

Performance Etiquette

- ♪ **Students may sit with their families**, but be sure to sit near the aisle so that you can get out easily when it's your turn.
- ♪ **Watch the program** so that you know who plays before you and you are ready when I call your name. When the student before you is playing, **take some slow, deep breaths** (in through your nose, out through your mouth) to calm your nerves. **Try to run your pieces through your head.** (It's hard to do – especially when someone else is playing something else, but try – it can't hurt!!) If your fingers are cold, blow on them to warm them up.
- ♪ Please show respect and consideration to your fellow students – “Do to them as you want them to do to you”. In other words, remember to be **quiet** and **listen** when other students are playing – and **clap really hard** for everyone.
- ♪ Another “Do unto others”: Please don't give your fellow students (who are also performing) a hard time in a way that will make them more nervous. Instead, **help each other stay calm and relaxed** – show your friends some encouragement and support and they will show it for you.
- ♪ When it's your turn, I will announce your name. As you get up and walk to the piano, I will tell the audience a little bit about you – things like what how old you are and how long you've been taking lessons. **Please come up to the piano quickly.** As you come up to the piano, I will finish talking and will walk over to meet you.
- ♪ As you sit down, put your Performance Binder on the piano and open it to your song. **Try to focus on the piano and your music** – try to put “blinders” on and “tune out” the audience. I know it's next to impossible – but trying to do this really does help. I will probably whisper “take a deep breath” to you (or something like that) in order to help you focus on the piano & your music. Another idea that may help you focus is to pretend that we are just having another piano lesson and it's just you & me & the piano.
- ♪ Before you start your first song, **take a deep breath, look at your music and hear the first line in your head.** Please, remember to do this – you won't believe how much it will help you focus!! Keep in mind that a strong beginning sets the pace for the rest of the song – and a strong ending is what the audience will remember. It's okay to make the audience wait while you take your time to focus -- it can mean the difference between a smooth & flowing performance and a rushed & stumbly one.
- ♪ When anyone is nervous, they automatically play a little faster than “normal”. So, **tell yourself to “go slow” when you start**, and you'll play the normal speed.
- ♪ **Sit up straight while you play** and try not to look as nervous as you feel – if you're scared & feel like running - try to smile instead.

- ♪ If you are performing two songs, put your hands in your lap for a minute when you are finished with the first one and let the audience applaud. **Enjoy the applause** – they are clapping for you because they liked it!!! You can turn your head and look at the audience, if you want, but you don't have to. Nodding your head and smiling to acknowledge the applause is also considered a good thing to do. Kind of like a mini bow.
- ♪ After I have turned the page to your second song, take **two deep breaths while you look at the music and hear the first line in your head**. The audience will probably stop clapping when you put your hands up to the keys, but **don't start to play until they do stop and you've "played" the first line in your head**. And again, take your time to refocus your mind on the new song - the same thing applies here as it did for your first song - and the audience can wait.
- ♪ When you finish your piece(s), and stand up to leave the piano, **don't take your Performance Binder** with you – I will take care of it.
- ♪ **Don't rush away from the piano** – the audience wants to see your face, at least once for just a minute - and your family probably wants to take a picture. So, leave the piano and go to the front center of the piano and **smile** while you count in your head to five ... and then **bow**!! Bowing after the performance is meant as a gesture of thanks to the audience for listening and for their applause. **Don't forget to do this!**
- ♪ People may come up to you during Intermission or after the performance and tell you how good you played. Remember to **thank them nicely** and tell them you're glad they enjoyed it.
- ♪ If you especially liked someone's piece, **please go up later and tell them** – everyone appreciates getting positive feedback – and one of the best compliments is one from a fellow student.
- ♪ If you get a compliment from a fellow student, remember to **thank them nicely and compliment them back**.