



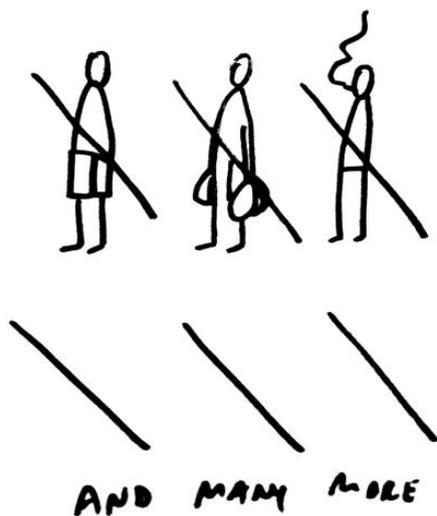
## Classical Music Concert Etiquette

Attendance at a classical concert allows us to enjoy some of the most beautiful music ever written, along with other people – artists and spectators. Therefore, it is vital to behave in a way that shows our consideration to the artists and to other audience members. Here are some guiding rules. When in doubt, put civility first.

### BEFORE ARRIVING

#### Dress

It is said that decorum at classical concerts is in transition. Of course, what isn't? What doesn't

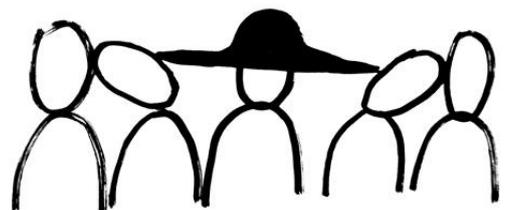


change is the thousands of hours the artist has devoted over many years in refining that which he or she would present to you. An outfit you would choose to wear to an elegant dinner, a job interview or a business meeting, or a theater performance, would be appropriate to show your consideration for his or her hard work and dedication. On certain occasions such as an opening night, semi-formal or formal attire may be requested.

#### Children

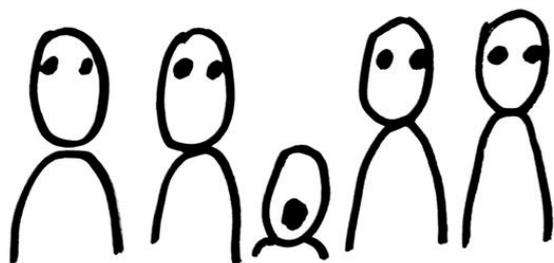
should be dressed in shirt and slacks or dresses. It would also be advisable to go very light on fragrances, as many people are allergic to perfumes and colognes. If you wear a hat, don't forget to remove it during the performance so as not to block anyone's view of the stage.

HA-HA HAT!



## Children

Some venues will not let (young) children in the door so it is best to find out ahead to time what



the policy of the house is. With the Enescu Festival, a six or seven-year-old would be welcome at the indoor concerts, especially if he or she has had been previously exposed to classical music. There is no age limit for the open-air events. Please, leave noisy toys home.

If, with the best of intentions, a youngster should lose patience, the solution is to accompany him or her out at the earliest moment with least disruption possible.

## Advance Review of the Program Selections

If you can find out in advance what the repertoire will be, it would be very advantageous to listen to the selections (perhaps you can find a CD containing them). The internet is a great help in this.

## ARRIVAL, AND AFTER

### When to Arrive

Out of respect for the performers it is important to arrive at least fifteen minutes ahead of a performance. When planning, take into consideration the traffic, or the difficulty to find a parking place around the concert hall.

Arriving early enough allows you to enjoy the atmosphere, and get ready for the experience. Leave your coats at the concert

hall wardrobe, use the washroom, find your seat and relax. If you do arrive late, you won't be allowed in until there's a pause in the music, so please expect to be seated between selections.

In some situations—especially when the music has no pauses or in the case of ballet—no one is admitted after the music starts.

Even if an usher is not present, please follow this courtesy.



## Once Seated

There are open seating or reserved seating events. Just purchasing your ticket ahead of time does not guarantee you a 'specific' seat if it is an open seating event. In this case, it is first come first served.

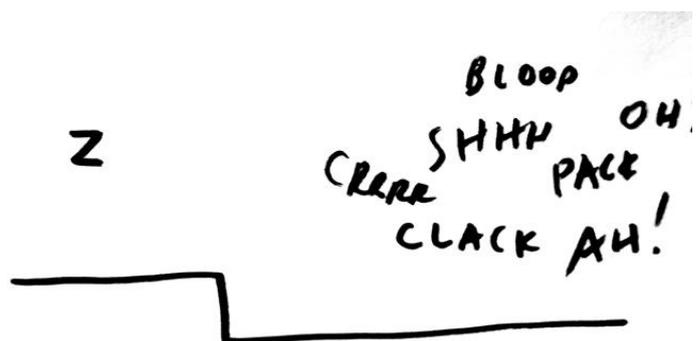


For reserved seating events, if you have booked a specific seat it will be awaiting your arrival. It is important to stay seated during the performance except in cases of dire need or emergency.

## Sounds that Get in the Way

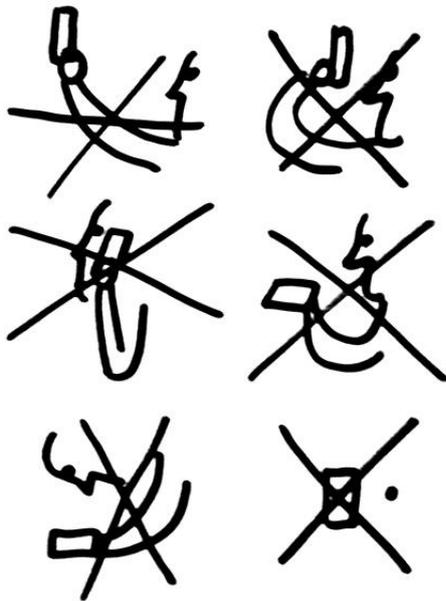
The basic idea is to help each other focus on the music and fully enjoy it. Making noise, fidgeting, or walking around can distract other listeners, and it may interfere with the musicians' concentration. Musicians can feel audience's involvement, and it inspires them to give their best.

- Cell phones, beeper watches, or any other device - Please turn them off or to silent.
- Talking - Please refrain from it.
- Whispering - It is not as silent as you think
- Unwrapping anything. Please leave snacks and juice boxes in your bag during the concert.
- Coughing - If you have a cough, then bring cough drops -and unwrap them beforehand -, or take cough medicine
- Squeaking a chair
- Kicking a chair
- Jingling coins
- Rustling the program and other paperwork
- Saying "shhh"



## Activities that Get in the Way

In classical performance, the common etiquette is “emotion without motion”. At times, things just happen and you can’t predict them. A chair collapses. The lights go off. A door slams shut. There is a technical mishap. However, there are distractions that can be easily and politely avoided:



- Texting or being on Social Media
- Photographing and Filming (see below)
- Fidgeting
- Passing notes
- Adding or taking off clothes noisily
- Opening a purse or backpack
- Eating - it is best not to try unwrapping candy and snacks. Please leave the food at home, or wait for an intermission to refresh
- Entering or leaving (unless in an emergency, of course)
- Walking around

## Photography and Filming

Please wait until after the performance to take photographs. It is so much more valuable to focus on the experience of the concert, not the preservation of it. Cameras and video recorders are often very distracting for the performers and are strictly forbidden during the Enescu Festival concerts.

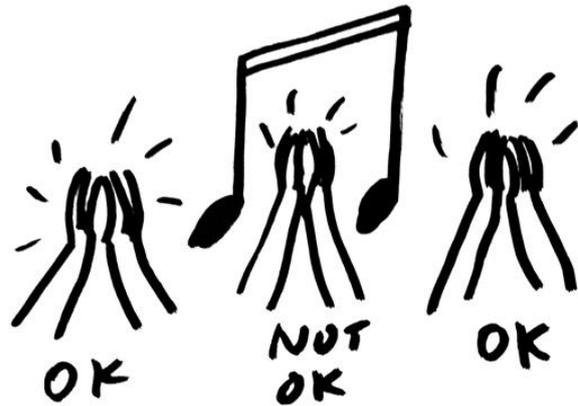
Also, remember that the professional musicians are very concerned with the integrity of their work and how they are being represented publically. Therefore, all photographs during performance ought to be taken only by the official photographers appointed by the venue.

You can use photographs published on [www.festivalenescu.ro](http://www.festivalenescu.ro) and on our Facebook page, for free.

## Applause! Applause!

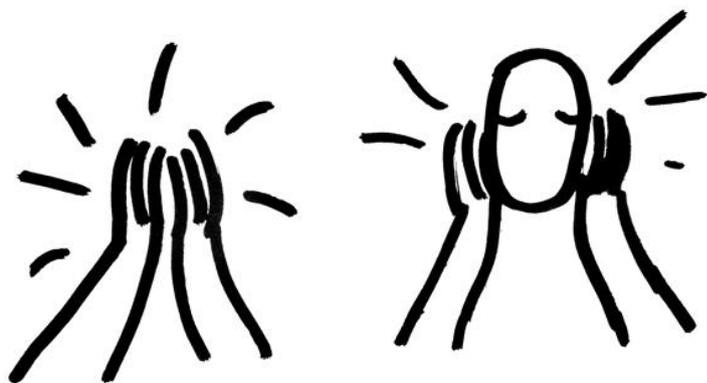
It is a sign of recognition and respect to applaud the soloist, the conductor, and the orchestra as they appear on stage. As you read your program you will note that on the more major compositions, several ‘movements’ may be listed as subcategories. It is best not to applaud between the movements of these works.

Why is it important not to clap at these break points? Holding applause between movements contributes to performers' concentration and maintains the momentum of the music they are creating. In addition, quiet endings have a lingering magic that can be too easily broken by insensitive audience members in a hurry to initiate applause.



If you want to anticipate when the composition will come to an end, you can

count the number of movements for an entire work as listed in the program booklet. You should be able to determine these by looking over the program page which generally lists individual movements of longer compositions. In addition, the program notes should help you follow the orchestra's progress through each piece. The movements are also usually easy to hear because of the different tempos or speeds and moods of the music, so keep track of the sections and applaud after the final movement.



The occasional composer can trick you, however, by not inserting a pause between movements. Beethoven, for example, doesn't have a pause between the third and fourth movements of his 5th Symphony.

Your best bet is to watch the conductor. He will let you know when a piece is over, so wait until he puts his arms down and turns to face the audience. If his hands remain in front of him, he is waiting for the orchestra to be ready to continue with the next movement of the piece. If the work is completed, the conductor will also shake the hands of the concertmaster and the soloist if there is one.

If you're still in doubt, you can always wait until the majority of the crowd begins to applaud.

One can always follow the lead of the more experienced concert goers in this matter.



### Take advantage of intermissions

Concerts usually have intermissions, a chance for performers and audience to take a break.

The musicians leave the stage; you may leave your seat. If you need to, you can go to the restroom, get a drink or a snack, or call someone on your cellphone during intermissions.

You will know that intermission is almost over when the lights dim in the lobbies, or when bells or announcements sound.

### Giving and Receiving

If all the clapping and bowing at a classical concert seems peculiar and old-fashioned, it might help to think of a concert as an energy exchange. The musicians send out musical energy, which the audience receives. At the end of a piece, it is time for the audience to give something back by applauding, and time for the musicians to receive it, by bowing.

An audience can show extra enthusiasm for the performers by standing up while they applaud. You may also shout "Bravo!" if you like. (To be politically and grammatically correct, shout "Brava!" for a female performer, and "Bravi!" for a group).

### LEAVING

#### The Dash to the Parking Lot (Concert Grand Prix)

Do the few minutes you might gain leaving early (while the artist is being applauded) really make up for the wonderful encore(s) you might miss or the people you disturb while walking over them? It is considered disrespectful to leave before the concert is over and the concert is not over until the artist has received his or her final curtain call.

## Meeting the performers

After concerts many performers make themselves available to meet the audience, sign autographs, and chat. Some members of orchestras and chamber groups really like to hear from listeners. Even some of the most famous conductors, singers, and instrumentalists may take time to meet listeners.

Of course not every musician is willing to meet the public, and sometimes another engagement prevents a performer from staying around after the concert. Whether or not the musicians are famous, this might be your chance to tell a performer or composer how the music affected you.



Some musicians sign autographs or recordings in the lobby at intermission or after the concert; some can be found backstage. Ask an usher where to meet the musicians, or look for the stage door or artists' entrance. You may have to wait for a while, but the fun of meeting the performers can be worth it.

However, if you are told that meeting the musician is not an option, please respect this.

An evening at the concert hall offers concertgoers an opportunity to experience the power and passion of live classical music. This is an enriching occasion that everyone should enjoy at least once in a while. Prepare your heart and mind for a great adventure and enjoy the time spent taking pleasure in the sound of great music!

Cartoons by Dan Perjovschi.