
Tafelmusik Volunteers

General Rules and Guidelines

Please be on time for the mandatory pre-concert volunteer information meeting - 6:00 pm on Wednesday, 7:00 pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and 2:30 pm on Sunday.

Please dress appropriately in office-type attire (dress pants for men, etc.). Please be neat. Jeans and sweatshirts are not acceptable.

We will provide usher nametags so that patrons will know whom to approach when in need of assistance. Please ensure you are wearing one.

We would like to stress the need for you to be aware of the rather awkward pew seating of Trinity-St. Paul's United Church, and to familiarize yourself with the map. It is important for the ushers to be attentive to latecomers and to seat them as quickly as possible, as well as to anticipate and solve seating problems in a diplomatic but authoritative manner. In order to succeed in this duty, we cannot stress enough the need to know your seating plan. Example: If there are eight people sitting in a seven-seat pew, there is something wrong which needs to be remedied. Know what to do.

You are expected to participate with various other duties, as individually directed by the Volunteer Coordinator. These duties might include intermission sales of coffee and treats, general clean-up of the gym after intermission and general clean-up of the church following the concert.

Most importantly, you are an ambassador for Tafelmusik. Always remember that you are representing our wonderful orchestra and choir!

Specific Volunteer Duties

Seating of late patrons at the appropriate late entrance time, as directed by the House Manager or Volunteer Coordinator.

The answering of requests for information including the location of washrooms, location of telephone, location of Tafelmusik Box Office, location of handicap washroom facilities; when and where refreshments and merchandise are sold.

The difference between balcony and orchestra seating, on which side of the church the odd-numbered seats are and which side of the church the even-numbered seats are, etc.

If you can answer questions such as "Why can't I sit in this seat, since it is empty?" and can provide correct information regarding the above, you are on your way to becoming an informed Tafelmusik usher. If you do not know the answer to questions such as these, please do not hesitate to ask the Volunteer Coordinator or her assistant, or Tafelmusik staff.

For those of you who experience seating problems prior to or during a concert, back-up will be provided by Carol Campbell, the Volunteer Coordinator, on the main floor, and by the Volunteer Assistant in the balcony. If a situation remains unresolved, or if a patron is unsatisfied, please take the patron's name and note the pew number, and bring the problem to the attention of either Carol or the Box Office at the appropriate time.

Other Volunteer Positions

Ticket Ripping Assistant(s)

Ensure that the ticket is an authentic Tafelmusik ticket and that it is for that specific date and time. Do not rip the ticket in half, instead nick it in the centre. Please inform the patron whether they are in orchestra or balcony, and if they are in balcony, please inform them as to whether they should use the odd or even balcony stairs.

Pre-Paid Ticket Assistant

Assist Box Office staff in dispensing the pre-paid tickets (tickets which have been ordered and paid for in advance by telephone). Pre-paid tickets are in envelopes which are arranged alphabetically. No money exchanges hands.

Refreshment Assistant(s)

This is a shared position with the kitchen staff, and ushers are asked to take money and be of assistance when necessary.

As soon as intermission begins, go quickly to the gym where refreshments will already have been set up. There are 2 positions: 1) money collectors, 2) serving assistants. All are rotating positions. The cost of a coffee and a treat is \$3 even.

Merchandise Assistant(s)

During intermission, a volunteer is required at the merchandise table to assist the Tafelmusik Merchandise Sales Co-coordinator. An annotated discography will be available to list prices and to assist the volunteers with giving knowledgeable sales advice. Volunteers are not required to handle cash; cash is handled solely by the Merchandise Sales Coordinator. Some training is required so if you are interested in this position please tell Carol and she will see you get the required information

Clean-Up Crew

Following intermission, a three-minute clean-up occurs. Coffee urns, extra cups, leftover cookies, etc., are brought into the kitchen. Tables are quickly wiped down and returned to the storage room beside the kitchen.

Following the concert, all loose programmes and other articles are picked up. Those that can be recycled are either returned to the Box Office or placed in the recycling containers by the Centre Office. Lost articles are handed in to the Box Office. Sometimes the programmes will have to be re-stuffed with inserts if we are running a little short. It should be noted here that if the programmes have arrived late, and the inserts have not been inserted, the Box Office gratefully accepts any assistance that you can give them with programme stuffing, prior to the concert. Following Saturday night and Sunday afternoon performances, the clean-up is a light pick-up. Usher chairs, music stands and musicians' chairs must be removed and put into storage. For those of you who can assist with these last two duties, it is gratefully appreciated.

Tickets

There are two type of tickets issued for Tafelmusik concerts - subscription and single tickets.

Everyone entering the concert must have a valid ticket. Please carefully check the date and seat location (particularly orchestra or balcony, odd or even numbers) on the ticket before allowing patrons to enter the concert. You must be familiar with the seating map in order to show them to their seats. If someone does not have their tickets, they should be directed to the Box Office where a duplicate ticket voucher will be issued. Alert Carol to any seating problems and if necessary, they will come to the Box Office for further assistance.

Typical seating problems include:

- sitting in the orchestra instead of the balcony, or vice-versa
- sitting in the wrong pew number, or the wrong half of the pew
- ticket holders for the upper balcony sitting in the regular seating
- tickets for a different night

If it looks like there are too many people in a pew check all the tickets and you will most likely find someone is in the wrong pew. Every year we receive comments from patrons that their pew was too full, but no one asked for usher assistance. There are limited seats sold in each pew, so there should never be an over-crowded pew.

You should also be aware of the conditions of sale, which are listed on the back of tickets. In particular, you should know that tickets cannot be refunded and that only subscribers may exchange tickets for another performance with minimum 24 hours notice.

Safety Manual

One of my main concerns as Front of House Manager is the safety of our patrons in case of a medical or building crisis. I have set in place, as best I can, some procedures so that if an unfortunate event were to take place, we would be prepared.

In case of a fire or a building black out, we have set procedures for evacuation of the building.

Black Outs

CM will make announcement asking all patrons to leave through the nearest exit: “Ladies and Gentlemen, as a precaution it is necessary to evacuate the building until the present situation is assessed. Please leave by the nearest exit.” FH, FHA and USHERS will assist the audience in exiting – flashlights pointed down, moving slowly and carefully on stairs, assisting patrons on stairs. Church staff, CM, and SM will try to locate any obvious reason for blackout. Church staff calls (416) 599-0400 to find out information regarding when power might be restored.

Depending on hydro information, we will assess whether to cancel or continue. USHERS, FH and FHA meet on corner of Robert St. and Bloor for information relay. Second choice is to meet at Shoppers Drug Mart across the street from the church.

If power comes back on within a reasonable period of time, the audience will be allowed to return and the show will begin again at an appropriate place:

CM “Ladies and Gentleman, power to the building has been restored. Please return to your seats and the performance will resume as soon as possible.”

Please Note: The last three people to leave the building will be the Consort Manager, the Front of House Manager and the Church overseer.

Fire Drill Procedure

Your position during an emergency is the same as your starting position as an USHER. Please return to that position as soon as you hear the alarm. Be calm and visible. You will have a flashlight if it is an evening performance. Point it downward to indicate the pathway, rather than up into the patron's faces.

The CM will take the stage. They will assess the situation and calm the patrons. If there is an evacuation, it will start first with the wheelchair patrons. CM will indicate the various exits from the building.

Ushers, your job is to:

- direct the patrons from your ushering section to the appropriate exit door.
- keep the patrons calm and encourage them to assist the elderly and physically challenged people around them.
- When your section is clear, close all doors and exit the building.
- Meet the FH on the corner of Robert and Bloor for further information.

Ticket Taker, your job is to:

- return to your door and make sure it is open and clear for exit. When everyone is out, close the door and report to the FH at Robert and Bloor.

If there is another kind of emergency, such as heart attack or fainting, inform the staff person in the lobby who will be in radio contact with the church phone. They will make the 911 emergency call. This is so that only one call goes out. Trained St. John's Ambulance volunteers are usually stationed in the usher's meeting room (the CE room). Staff will ask them to assist in an emergency situation. While the situation is being assessed, please take your ushering position and wait for further instructions. Be calm and remain visible.

Remember: In case of a building crisis, we should be supported by competent city staff (i.e. fire fighters and hydro people) immediately after the crisis is discovered. Our major concern is evacuation of the building. The best way to address this concern is a prepared staff.

General

In case of medical emergency, we have tried to back ourselves up with St. John's Ambulance volunteers, and will continue to do so. The procedure in these cases, with the aid of St. John's is relatively straightforward. If the occurrence is before, after or during intermission, and takes place outside the Sanctuary, the FH is contacted and immediately proceeds to the crisis with St. John's ambulance attendants. The CM is informed as well, and temporarily turns the concert over to his/her assistant (SM). The church overseer is placed on standby. The FH duties are given over to the FHA. The SM checks in with the FH at the crisis area and then most likely goes back to his/her concert duties and the concert activities continue as scheduled. The concert will only be put on hold if the crisis is in the Sanctuary, and then only until after St. John's volunteers assess the situation. Those actions taken, the concert would then continue. The FHA will act as the FH and will inform the staff member of the crisis. He/she could join the FH as a consultant or an assistant, depending on the severity of the crisis or the need (e.g. extra crowd control). FHA will field all questions from volunteers or information that needs to be shared with the volunteers. Volunteers will continue USHERING duties unless asked to help in assisting FH.

The FH does not leave the scene of a crisis until the patron is escorted out of the building or back to his/her seat. The FH must get the name, phone number and address of the patron and records the details of the incident in the nightly report. A follow-up the next day or as soon as possible by Administrative Staff would bring closure to the incident.

Concert Interruptions

If the crisis interrupts the concert, the CM will take centre stage and quiet the house. A request for doctor's assistance will be made. Meanwhile FH will notify St. John's ambulance attendants or retrieve the first aid kit. The church overseer will be on standby. The patron will be assessed and removed from the Sanctuary, if possible. CM will be given permission to restart the concert.

If the patron is unable to be removed from the Sanctuary and is in need of an ambulance, one would be called by the church overseer and directed to the Northeast door of the Narthex. If the incident takes place in the Gym, the ambulance will be directed to the Centre west door, off Bloor. Otherwise, the Northeast door is always the designated ambulance route. The Administrative Staff member will be delegated to go outside to the street and wave the ambulance in. The FHA will be placed in the Narthex to keep the route clear of patrons wanting to move away from the scene. CM could suggest patrons move to the Gym or out of the building through the appropriate exits, depending on the location of the incident. USHERS will standup and take their places at their position at the head of the aisles and doors. USHERS will be alert and ready to help if asked. The concert will only resume after appropriate care has been given and the patron is safely removed from the building. The name, address and telephone number of the patron and which hospital that they have been taken to must be recorded and a follow-up will occur as soon as possible.

Some Quick Notes

Bleeding

To control bleeding, even from a cut artery, apply direct pressure on the wound using a clean pad or your hand. Raise the limb or head above the heart and watch for symptoms of shock.

Fractures/Falls

All fractures must receive medical attention. All fractures, dislocations and sprains should be immobilized before casualty is moved, unless the casualty is in immediate danger. Use R.I.C.E. (rest, ice, compression, elevation).

Choking – Conscious Victim

If the victim can speak, cough or breathe, do not interfere. If the victim cannot speak, cough or breathe, call for help. Perform abdominal thrusts until successful or the victim becomes unconscious.

Choking – Unconscious Victim

Call for help. Open the airway using head-tilt/chin lift maneuver. Try to ventilate. If unsuccessful, straddle victim and perform 6 to 10 abdominal thrusts. Do finger sweep, try to ventilate. Continue sequence as necessary.

Burns – Heat

Immerse the burned part in cool water until pain is relieved. Remove jewelry and loosen tight clothing before swelling occurs. If immersing the burned part is not possible, gently pour cool water over the burned area or apply a clean cloth soaked in cool water. When the pain has lessened, cover the burned area loosely with a clean, preferably sterile, material and obtain medical help.

Suspected Heart Attack

Signs: shortness of breath, paleness, sweating, and other signs of shock, vomiting, unconsciousness, or complaining of crushing chest pain, which may or may not be severe, pain spreading to neck, jaw, shoulders and/or arms, feeling of fear, feeling of doom, feeling of indigestion, nausea.

Actions: Get medical help. Place the person at rest in position of most comfort, usually semi-sitting, to ease the work of the heart and breathing. Loosen tight clothing at the neck, chest and waist. Reassure the victim. Assist the victim to take prescribed medication, if requested. Assess breathing, and if breathing fails begin AR immediately. Assess the pulse, if the pulse stops begin CPR immediately.

Fainting – Conscious

Lay the person down with legs raised about 12 inches (shock position). Ensure a supply of fresh air. Loosen tight clothing around the neck, chest and waist. If you cannot lay the person down, have the person sit with their head and shoulders lowered.

Fainting – Unconscious

Send for medical help. Look, listen, and feel to determine if the victim is breathing. Loosen any restrictive clothes. Place the victim into the recovery position.

Shock

Signs: restlessness, decreased consciousness, pale skin, bluish/purple colour to lips, tongue, earlobes and fingernails, cold clammy skin, profuse sweating, vomiting, shallow irregular breathing, could be rapid and gasping for air, a weak rapid pulse (in later stages the radial pulse may be absent), feelings of anxiety and doom, confusion, dizziness, extreme thirst, nausea, faintness, pain.

Action: Give prompt and effective first aid for any injury or illness. Reassure the victim often. Loosen tight clothing around the neck, chest and waist. Place the victim into the best position for the condition. Cover the victim to preserve body heat. Ensure that movement does not aggravate injuries. Do not give anything by mouth. Moisten lips only if the victim complains of thirst. Monitor the victim's condition (ABC's) and note any changes. Continue ongoing victim care until medical help arrives.