



Recital Planning: Room Layout and Seating

By Joan Cupp and Wesley Schaum

Careful room layout will help make your recital more effective. Obviously, the keyboard should be the center of attention in the room and should be in “concert position” so that the performer looks at the audience over his/her right shoulder. Be sure to eliminate any distracting backdrops, posters, pictures, etc. around the keyboard.

The chairs for the audience should be positioned so they face away from the entrance to the room. Otherwise, the program may be disrupted by the arrival of latecomers.

Many teachers like to have their students sit together at the front of the room, near the keyboard. If they are seated in the order of performance this will eliminate commotion as one student finishes and the next begins. The object is to keep things moving with as little delay as possible between each performer. Signs or colored ribbons may be placed at the ends of each row, reserving the necessary seats for students only.

If you are renting a room for the first time, be sure that chairs are included. Unless you are in a theater or auditorium with fixed seating, you will have to tell the manager or custodian how many chairs you will need and how they should be arranged. A good rule of thumb is to have four seats for every student in the program. This allows one seat for the pupil and three others for the family. It’s a good idea to have a couple of dozen extra folding chairs nearby so they can be set up quickly if needed. If there is adequate room, leave at least six inches of space between each seat and allow ample leg room between each row of seats.

Be sure to allow ample aisle space. Ideally, the aisle should get wider toward the back of the room. Two aisles are usually



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Planning Printed Recital Programs

Printed programs are advantageous in several ways:

1. To organize and add prestige to the recital.
2. As a source of pride for both parent and child, who enjoy seeing their name in print.
3. As a memento or souvenir.
4. As advertising for you, the teacher!

Encourage families to take extra copies to send to relatives and show to neighbors.

Plan that there be enough copies printed so that each performer will have his/her own copy, plus at least one copy per family in the audience. At the Schaum Music School we like to have four copies of the program for each student.

If your home computer has drawing/illustration software, you could design your own cover for the program. This is most effective if you have a color printer. Otherwise, you can use word processing software to prepare and print the student names, music titles, composers, etc.

Add a Professional Touch to Your Programs

Use one of the Schaum Recital Program Blanks for printing your program. There are many attractive and colorful cover designs. The blanks are 8½ by 11 inches, intended to be folded in half to 8½ by 5½ inches. After folding, the

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Room Layout (continued)

better than one, if there is enough room. Make sure that the recital room has a safe and fast exit in case of emergency. Do not place chairs where they would block an aisle or exit door. Keep exit doors clear and be sure they can be opened easily from the inside. This is particularly important when you are likely to have a large crowd. If you have rented a room or hall and find an exit blocked, insist that it be cleared and unlocked before your program begins.

In case of emergency, you should be prepared to act quickly and appropriately. Know the location of the nearest telephone in the building. This is the best place to make a 911 call because the building location is automatically conveyed to the emergency call center. Be aware that if a 911 call is dialed from a cell phone, the caller must be prepared to give the dispatcher a specific address or location. This may be difficult in an emergency situation, particularly if someone in the audience makes the call.

Keeping the keyboard close to the audience is an advantage. It creates a more informal, intimate atmosphere and makes performing less intimidating to the students. Encourage the audience to sit near the front of the room. When possible, avoid putting the pupils on a stage or high platform unless the expected audience is quite large (75 or more).



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Printed Recitals (continued)

illustration becomes the front cover. The remainder of the sheet is blank for printing your own student names, titles, etc.

The Schaum Recital Program Blanks are available in packages of 25 sheets and 50 sheets. For small recitals, one package of 25 blanks may be sufficient. If more than 50 blanks are needed, you may combine one package of 50 and one pack of 25, etc. These blanks may be printed on your home computer or on a photocopy machine, as found at most quick print shops. See our web store for all of the designs available: www.schaumpiano.net.

Homemade program designs are also effective. If you are not artistically inclined, perhaps a friend or student with artistic talent could create musical or seasonal decorations for the program. Programs can be printed on different colors of paper. If you have time, or have students or parents who are willing to help, the programs could be planned so that after printing they could be cut into a special shape, such as heart-shape for Valentine's Day. Fancy programs can be made by pasting the cutout printed program onto another larger sheet of a different color. Again, a friend or student artist might create a design.

Be sure to enlist someone as a volunteer to help pass out programs as the audience enters the room.

Refreshments

Simple refreshments such as cookies or cake and punch add a little glamour at the end of a program and also serve as a tangible reward especially for the younger children. Often, several mothers may be willing to help furnish the baked goods. Inexpensive punch could either be poured out of a can over ice or made with a recipe. Be sure to furnish small plates and napkins.



Schaum Recital Program Blanks

See all designs at www.schaumpiano.net



#46



#53



#55



#48