

ARTIST ETIQUETTE FOR OPERA AND MUSICAL THEATRE

Brian DeMaris | www.briandemaris.com

Read Emily Post, as you will be interacting with donors and producers who are keen on the many social rules of good etiquette. Guys: know your Black Tie etiquette (see www.blacktieguide.com).

Always dress nicely for the first rehearsal and the Sitzprobe. Never wear open-toed shoes to rehearsals.

Turn your contracts in on time with all the requested materials in the requested format.

Be open, present and smart when given a note by music or directing staff. Saying “thank you” is a better default response than “sorry.”

Don’t give notes to your fellow cast members. Speak to the director, conductor, or artistic staff.

Don’t walk in front of the director during rehearsal or bother a stage manager when calling a show or running rehearsal.

Thank the stage manager or pianist after rehearsals.

Check in with the conductor and director frequently (but not too frequently) to see if they have any notes of suggestions.

Write thank you notes to everyone you interact with during your engagement.

Be nice to the interns and administrators who handle the details.

Be nice to audition monitors and audition accompanists.

Arrive on time, which for rehearsals and performance calls means to arrive early. Even for professional parties, there is no such thing as “fashionably late!”

Give your dressers a gift – or tip them.

Be careful how you represent yourself on-line. Everyone is watching.

Know the company’s resources. Don’t fuss about things that they can’t do anything about.

Don’t drink the night before a performance. Be careful drinking during the rehearsal week too.

Know your place.

Know everyone else’s place.

Know your part.

Know everyone else’s part.

Know yourself.

Get to know everyone else as much as you can. In every production you do, your fellow cast members become part of your network, part of your team, and part of your life as an artist. For everyone there, you may have worked with some of them before or even attended school with them. For some it could be the first and/or last time you work with them, or for others it could be the first of many more chances to work together. Every relationship is equally valuable. Spend time with people. Look them in the eye. Get to know them. Take an interest in them, and value them.

Don't gossip. Don't whine. And don't ever forget how lucky you are to be doing what you love.