turn a music stand horizontally and position it close to where you will be standing to facilitate quick mute changes. Place a cloth on the stand to eliminate the clanging sound of metal against metal that can disrupt the performance
    - e. Predetermine piano lid height (during dress rehearsal) and make sure the stagehand is aware of any changes throughout the performance
  - 2. Tuning
    - a. Never tune on stage
    - b. Always tune all instruments ahead of time
    - c. Check piano with electronic tuner and then use the tuner backstage if needed
    - d. Adjust throughout performance as necessary
- C. Music should be placed on stand prior to the performance. Avoid carrying music on/off stage.
- D. Use spare time backstage for relaxation techniques

## III. Attire – look nice, but also feel comfortable

- A. Prior to performance, ask the personnel manager to see if there is a special occasion being celebrated so you can acknowledge it from the stage, if appropriate
- B. Soloist – depending on the venue, your attire may change
  - 1. Solo recital
    - a. Men:
      - Suit with tie is most common
      - Tuxedo is acceptable for a more high-profile recital
    - b. Women:
      - According to your taste and style (feel comfortable)
      - Avoid low-cut tops, very tight clothing, and uncomfortable shoes
  - 2. Solo with large ensemble
    - a. More formal than recital
    - b. Typically, tuxedo (men) or evening gown (women)

#### IV. Stage Presence – physical presentation on stage is as important as the music

\*Confident and comfortable appearance = better performance and a relaxed audience that is undistracted

##### A. Smile all of the time

- Not a big, cheesy smile, but one that says, “Hey, I love doing this and you are in for a real treat.”

##### B. Bows

\*This is where inexperienced performers often make mistakes

###### 1. The proper bow

- a. Smile the whole time
- b. Legs straight
- c. Heels together
- d. Hold trumpet with both hands, or leave both hands at either side (whatever is most natural)
- e. Bow at waist (keep head down and look at shoes)
- f. Hold for two/three seconds
- g. Stand back up straight

##### C. Entrance

###### 1. Know the stage setup so you can navigate through it

###### 2. Walk confidently and with a purpose

\* The performance begins the second the audience sees you

\* The performance is not over until you are driving away

- Keep your head up and look straight ahead

###### 3. Order of entrance

###### a. Recitals

- Generally, soloists enters first (but wait to take bow with accompanying musicians)

- If entering from stage left, pianist should walk behind the soloist, but in front of the piano

- Page turner enters last and walks behind piano

- Performers take a brief bow together

###### b. Solo with large ensemble

- Ensemble is already on stage and tuned, performer then walks out first with conductor behind

- Shake concertmaster’s hand, take a brief bow (not too fast), and then begin

##### D. During the Performance

###### 1. Stand with good posture at all times

###### 2. It is OK to make periodic eye contact with audience

###### 3. During piano interludes, look at the pianist and enjoy their music

###### 4. If you end a movement before the pianist/ensemble, wait to empty water until after they finish

###### 5. While emptying water, be discreet and courteous to audience

###### 6. Be aware of, and avoid, any nervous ticks you may have

- Obnoxious foot tapping

- “Mouthing” the rest count

- Excessive water emptying

###### 7. If you make a mistake, continue to smile and avoid flinching or looking disgusted. The audience may not even notice, but if you show it in your face, they *will* notice.

##### E. Exit

###### 1. After completing the selection, take a bow and leave the stage as confidently as you entered (regardless of how *you* think the performance went). Avoid looking like a robot.

- For sonatas, bow *together with pianist*

- For all other works, take a solo bow and give the pianist a solo bow

###### 2. Soloist exits first, then pianist (or conductor) and page-turner (if present)

###### 3. Solo bow with orchestra:

a. Shake conductor’s hand, then concertmaster’s hand, *then* take solo bow

b. Give time for conductor to acknowledge orchestra before bowing again