

Pennsylvania DeMolay



Music Maestro!

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Music Maestro!

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Music, when properly used, can greatly enhance the impact and class of DeMolay ceremonies. Since the Installation of Officers is an important opportunity to make a positive impression on families, Masonic sponsors, and the general public, music is especially appropriate on this occasion.

It is important, however, that appropriate music is chosen, and used well, to make the proper impression. Here are some suggestions for you as you guide your members on using music:



Remember - anything can be overdone. Use specific music to enhance your programs!

1. Music can be used to **set a mood**, **reinforce a point**, or **create transitions** between elements of the ceremonies. It also helps the event to flow, and prevents "dead times" of silence during the ceremony.

2. Music should **accompany** the ceremonies, **not overpower** them. Well-chosen and well used music will not draw too much attention to itself.

3. **Live music** is not necessarily better than **recorded music**. If you intend to use live musicians, ALWAYS "audition" them first. Using a musician you are unfamiliar with is a bad gamble.

4. If you will use recorded music, be sure to **test all equipment** first, and check volume levels and room acoustics beforehand. Remember that sound will be somewhat different in a full room than an empty one.

5. Try to put the audio equipment and person playing the music more or less **out of sight**... they're not the show.

6. Be sure that recorded music is **organized** in such a way that it can be accessed quickly and controlled properly. The ceremonies should never be held up waiting for music to start or stop. It is wise to create a "mix" tape or CD with all the music for the event on it, in the order it will be used.

When choosing appropriate music, keep these things in mind:

1. **Familiar music** comes with associations. You can't play the "Superman" sound track and expect people not to think of Superman. Be aware of the images your music conjures. Sometimes, it is better to use music that is unfamiliar.

2. **Instrumentals** are often safer than music with lyrics. If there are lyrics, people tend to try to listen to them, which may distract from your program. If you use music with lyrics, it should not be used at a time when it will be "competing" with any part of the ceremony.

3. A **variety** of types of music may be appropriate. Classical music, of various types, is a good bet for bringing class to the event. Music appropriate to a holiday season, patriotic music, or other theme, may also be appropriate for your occasion.

4. Remember that you have guests of **various ages and interests**. Be careful of choosing contemporary music that may be unpleasant or even offensive to guests. This doesn't mean that contemporary and popular music CAN'T be used, only that it must be chosen carefully. Obviously, any music that is lyrically questionable must never be used.

5. **Light and fast moving** music should predominate, since it helps to keep up the pace and mood of the ceremonies. This is particularly true of music played for movement on the floor. If the music is very slow, people will tend to move slower and slow down the ceremonies.

6. **Somber music** can be used very effectively to change the mood of the ceremonies at serious times, but should be used very sparingly.

7. Using music which will create a **"humorous"** reaction is okay on occasion, but should not be overdone. If guests begin to wonder "Gee, what funny song will they play next?" then the music has detracted from the ceremony instead of adding to it. Musical "jokes," if used, are best left for the end of the ceremonies, or for a single event during the ceremony.

8. **Music playing behind a speaker** can be a blessing or a curse. It can lend drama to a speech like the Flower Talk or the Ceremony of Light, or it can distract both the speaker and the listener. Choose very carefully whether to use such music, and which music is used. Never play lyrics behind a speaking part. Always make sure the speaker is aware that music will be playing while he speaks, and that he is comfortable with this.

Suggested types of music:

1. **Soft background music** playing as guests arrive sets a nice atmosphere for the ceremony. Similar music can also be played as guests dismiss.

2. **Processional music** can be used for the entrance of the Chapter Officers, and any dignitaries being formally received into the room. It is also fitting for times when the Marshal is moving to present guests, or to cover other times of movement.

3. **Reverent, prayerful music** is fitting when the Chaplain is traveling to and from the altar for prayer, when the Bible is being opened, while the altar is attended to, or during ceremonies like memorial services.

4. **Patriotic music** can be used for processions, and is especially appropriate for use when the flag is being presented. The **National Anthem** must not be used as "traveling music." If the anthem is to be used, the flag must be stationary at the altar or

travelling music. If the anthem is to be used, the flag must be stationary at the altar, or in its standard, and the room raised to attention and salute. Use of the anthem during the flag ceremony is encouraged. It should follow the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. **Special music** by a soloist or other musician(s) may be inserted at appropriate points in the ceremony, if desired, but Chapters must keep schedule in mind and not over-extend the program with added music and ceremonies.

6. **Somber music**, as mentioned above, should be used sparingly. Portions of our ceremonies, like the Orator's speeches, a Flower Talk or Ceremony of Light, or a Memorial Service may call for more serious music, but do not overuse it.

7. **Fanfares** have limited usefulness. They may be used for reception of a high dignitary, or during ceremonies to confer honors (there is a designation in the Legion of Honor Conferral for a fanfare). Overusing fanfares (like overusing the calling up of the Chapter or the "standing ovation") destroys their significance.

If you'd like some specific suggestions or samples of appropriate music, contact the PA DeMolay office for help.

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