



LAKE ONTARIO REGION 16

JUNE 2016 QUARTET WORKSHOP

CLASS TITLE: *Stellar Performances – Kick it up a Notch!*
DATE: Saturday, June 4th, 2016
DESCRIPTION: “Be more entertaining, make a lasting impression on your audience, improve your stage savvy, get ideas for better packaging of your repertoire, *and more!*”
FACILITATORS: Pam Calveric & Sue Melvin

AGREE ON THESE GENERAL QUARTET THINGS FIRST

1. *Goals:* What are your quartet goals and do they match? For example:
 - Is competing your main focus?
 - Just for fun?
 - Community service?
 - Comedy? (Be aware that comedy is tougher than we think.)
 - Other?
2. *Get Comfortable with Each Other* – Talk about:
 - Can you live with the fact ‘Sally’ is never on time?
 - Are you flexible with Susie missing rehearsal occasionally due to work schedule?
 - Are you all OK with the distance you need to travel to rehearse?
 - How many choruses are involved and will you have to audition for all of them?
 - Are you going to have a set rehearsal day, or move it around?
 - Other
3. *The End:* Believe it or not, before jumping in to performing, talk about the quartet ending. While this may sound odd, if you discuss it ahead of time, you’ll already have a plan when the time comes. Lives can change, circumstances change, etc. and this can help avoid any possible hard feelings.
4. *Image:* What is your quartet image? Classy? Sweet? Fun? Deciding this may help with music selection, clothing choices, etc.
5. *Roles:* Who does what?
 - Who takes care of the money?
 - Who does the rehearsal agenda – or do you rotate that responsibility?
 - Who is the contact person?
 - Who does the shopping?

HOMEWORK BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE SPACE

- *Directions* – Know where you are going to avoid lateness and confusion
- *Warm-Up Room* – Where, when, size, directions, etc. (Don’t risk taking ‘pot luck’ on-site.)
- *Performance Room Size* – Scout it out in advance to determine the best place for the quartet to stand (make sure you’re against a wall for better sound), what the room acoustics are, whether a microphone needs to be requested, where the room is located, etc.
- *Get it in writing!* – Avoid communication problems and misunderstandings.
 - *External* – Get all the details confirmed via email with the hiring contact, and then also re-confirm with the customer 2 weeks before the gig.
 - *Internal* – Make sure all quartet members have the most current details well in advance of the gig. Use a performance sheet template so you don’t miss any information. Sample here: http://www.saregion16.com/db_uploads/Performance_Information_Sheet_Sample_-_Quartet.doc



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HOMEWORK BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE (cont.)

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- *Size* – Impacts whether you need a microphone, whether you need a raised surface to stand on so they can see you, etc.
- *Age group* – This can impact the song choices, sing-alongs & emcee material. (E.g: You wouldn't do a "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" sing-along at a school/for kids!)
- *Audience Background* - Be aware and use common sense/good taste. For example:
 - *Seniors* – Be careful with ballads about loss...Many of them are widows or widowers.
 - *Religious Issues* – If/when you are singing for a religious group
 - *About the Organization* - Ask the hiring contact questions in advance and look up the group online so you are savvy about them.
- *Occasion/type of event* – This helps with personalizing the emcee material.
- *Never Promise More Than You Can Deliver* – Accept only those jobs you can handle.

HOW YOU LOOK

- *Costume appropriateness*
 - Tasteful / take the high ground
 - Suitable to audience & event/occasion – For example, if it's a dressy evening affair, do not wear a casual outfit!
 - FIT – This is huge! Make sure your quartet clothing is roomy and wear your foundation undergarments and/or padded bra if needed. We want the audience to get a great first impression and focus on our music vs. anything else.
- *Make-Up* – Yes, always!
- *Posture/Body language*

PREPARING YOUR SET

- *Set duration* – Know the approximate length of your songs so you can properly fill the allotted time. We don't want to cheat the customer on the contracted sing time, yet not go over our time either. Figuring an average of 3 minutes per song (including any emceeing) is a guideline.
- *Variety*
 - Recognizable songs work best, but miracles can be accomplished with a great verbal introduction
 - Mixture of types of songs; e.g. up-tunes, swing/change-of-pace, minimize use of 'sad' ballads.See sample set list at bottom of this performance sheet:
http://www.saregion16.com/db_uploads/Performance_Information_Sheet_Sample_-_Quartet.doc
- *Pitch Pipe Technique*
 - Avoid white spots – Practice tuning up while the emcee is speaking so you are ready to start the song when she's done.
 - Have a back-up Pitch Blower to blow the pipe if the Primary Pitcher is emceeing.
 - Write the song order with pitches on your pipe.
- *Audience participation* – Make it relatively easy
 - Rounds – For example, *Three Blind Mice & Frere Jacques (Are You Sleeping)*
 - Partner songs (2 songs that fit together) –
<http://musicresources.weebly.com/35-partner-songs--rounds.html>
 - Quodlibets (multiple songs that fit together) – Example:
http://www.saregion16.com/db_uploads/Quodlibet_Partner_Song_-_Blue_Moon_etc..doc
 - Physical participation – For example, hands up/hands down on key words.
- *Emceeing* – Who, where, how long, what to say, what not to say, etc. See Dos & Don'ts here:
http://www.saregion16.com/db_uploads/BARBERSHOP_EMCEE_DOs_&_DON_Ts.doc



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HOMEWORK BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE (cont.)

REHEARSE!

- Rehearse the *whole set!* This is the only way to find out any potential issues.
- Record the rehearsal set so you know what to practice.
- Get someone to listen to/watch your practice performance for feedback.

DURING THE PERFORMANCE

- Our performance begins off stage
- Don't allow things that happen prior to the performance shake you (e.g. traffic, family issue, etc.)
- Believe / feel capable / be confident
- Smile / Posture
- Leave 'rehearsal thinking' behind and be present in-the-moment
- Be yourself; be natural & real
- Errors – Don't let them shake you...Make a joke of it and move on quickly so both you and the audience are not uncomfortable.
- Sing the same way that you always do – Regardless of the room acoustics.
- Be supportive if a member is not feeling well or having vocal issues. (For example, a light touch on her back, or having the foursome sing a little easier so she doesn't feel she has to push it.)
- Sell the story
- If you're having fun, so will the audience

CLASS RECORDING

Click this link to listen to, or download, an audio file of this class:

<https://app.box.com/s/9o0djnk7hgrpij9xzfiqqqwa5a24f9w>

Thanks for attending....

HAPPY PERFORMING!