



going to see a...

Richmond Symphony Orchestra Concert

RICHMOND SYMPHONY
SENSORY FRIENDLY PERFORMANCE PRE-VISIT STORIES





Carpenter Theatre

I am going to a performance at the Carpenter Theatre. The Carpenter Theatre is the main building where the Richmond Symphony Orchestra performs concerts.



parking

Before I go to the symphony, I will park near the building. Sometimes, we might have to park further away and I will have to walk to get there. I will stay with my group and walk to the symphony building. There are many doors, but we will find the one under the big sign where the ticket office is.



will call

Next, we may go to a window outside the building called “Will Call” or one inside the door called the “Box Office.” These are places where you can pick up or buy tickets. We will talk to the cashier to get our tickets. There is a glass window between us so we have to use a microphone to talk to each other. It may sound weird or funny.



usher/tickets

After we get our tickets, we may have to wait in a line. The line is for the people who are going to the concert. The theatre usher is a friendly helper. When it is my turn, we will give our tickets to the usher. The usher will scan our tickets with a scanning machine that may make a beeping sound and then give them back to us to keep. An usher or another person working at the symphony may give us a program with information about the performance.



lobby

When we get inside the building, there will be many things to see and look at. A concession stand selling snacks and drinks may be open. There may be people standing behind carts selling snacks, too. There may also be music to listen to or things to touch and make before the concert starts. I can check with the adult I am with before touching.



waiting

When I go to the symphony, I may have to wait in a line to go inside the Carpenter Theatre. I may have to wait in a line to go to my seat. I may have to wait in a line in the bathroom. I may have to wait in a line to do the activities or meet a musician.



bathroom

If I have to go to the bathroom, I will tell my adult. I can go to the bathroom anytime I need to. The bathrooms are past the double doors at the end of the lobby. If my adult needs to help me in the bathroom, we may go to the family bathrooms in the donor lounge. The sound of the flushing toilet can be loud, but it will only be for a short time.



finding my seat

Before the concert starts, we will walk to our seats. We may choose to sit upstairs in the balcony or downstairs in the orchestra. If we sit in the balcony, we can walk up the stairs in the middle of the lobby, or we can take the elevator near the bathroom through the double doors.



Symphony Hall

When I find my seat with my group, I may have to wait for the concert to start. There are many things to look at inside the symphony hall. I may see birds, paintings, and statues. Some of the statues are naked. Sometimes artists make naked statues to show how the body looks. It is OK to look at these statues. I may see clouds hanging from the ceiling. These are special clouds that help make the music sound good. I can look at all these things while I am waiting for the concert to start.



balcony

If I decide to sit high up in the balcony, I may need to walk up some stairs. They might be hard to see so I should hold on to the handrail. The balcony can be steep, so I should walk carefully and stay close to my group. The balcony is a great place to see and hear the concert because it is up high. The people in the balcony can see all the musicians on the stage. There is a place in the back of the balcony where people can stand to watch the concert.



musicians

An orchestra is a group of musicians playing different instruments. Sometimes, I will see musicians playing at the same time. At other times, I will see the musicians playing at different times.



conductor

When the orchestra is on stage, I will see a person standing in front of the orchestra. This person is called the conductor. The conductor leads the orchestra. I may see the conductor use a stick called a baton to lead the orchestra. I will see the conductor move the baton or hand in the air to let the musicians know how to play the music.



the concert begins

When the musicians are ready to start the concert, I will hear a voice that says welcome to the symphony and tells people the rules of the concert. First, the concert master will come out. Then, the conductor will come out and stand at the front and start the concert.



concert

A concert is a musical performance. The music will get louder and softer at different times during the concert. The music will get faster and slower at different times during the concert. I might feel excited when the music gets faster or louder. I might feel calmer when the music gets slower or softer. If I don't know what is happening I can whisper questions to my adult. If the music is too loud, I can cover my ears.



clapping

Sometimes, people clap when they like what they are seeing or hearing. In a concert, people usually clap after the music stops. People clap for a short time and then the clapping stops. Sometimes, people clap during the music. The conductor may ask the people in the audience to clap with the music. If the clapping is too loud for me, I can cover my ears until it is over.



leaving the theater

When the concert is over, I will leave my seat and walk down the aisle to leave the theatre. All the people will leave the theatre at the same time. The aisles and lobby will be crowded. I will wait for the person to my left and right to take a step before I take a step so that everyone can get out. I will walk slowly while we leave the theatre.

Authors:

Joshua Taylor

Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence

Christina Smith, MOT, OTR/L

Graphic Designer

Funding provided by

Julia and Tunncliff Fox Charitable Trust, Bank of America, N.A., Co-Trustee

Jay Paul

Photographer