

ADVICE TO SOLOISTS SEEKING AN ACCOMPANIST

Here are five simple, common sense rules to find and retain an accompanist.

1. **SCHEDULE EARLY** -Line up your pianist **AT LEAST** one month ahead - and give her the score promptly. Pianists have to practice too and learning a part that is a reduction of a full orchestra score may take many hours. When there is a Music Festival or a Concerto Competition, a pianist may be working with several soloists and may not be able to take on another piece at the last minute.

2. **CONSIDER IT A COLLABORATION** - Ask the accompanist to check out the music early to allow time to find another pianist if the part is too demanding. Be specific about the tempi and provide your expected metronome settings. Don't pressure the pianist if she decides not to do it for either technical or artistic reasons.

3. **BE PREPARED** - Be prepared for at least 3 rehearsals prior to performance. Be flexible to the accompanist's schedule. Arrive and leave on time, bring music, music stand and a pencil. Know your part - remember, the accompanist is **NOT** your teacher.

4. **DON'T ASSUME THERE IS NO FEE** - Most accompanists are very generous to spend hours of their time helping young musicians, but don't abuse the privilege and don't expect them to work without compensation. Ask them what their fee is. Some accompanists charge by the rehearsal and others with a flat fee. If they **DO** offer to do it without payment, a nice card or flowers should be given after the performance as a gesture of personal thanks.

5. **SHOW RESPECT** - At performances, acknowledge your accompanist and invite him to join you in taking a bow. An accompanist is often under tremendous pressure to help you play at your best and public acknowledgment of their work and contribution to the musical process is simply good manners.