

Willimantic Orchestra

David H. Vaughan, Conductor

General Information Handbook

The Willimantic Orchestra is a non-profit community orchestra dedicated to the performance of authentic orchestral music.

String instrumentalists of all reasonable abilities are welcome. Questions regarding ability may be addressed to the conductor or section leader.

Woodwind and brass players of considerable ability are encouraged to express interest. In case of open seats, they may be recruited or auditioned depending upon numbers interested.

All instrumentalists are encouraged to become dues paying members. Members are entitled to vote and participate in decision making. Dues are an important income resource that enable the orchestra to pursue its mission.

Instrumentalists in the Willimantic Orchestra have the responsibility to:

- * attend all rehearsals prepared to participate in as professional manner as possible
 - arrive early enough to be seated and ready to play at 7:00 p.m.
 - bring pencils, and use them.
 - come each week playing the music better than the preceding week
 - listen to recordings of programmed pieces.
- * notify stand partner, section leader, and conductor of anticipated absences as early and often as possible.
- * make their music available to their stand partner in case of absence.
- * consider xeroxing your part for the use of your stand partner or substitute. Destroy copy afterward.
- * **RETURN ALL MUSIC TO LIBRARIAN AFTER CONCERT**
 - musicians are financially responsible for lost music or music returned so late that the orchestra incurs a late fee from the rental agency.
 - no music will be distributed until Orchestra Data Form is filled out completely and turned into an Officer of the Orchestra.
 - musicians new to the Orchestra may be asked to demonstrate a few weeks regular attendance before being issued a folder.

REHEARSAL PROCEDURE

The music stand storage room is opened between 6:30 and 6:45 p.m., at which time musicians are encouraged to arrive. Oftentimes, chairs need to be re-arranged and music stands distributed. Learn how to set up the orchestra seating plan and make a point of helping.

Musicians should be warmed up and in their seats for the tuning "A" given at 7:00 p.m. Socializing is suspended at this point. Listen carefully to the pitch, keep it in your "ear" and play softly as you try to match pitch exactly. The woodwind and brass sections are tuned first, followed by the strings. Ask for help from your stand partner or section mates. We can only improve by seeking and considering feedback from our colleagues. None of the instruments available to the musicians in our orchestra are tuned at the factory.

Every effort will have been made to provide a rehearsal schedule prior to the rehearsal period. Musicians should refer to it as they prepare for rehearsal. After tuning, the conductor may announce any minor changes to the schedule, specific focus areas for the rehearsal, or other very brief announcements of a general nature.

Rehearsal will commence and continue until approximately 7:30 p.m. This time is reserved for the discussion of administrative matters important to the Orchestra. If there are no announcements or issues, rehearsal will continue without pause until approximately 8:30 p.m.

At 8:30 p.m. more announcements or reminders may be made before a 15 minute break is taken. If a musician is not required for the latter part of a rehearsal, his/her stand should be returned to the storage room, and any special arrangements for next week's rehearsal should be worked out prior to departure.

At 8:45 p.m. (approximately) rehearsal will continue until 9:30 p.m., often, but not always, with a new piece or movement which requires reduced instrumentation. Every effort is made to use forces efficiently, but this is a situation in which one can not please everybody, especially when absentees render the original rehearsal schedule useless.

At 9:30 p.m. the rehearsal concludes. Musicians should see that all stands and other equipment is put in the storage room. Scan the rehearsal area for music, instruments, and personal items that might have been misplaced. Formulate a plan for personal practise in preparation for next week's rehearsal.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

As mentioned above, arrive at rehearsal well in advance of 7 p.m. It is disruptive and rude to make a habit of squeezing into one's seat after rehearsal has begun. However, late arrival is always preferable to non-arrival. In our busy lives, occasional tardiness is forgivable.

If absence is unavoidable, each musician (especially woodwinds and brass) is responsible for:

- notifying the conductor, stand partner, and section leader as soon as possible
- arranging for a substitute (see conductor or personnel manager if necessary)
- making sure that the folder is at rehearsal for the substitute to use. Make a photocopy if necessary

PERFORMANCE PROCEDURE AND ETIQUETTE

Our orchestra schedules a warm-up rehearsal at 1:00 p.m. the day of the concert. This rehearsal enables us to work on problem areas, review tempos or changes, and give the featured soloist a final chance to go through the piece. Plan to arrive at that time if at all possible. In general, pieces are rehearsed from smallest to fullest instrumentation.

We strive to present as professional appearance as possible. Concert dress is black suit and bow tie for men and long black dress for women. Plan now to buy or borrow the appropriate attire.

Please be in your seat well in advance of the concert start. Attend to your personal needs, make sure that your music and instrument(s) are with you and in working order. All music is collected after the concert, so you must bring your copy even if you are reading from your standpartner's copy.

Warm-up and review important transition points (repeats, da capos, del segnos, codas, sudden tempo and dynamic changes, sudden grand pauses, etc.) as well tricky technical passages.

Just before concert time, the concertmaster(mistress) will lead the tuning. (See rehearsal etiquette.) When all musicians are in place, the conductor will enter, in Shafer Hall usually between the viola and cello sections. At this point, it is appropriate for the members of the orchestra to stand, not to honor the conductor, but to formally present itself to the audience and signify the start of the concert. Sit when the conductor indicates.

Be aware of the concert flow if you do not play in every piece on the program. From time

to time, major stage changes must be made. Please be willing to help move things.

At the conclusion of the concert each musician has the responsibility to:

- leave all music and folder on chair
- return music stand and other equipment back in storage room.
- be willing to help percussionists, pianists, etc. with their instruments.

OTHER CONCERNS

Serious arts organizations can never have enough money, publicity, leadership, and (!)followership. Every musician in the orchestra should have some sort of non-musical role that helps the orchestra.

* Be a dues paying member. It gives you an official voice in the decisions of the orchestra

and helps defray the costs we sustain.

- * Participate in the fund raising activities. Sell program ads. Promote the orchestra through your business's sponsorship. Write grants. Wheel and deal in-kind services to our orchestra such as program printing, display advertising, etc. Consider becoming a sponsor or patron yourself.
- * Promote the orchestra. Tell people about it. Invite people to the concerts and to play with us. Put up posters. Distribute flyers. Donate your time on the computer to make mailing labels, press releases, etc. If you are artistically inclined, create

posters, logos, advertising art. Find non-playing volunteers for ushering, ticket-taking, refreshments.

- * Become involved in the orchestra's committees. Changes in leadership keep the work fresh and members won't get burnt out. Many hands make work light. Don't try to hide when the nominating committee chairperson approaches you.
- * Be a self-starting problem-solver. Instead of watching two 89 year old ladies move the piano on stage, get up and help. If you think that the orchestra sound better seated on risers, volunteer to organize a stage crew to move them into place and take them down. If you have a friend who loves to tape record concerts, here is their chance. Be willing to accept responsibilities orchestra membership requires. Everybody is happier when that happens.