

A Program Planning Recipe
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Selecting your program order is a creative process which will enhance your ensemble presentation. When the right order of compositions is presented, your performance will be most enjoyable to your audience. Creative thought concerning what the audience hears, sees, and experiences, from an emotional standpoint, will make your recipe for success a culinary delight.

Ingredients:

Well thought out program options – using your program data base with your favorite selections; you can mix and match various styles and music categories, which will enhance your total presentation.

Serves:

Will serve all audience and ensemble members with a variety of musical satisfaction and enjoyment.

From Cutting Board to Serving Dish - Repertoire to Selection

As you prepare this fine meal, programming must whet the listening appetite of the audience. A well-balanced program will enhance all emotional and creative senses in the same way that world renowned chef prepares his table with exotic delights. Create a data base with all your favorite selections. Include categories such as: *overtures, marches, suites, symphonies, show medleys, contemporary works, and encores*, -- and be sure to include time and style of each selection. You will then be able to sort and select from a variety of options by setting up your own recipe box.

From Market to Home - Rehearsal to Stage

And of course, each meal must be accompanied wines that compliment and deserts to tantalize. The total effect will be you as the connoisseur; metamorphosis of a conductor, transforms you from master chef to composer. Yes, with you as the composer of this program, you will present your ensemble as a fine menu of musical expression. The personality, heart and sole of everyone performing should speak through your musical selections. Every part of your musical event is a performance, from the first person who enters the stage to the final performers exit.

From Kitchen to Table - Performer to Audience

A program formula can have many different facets: with intermission or without, an opening welcome with narrated program notes or simply printed notes for the audience to think and reflect. Your intermission can be the division between challenging and easy listening. Your entire program can be enhanced with marches and lighter selections. The length of a program can be anywhere from 45 minutes on each side to a 50 minute first half, 35 minute second half, which works well from a listening standpoint. Your planning should also include talking and program notes relative to music performance.

Ingredients and Program Planning

First consideration - Open your performance with a selection that brings attention and is exciting and brilliant. It does not have to be loud and technical, but should show command of performance and confidence. It should also present a sense of -- ***welcome to our performance!*** Overtures, Dance movements and Marches work well as opening selections. Remember that the audience had not quite settled down to think of what is on the menu yet ... they will also be making judgments on what is being served and what may be in store for them throughout the program. Allow them to relax settle in.

Second consideration - Your most reflective work on the program can be presented at this point. Your audience can now digest and enjoy a fine soloist and thought provoking work. This will be

challenging for the performers and audience alike. Brilliant featured Soloist, Tone Poems, Folk Song Settings; Symphonic Suites are now ready for presentation.

Third and final consideration – This will be the most ambitious selection on the program. Your major Symphonic work, new commission project to be premiered or guest composer/conductor presenting their composition. Something your ensemble has dedicated their heart and soul to presenting at this performance. Then, begin the gradual relaxation from challenging to easy listening selections, which will appeal to your audience and allow them to enjoy and reflect what they have just experienced. ***Relax and prepare for dessert.*** Several selections for the audience, which will be totally for pleasure alone.

Cooking with Balance and Moderation

The repertoire chosen must be challenging and not discouraging. Include a variety of light and heavy selections, old and new, fast and slow, loud and soft, reflective and dramatic -- keep your thought process simple. Allow emotions to be part of your presentation and perform with excitement and conviction.

Your careful consideration of how tempo, key relationships, and reflective moods are presented to the audience; will enhance your overall musical presentation. Prepare your audience for an emotional and reflective response. It may be range from serious reflection to exuberant and enjoyable laughter.

Setting the Table and Communication

A less formal atmosphere can be best for many performances. The use of an announcer keeps the audience engaged and attentive. This also gives the performers a rest between selections to mentally get ready for the next piece. There is a need for time between pieces, and we tend to move on to the next selection without adequate time to prepare and reflect on the next mood or expression to be presented both from a performers and audience standpoint. If you choose not to have program notes presented by an announcer, do consider leaving the stage between compositions and allow for applause and time for the performers to prepare for the next selection.

Programming need not be difficult – if you prepare and plan, your menu will always be exciting and enjoyable. Develop a program format that works for your ensemble. Here is a sample program menu:

AN OVERTURE

An aperitif to tantalize and challenge the appetite.

A MARCH

Hors d'oeuvres to stimulate and relax the soul.

A BRILLIANT SOLOIST

A salad course with a rare tasting dressing that will enhance curiosity and taste.

A SYMPHONY, A CONTEMPORARY WORK, BALLET SUITE

A solid main course of whatever suits our creativity for the day.

Intermission

A FRESH SUGGESTION - BE DARING

A vegetable that we don't really like but know is good for us.

A LIGHT AND RELAXING WORK, EASY TO DIGEST

A fruit or cheese course to cleanse and clear the pallet.

A SELECTION WHICH BRINGS PLEASURE
A sweet and delectable dessert, or festive flambeau