



*Department of Music
College of Visual and Performing Arts*

What to Expect at a Classical Concert

Welcome! If you're new to classical music performances, we're glad you're here. Here are a few tips to help you understand the traditions of classical concerts. Enjoy the show and thanks for joining us!

Elisa Koehler, Music Department Chair

Wait to clap

Unlike pop concerts where we clap after every song, some classical pieces (concertos, sonatas, suites, symphonies, etc.) have multiple sections (movements) that are like chapters in a book or scenes in a play. It's customary to wait until the end of the last section to clap. If you're not sure what to do, just wait until everyone else claps.

Silence is our canvas

In our media saturated culture, we're used to controlling our environment when we listen to recorded music. Live classical performances are different. Musicians need silence in order to concentrate on their craft and paint their musical pictures.

Escape the digital domain

The light from a phone in the darkened hall can distract everyone around you, not just the performers. Please be considerate of others.

Comings and goings

If you're late, it's customary to wait to take a seat until after the first piece (or section of a piece) ends. Similarly, if you need to leave early, do it between pieces or sections.