



**Job Title:** Usher / Front of House for Concerts

**Position Classification:** Project Worker

**Job Description:**

**POSITION SUMMARY:**

As a first point of contact for many members of the public attending UBC School of Music, members of the concert production crew are ambassadors for the School. The School of Music is dedicated to providing instruction, concerts, and performance opportunities at the highest level, in order to contribute to the arts and culture of UBC and Vancouver. Workers will contribute to the School of Music's aim to produce concerts of exceptional quality. Over the concert season, thousands of people will attend the Wednesday Noon Hour series, Music on the Point concert series and various special events.

The UBC School of Music, in its various academic programs, trains its students to prepare them for various careers in the Arts and Culture sector. UBC Music students have had careers as: performers, composers, conductors, artistic directors, academics, researchers, arts administrators, performing arts facilities workers, recording engineers & producers, concert presenters, music programmers, broadcasters, and more. With a Work Learn job, students receive training and hands-on experience, which is ideal preparation for careers in the arts field. Students learn by observing, the many elements of concert production at a performing arts facility and become actively involved in presenting live music concerts. This Work Learn position provides skills and experience, which enhance and support students' course work and helps students to secure jobs upon graduation.

The main job responsibilities for this position are:

- Work as an usher or front of house worker for two professional concert series and other events presented by the UBC School of Music: the Wednesday Noon Hour concert series (18 – 20 concerts), the Music on the Point series (4 – 5 concerts), the Dal Grauer Memorial Lecturer in Music (piano recital) concert, as well as various other concerts and special events (5 – 10) presented by the UBC School of Music in the Roy Barnett Recital Hall (a 255 seat theatre). Work time will be a minimum of 2 hours per week of work when the Wednesday Noon Hour concerts are running. More hours of work are assigned according to other scheduled concerts and events.
  - To prepare the concert hall in advance of patrons arriving and set up the front of house and ticketing area.
  - To provide a welcoming, polite and professional presence to all patrons and performing artists.
  - Front of House Box Office: Selling event tickets at the entrance, preparing the ticket sales reconciliation, being the first point of contact for answering questions and directing patrons as required by the situation. Acts as primary communicator from the Front of House with the Stage Manager backstage leading up to the event (using a walkie-talkie).
- Or.
- Usher: Greeting patrons, distributing house programs and guiding patrons to the seating area of the theatre, as well as assisting special needs patrons and their care givers to their seats. Assist groups that have reservations to preassigned seating.
  - Provide assistance to all patrons and guest artists with guidance and direction from the Concert Manager or senior student worker, as appropriate.
  - Coordinate with the Stage Manager to initiate protocols to begin the event.
  - During events, oversee the audience to enforce regulations (e.g. no unauthorized photography or recording is being done by audience members).
  - During events oversee the audience and be prepared to provide assistance as required.
  - Assist with end of event protocols including opening the theatre doors and making sure passage ways are clear for patrons as they leave, answer questions from patrons, clear the front of house area (tables and chairs etc.) and do a theatre check after the event.



- At events with a reception afterwards: assist with reception area setup, be welcoming and helpful to guests during the reception, and clean up afterwards.
- Problem-solve as unique issues arise. Refer to Concert Manager or senior student worker as appropriate.
- Work attire: Concert production crew are expected to wear the crew shirt (provided) with black trousers or skirt and dress shoes.
- Opportunity to cross train and provide back-up as a stage manager.

### Qualifications:

Required and preferred skills are:

- Undergraduate or graduate music student with a curiosity to know the behind-the-scenes workings of concert production and a passion for helping to create an excellent, high quality, authentic live music experience for the public.
- Eligible for UBC's Work Learn Program.
- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills.
- Knowledge of music and basic concert etiquette
- Enthusiastic, responsible, team player
- Basic math skills for working with money
- Must be available on Wednesdays from 11:00 am - 1:15 pm for Wednesday Noon Hour concerts. Other concerts are scheduled at various dates and times.
- Must arrive on time, prepared and in appropriate attire (crew shirt which is provided with black trousers or skirt and black dress shoes)
- Will need to be able to assist special needs patrons to their seats as well as have confidence to advise patrons when needed that cameras, telephones and computers are not allowed to be used in the theatre.
- Experience in concert production or related live production (e.g. theatre) an asset.
- First Aid training an asset.
- Preference given to UBC School of Music students.

### Student Learning Components:

#### TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

All members of the production crew will receive the following training:

- Students receive orientation and training in advance of the first event from the Concerts and Communications Manager (a staff member of the UBC School of Music).
- Ongoing training and supervision is provided by the Concerts and Communications Manager as well as senior students who have previously been members of the crew.

#### NETWORKING AND MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Networking opportunities include:

- Experience interacting with concert artists and developing connections with them (faculty members, local and visiting guest artists, artists with international reputations)
- Working alongside peers as a team on the production crew
- Working with School of Music staff.
- Interacting with the general public. Developing a connection with the audience, and understanding their needs from the perspective of the presenting organization in order to create an environment conducive to the enjoyment and comfort of patrons attending live music events.

Mentorship opportunities include:

- Working under the supervision of the Concerts and Communications Manager, who will demonstrate and explain many aspects of concert and event production, scheduling and logistical matters.



- General career mentorship from the Communications Manager and Assistant, such as: professionalism, interacting successfully with staff and faculty, conflict management, and advice about future job applications.
- Learning about how to resolve administrative issues by observing and working alongside School of Music staff and faculty members.

#### SUPPORT AND EVALUATION

- At the end of each concert, the Concerts Manager will debrief the production crew informally.
- Lines of communication with the Concerts Manager and Assistant are always open; questions and reflection are encouraged.
- Opportunities each week to meet briefly one on one with supervisor.
- At the end of the concert season the production crew meets with the Concert Manager for a season review, discussion, suggestions for improvements to protocols, a general debrief and acknowledgement of successes.

#### WORKPLACE SKILLS AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

As part of the Work Learn training, students are continually learning broader aspects of concert production and the value of these production jobs within the Arts and Culture industry.

For students of music, learning the processes and elements of producing a concert is invaluable. This work provides hands-on experience enhancing the learning experiences of music students in the various programs at the School. As well, these jobs relate directly to real world jobs in the music industry that students will encounter outside of UBC. These production jobs provide a practical foundation for careers in concert production and other areas of the music industry.

By the end of the work term, ushers and front of house workers will have gained:

- Hands-on concert production experience and behind-the-scenes insights from the Concert Manager into several aspects of concert production by the Concert Manager.
- Event planning experience
- Deeper understanding of arts management elements, including the interaction between concert producers and performing artists. Students will learn how to respect and work more efficiently with production staff when students are performing themselves.
- The ability to connect with and understand audiences who are the consumers of live music (the product that the students are learning to create in their UBC Music studies)
- Enhanced communication skills. By being a member of a team, workers will enhance their listening skills and ability to communicate ideas clearly.
- Problem-solving skills. Workers will acquire the ability to be proactive by foreseeing and avoiding potential issues. Analytical/creative thinking skills in order to solve problems quickly (thinking on your feet) in the event that a problem does arise.
- Increased confidence in leadership skills by providing direction to peers and concert patrons.
- Effective time management skills by managing deadlines (the various time signposts of concerts: opening the hall, opening the ticket desk, the concert start time etc.) and learning how to prioritize urgent items.
- The ability to apply the skills acquired in course work (music theory knowledge, music history, performance) to a role in concert production (e.g. answering patrons' questions about concert repertoire; explaining why performers may have to cancel a performance.)
- Students will be able to apply acquired skills to their coursework by being able to manage and produce their own required student recitals effectively, manage their time more efficiently (e.g. think sequentially and focus on urgent items), communicate more effectively within groups, and problem-solve proactively with the completion of their assignments.