

PERFORMING TOOLS

70. Work to develop the visual aspect of your playing.

While we tend to think of music as an aural art, it is impossible for the audience to separate your stage presence and appearance from the music in a live performance. How you present yourself can either contribute to or detract from your music, so make sure you take the time to evaluate this aspect of performing as critically as you would evaluate your musicianship. Great musicians are also great performers—the way they look complements the music.

Projects:

Record your performances, practice sessions and ensemble rehearsals to evaluate your overall appearance. Notice how you enter the stage, bow and move. After viewing the recording with sound, turn off the sound and describe the sound you SHOULD BE hearing. Music should look as it sounds.

When you attend a live performance, observe the attire and stage presence of the performer(s). Take special notice of anything that makes a strongly positive or a negative impression on you. Be aware of subtleties such as clothing and body motion when music is not being played.

When reviewing ensemble rehearsals, focus on how your ensemble members interact with each other, especially in regard to musicianship, body language etc. Ask the following questions: Are you easy to work with and do you convey the musical thoughts you desire? How well