### Assessing Your Performance Skills

by Gerald Klickstein  
*If any statement isn’t true for you, see Part II of *The Musician’s Way* for guidelines to build up your performance skills.*

1. I understand how performance stress affects me before, during, and after a concert.  
2. I don’t feel threatened by performance stress.  
3. I’m aware of the personal, task-related, and situational causes of performance anxiety in general and with me in particular.  
4. When I have trouble on stage, I always know how to practice to bring about improvements in my next performance.  
5. Of the five facets of performance preparation (artistic, technical, physical, mental/emotional, organizational), I know the areas in which I’m capable and any in which I need to make progress.  
6. In the areas of preparation in which I’m weakest, I have plans for how to advance.  
7. On the day of a concert, I know how to prepare myself and my things to minimize stress.  
8. Upon arrival at a venue, I’m capable of managing the backstage environment, supervising stage setup, and working with any staff.  
9. When I’m restless backstage, I use specific techniques to ease my discomfort and awaken my creativity.  
10. I feel secure walking on stage, bowing, and carrying out all of the other aspects of stage deportment.  
11. I can project a stage presence that contributes to an audience’s enjoyment of my performance.  
12. I’m able to start and end pieces with consistent control.  
13. During a performance, I know how to employ tactics - such as deep breathing, mental focus, and positive self-talk - that lessen the unwanted effects of arousal.  
14. Even if I’m nervous, when performing easy music, I can still be sufficiently accurate and expressive.  
15. Performing often stimulates me in constructive ways and helps me be creative.  
16. When performing, I’m committed to giving my listeners the best possible experience; I don’t give in to self-conscious worries.  
17. I can speak to an audience in a personable way.  
18. I can handle on-stage errors to curtail their musical impacts.  
19. While performing, I let errors go and seldom become distressed.  
20. After a concert, I’m able to accept my performance and not berate myself for slip-ups.  
21. Following a performance, I’m supportive of my colleagues and courteous to my listeners.  
22. I deliberately evaluate my performances.  
23. I regularly practice performance skills by doing private run-throughs and by performing for peers.  
24. I know where to find expert help for any performance problems that I can’t solve on my own.  
25. I’m confident that my performance skills either suffice or are improving.