



Playing Your Part ...

Responsibilities of Members

Membership

The orchestra may seek new members when vacancies or needs arise.

Applicants are typically invited to join in orchestra rehearsals during a probationary period. During this period, the applicant will be invited to sit next to the appropriate section leader in order for the leader and the Music Director to assess the applicant's playing abilities.

Membership will be granted to the applicant upon approval of the section leader and Music Director.

Membership dues are required of regular members, and may be paid on a per concert or annual basis; fees are waived for full-time students. Consultation between a member and the Personnel Manager and the executive board is encouraged if financial difficulties arise.

Attendance

Members are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances.*

Missing more than three rehearsals in any given concert cycle (typically ten rehearsals per concert) may result in a decision by the Music Director, via the Personnel Manager, to ask the member to sit out the upcoming concert.

There may be some exceptions. Occasional, unforeseen absences due to illness and/or family emergency, or, in some instances, weather conditions may occur.

*The performance and cohesiveness of the orchestra depends on the attendance at rehearsal of every member. Absenteeism makes it difficult to achieve the level of performance desired.

Members must make every effort to inform the Personnel Manager and their section leader of such unplanned absence as soon as possible.

Members are required to inform the Personnel Manager well in advance of any planned absences during the concert season.

In either situation, members are asked to inform the Personnel Manager as soon as you can if you'll be absent, and if you play one on a part, please find a sub to cover for you.

Unless otherwise instructed, members are expected to be in their seats, tuned and ready to play before 7:30 pm on the night of rehearsal (7:30 to 10:00 pm each Tuesday).

A dress rehearsal is held on the Friday evening preceding each Saturday concert.

Volunteerism

There are many tasks that must be done in order for the orchestra to function. These tasks include set-up and take-down of chairs and stands prior to rehearsals and concerts, set-up and clean-up of concert receptions, contribution of reception items, assistance with publicity, etc. Members are expected to volunteer (sign-up) for such volunteer opportunities as needed, such as the duty roster for the post- concert sanctuary restoration.

Many hands make light work!

Performances and Concert Dress

The Parkdale U.C. Orchestra presents three concerts during the regular September to May season (typically on a Saturday evening in the fall, winter and spring seasons), with a break of about two weeks during the December holiday.

Occasionally, an additional concert or two may be performed on special occasions (e.g., during Italian Week celebrations in the late spring). Concert repertoire is chosen by the Music Director in consultation with the Music Committee, including suggestions from members.

The Parkdale U.C. Orchestra is the oldest symphony orchestra in Ottawa, founded in 1945 by members of the Parkdale U.C. congregation. It is one of very few church-associated orchestras, although most orchestra players are not members of the congregation.

In recognition and appreciation of the valuable assistance provided by Parkdale U.C. in the form of affordable rehearsal and performance space, the orchestra typically performs at least twice a year during regular church services, providing accompaniment to the church choir during hymns and/or performing one or more short pieces from the current concert repertoire. This may involve either the full orchestra, where members are required to participate, or may involve smaller ensembles formed from orchestra member volunteers.

Concert dress, for all performances, unless otherwise indicated, constitutes appropriate black outfits for women and 'black tie' (suit or tuxedo) for gentlemen.

Orchestra Traditions and Etiquette

- The following points are typical of many orchestras, and for the Parkdale U.C. Orchestra:
- The Concertmaster will tune the orchestra at the beginning of each rehearsal, and subsequently if directed by the conductor, by requesting an 'A' from the oboe. The tuning order is brass/winds, violas/cellos/basses, then violins. Do not tune or play while other sections are tuning. Brass players and low strings (e.g., double bass) are encouraged to use tuners as a guide during rehearsals.
- Keep your eye on the Conductor as well as your music (raising your music stand slightly may help).
- Be aware of the beat the conductor is counting (e.g., in 2, 4, etc). Avoid losing your place by knowing (counting) which measure is being played at the moment.
- If your part involves long rests, count carefully and keep your eye on your section leader for cues and bowing. Try to avoid obvious foot tapping (try wiggling just your toe!).
- If your part does not contain alphabetic or numeric rehearsal cues, or bar numbers, members should add numbers at least in the first bar of each line. If a piece begins with an incomplete measure (e.g., a "pick up"), count measures beginning with the first full measure. Where there are first and second endings, our Librarian suggests we number all bars. The librarian or assistant may provide bar numbers to the orchestra in some cases in order to ensure uniformity.

- If you have a question about the music, ask your section leader first (only then, if your question was not answered, ask the conductor).
- Stop playing immediately when signaled by the conductor, and remain quiet while the conductor addresses the orchestra or individual players.
- Always have a soft pencil (e.g., 2B) and eraser on your music stand to make notes during rehearsal. Bowing indications will be provided by your section leader; mark these in before rehearsal, or during the break.
- Sharing of stands is strongly encouraged among string players (one player per stand in other sections, where parts are varied). Page turning is typically the responsibility of the ‘inside’ player. Where notes are divided (divisi), outside players play the upper note, inside players the bottom note.
- Plan to arrive 30 minutes before the start of rehearsal in order to set up, tune, warm up and be ready to play at 7:30. Help put away chairs and stands after rehearsal.
- Practice your part between rehearsals. Prior to each rehearsal, the Music Director will communicate the music selection and rehearsal order via the Personnel Manager. Remember, the rehearsal is not the time and place to learn your part ... you are there to learn everyone else’s part and play in ensemble.
- At concerts, watch the Concertmaster for cues to stand (upon entry of the conductor), sit, and for bows. Smile !! ... everyone is looking at you !
- Return all rented music to the Librarian at the end of a concert, after erasing any and all pencil markings. If parts have been distributed electronically, we are obligated to destroy both electronic and printed parts after the performance.
- Please refrain from using scented products such as perfumes, as some members are highly sensitive or allergic.
- There is nothing like making good music together! Tolerance, patience and good humor are essential ingredients. Let’s set our standards high and have fun!