

Volunteer Guide

Thank you for offering your time to assist Gotham Early Music Scene. Your volunteer efforts on behalf of early music are greatly appreciated! We offer these guidelines to make your work easier and more effective, and to help raise the quality of the concert experience for the many patrons we serve.

GEMS Contacts:

Elizabeth Bell, Director of Concert Services (773-458-8540) - your primary coordinator!

John Thiessen, Director of Concert Production (917-575-5825)

Our main objective: Despite all the details below, what we do as volunteers all boils down to friendly and competent service that makes our audience feel welcome and glad to be at our event. Our aim is to lower the stress of patrons getting into the hall and finding their seats and making them feel that they would rather be no place else other than at this particular GEMS event.

Don't get lost in the details: You are not expected to memorize what follows. Before each event, the volunteer coordinator in charge will send you an email with the logistics of that particular concert. Plus, you'll get an orientation at the site before the concert begins. So read on, but don't be daunted.

Confirming the obvious: It may seem obvious, but be sure you're certain of the date of the concert, the arrival time for the volunteers' orientation, and the address of the hall and which door to enter to meet the volunteer coordinator. Double check your calendar!

What to wear: You will be the first contact many people will have with Gotham Early Music Scene, and we want to create the impression of a professional, well-run front-of-house operation for the groups we serve. Thus, dress should be ***GEMS Concert Attire***, which is black or navy dress pants or skirt, paired with a solid, neutral blouse or dress shirt. Think of it as business-appropriate clothing and you'll be good to go!

When to arrive for orientation: The default arrival time for any GEMS event is **1 hour and 15 minutes before the time of the performance**, which gives us time for orientation and any questions volunteers may have before the hall opens. We appreciate your being prompt and respecting the timeline. If you are running late, please notify the volunteer coordinator by phone as early as possible.

Note: You may be asked to come earlier for a given event.

When you arrive: Check in with the onsite manager (likely Libet), who can supply a 'Reserved for Staff' sign to be placed on your seat at the rear of the hall. Please ask them for a Volunteer name tag for you to wear during the event. Determine where the restrooms are and freshen up as needed; then gather for orientation.

Help stuff or collate programs if needed, and help put up signage and put out literature as directed. Then take your posts no later than 5 minutes before the doors open to the public.

If you're selling CDs, arrange them nicely and conveniently for sale, make an accurate inventory of the stock, and make sure it's recorded on a Consignment form (THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT).

If you're a ticket taker and there are people trying to get into the hall early, please help out by politely explaining to them when the hall opens and could they kindly wait.

When to leave: Please plan on staying till the end of the concert to help do a “sweep” through the hall, picking up extra programs, taking down signage, locating lost-and-found items, and so on. If you need to leave before these tasks are done, please discuss your situation with the volunteer coordinator in advance.

Getting a replacement: If for some reason you are unable to be at the event you volunteered for, please find a person willing to take your place. Since it is our mission to introduce people to early music, the person replacing you does not have to know anything about early music; they will have an opportunity to be introduced to the music for free. Please e-mail the name and contact information of the new person to Libet Bell (ebell@gemsny.org) as soon as you possibly can.

If you cannot find a replacement yourself, or if at the last minute you discover you cannot attend and cannot find a replacement, please call the volunteer coordinator.

Typical assignments, distributed by coordinator the day of the event:

Ticket Taker | Will Call | Ticket Sales | Merchandise Sales | Usher

**Please note that all of these assignments include being on your feet for approximately 45 minutes at a time. Sales also involves the use of a tablet (you'll be instructed in their functions.) If you have any limitations in these regards, please let the volunteer coordinator know *when you volunteer for the event* and not the evening of.

Bring your cell phones with you. We want you to be able to communicate with us, (and we with you) in advance and also during the event if needed (so that you don't have to abandon your post!)

Once again, thank you very much for your interest in helping the artists who perform for us through your volunteer efforts with GEMS. We genuinely appreciate your contributions!

The GEMS team