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Writing a Music Review

“A review should educate as well as evaluate.” –Isaac Stern

The live concert review should be:

- (1) one page in length
- (2) single spaced (if you have a lot to say)
- (3) 12-14 pt. type using a Times font

Optional:

You can use a column format (i.e. newspaper layout) if you wish. You may also use clip art and text wrap. If you decide to use clip art, limit yourself to one piece and it should not be very large. Use text wrap so that you don't waste space where you could write.

Paragraphs:

A three paragraph format works well for a review, but you are not limited to this format. Your first paragraph should present the details of who, what, where, when, etc. The second paragraph should be your main focus on what you intend to say about the performance. The third paragraph should make any summations or conclusions.

Choosing a topic:

Make a list of possible topics. Underneath each topic, make a list of things you'd like to say about that topic. Choose the one of which you have the most to say. You might choose to focus on a single musical composition from the concert or you might focus on the performing ensemble or soloist. It may be something different altogether.

Things to Do:

- (1) Try to incorporate some history or information about the musical composition, composer, or performing ensemble in addition to your observation regarding the actual performance. Use your program, the internet, or Grove's Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians as sources for this information.
- (2) Try to incorporate some of the musical terms from our terms sheet.
- (3) re: Proof reading your work....Read your paper as if you were speaking to a class. If it sounds wrong, change those sections that don't read well.
- (4) Use the spell check and grammar check built into your word processing software before printing a hard copy to turn in.

Things NOT to Do:

- (1) Try to avoid sentences beginning with "I."
- (2) Don't apologize for your lack of musical knowledge or being outside your comfort zone.
- (3) Once you have used a musical term, don't proceed to define it.
- (4) Avoid being redundant. And did I say to avoid being redundant?
- (5) If you decide to say whether a performance was good or bad, include your reason as to why it was good or why it was bad.



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