

chicago manual of style quoting performances

Understanding Chicago Manual of Style Quoting Performances

chicago manual of style quoting performances often presents unique challenges for writers, demanding precision and clarity when documenting theatrical works, musical compositions, and other forms of staged or interpreted art. This comprehensive guide delves into the intricacies of citing these dynamic and often ephemeral events within the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), ensuring academic rigor and reader comprehension. We will explore the fundamental principles of quoting from performances, the specific challenges posed by their non-textual nature, and detailed methods for citing various performance types, from live theater to digital recordings. Understanding these guidelines is crucial for anyone undertaking scholarly work that engages with the performative arts, providing a robust framework for accurate representation and attribution.

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Key Principles for Citing Performances

When approaching the **chicago manual of style quoting performances**, writers must grapple with the inherent differences between quoting from a static text and documenting a transient event. The primary principle is to provide enough information for the reader to locate or understand the performance being referenced. This often involves detailing the work itself, the specific performance, and the individuals or groups involved. Unlike a printed book where a page number suffices, a performance citation requires a broader context. Accuracy is paramount, and capturing the nuances of a specific rendition is key to scholarly integrity.

Quoting from Live Theatrical Performances

Documenting live theater presents a particular challenge because the performance is ephemeral and subject to interpretation by actors and directors. When quoting from a live theatrical performance, the goal is to represent what was seen and heard in that specific instance, rather than quoting from the published script, unless that is explicitly your intention. This distinction is vital for accurate scholarship.

Citing Dialogue and Stage Directions

When quoting dialogue from a live performance, it is best to treat it as a personal communication if you attended the performance yourself and there is no readily available published script of that specific production. If you are quoting from a published script of the play, then you cite it as a literary work. For live performances, the citation should focus on identifying the play, the specific production (including the theater and dates), and the actor who delivered the line, if relevant to your argument. Stage directions observed during the performance can also be described, attributing them to your observation of that particular staging.

Attributing Specific Interpretations

A crucial aspect of quoting performances is acknowledging the interpretive layer. A director's vision and an actor's delivery can significantly alter the impact of a line or scene. When your analysis hinges on a specific interpretation of a character's emotion or a subtle nuance in dialogue delivery, you must clearly attribute this to the performer or the directorial choices. This might involve phrases like "as delivered by [actor's name] in the role of [character]" or "directed by [director's name], the scene conveyed a sense of..."

When Direct Quotation is Not Possible

Often, for live performances, direct quotation in the verbatim sense of a printed text is impossible. Instead, you will need to paraphrase or describe actions and vocal inflections. In such cases, your citation in the footnote or endnote should indicate that you are referencing your own observation of the performance, specifying the production details. For example, a note might read: "Observation of the performance of Hamlet at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, London, October 15, 2023, directed by [Director's Name]."

Citing Musical Performances

Citing musical performances requires attention to both the sonic and lyrical elements, as well as the context of the specific rendition. The distinction between the musical composition and its performance is often central to the analysis.

Quoting Lyrics

When quoting lyrics from a song performed live or on a recording, treat them much like dialogue in a play. If you are citing lyrics from a published collection of songs or a libretto, cite that source. If you are quoting lyrics as heard in a specific performance, and there isn't a readily available published source of that performance's lyrics, you may treat it as a personal observation or reference the specific recording. Footnotes should identify the song title, the performing artist, and the album or concert details.

Referencing Musical Elements

Beyond lyrics, musical performances involve a complex interplay of melody, harmony, rhythm, and instrumentation. When analyzing these elements from a specific performance, you are not quoting a text but describing an aural experience. Use descriptive language and refer to the specific recording or live event. A footnote might note, "The extended instrumental improvisation in the second movement, as performed by the [Orchestra Name] under [Conductor's Name], featured a prominent [instrument] solo."

Performance vs. Composition

It is critical to distinguish between citing the original musical composition and citing a particular performance of that composition. If you are discussing Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, you might cite the published score. However, if you are analyzing how a specific conductor or orchestra interprets Beethoven's Fifth, your citation must point to that particular recording or live event.

Citing Other Performance Types

The principles of **chicago manual of style quoting performances** extend to various other forms of staged or executed art, each with its own nuances.

Dance Performances

When discussing dance, you are often describing movement, gesture, and spatial relationships rather than spoken words. Cite the choreographer, the dance company, the specific work, and the venue and date of the performance you viewed. Descriptions of movement should be detailed and analytical, often using specialized terminology if appropriate for the field.

Film and Video Performances

Quoting from film and video performances typically involves citing the film title, director, studio, and release year. Specific scenes or dialogue can be quoted directly, referencing the medium. If you are analyzing a particular performance by an actor, you would mention the actor's name and the character they portrayed.

Digital and Online Performances

The rise of digital and online performances, including streamed plays, virtual concerts, and online video content, requires careful citation. Reference the platform, the URL, and the date of access. For live-streamed events, the date and time of the broadcast are important. If the performance is archived, provide

information on how it can be accessed.

Footnotes and Endnotes for Performance Citations

Footnotes and endnotes are the primary means of providing detailed citation information for performances. For live events, they should include the title of the work, the name of the playwright or composer, the director, the performing company or ensemble, the venue, and the date of the performance. For recorded performances, include the performer(s), recording artist(s), album title, label, and year of release, or the platform and URL for digital content.

Bibliography Entries for Performances

The bibliography provides a consolidated list of all sources. For performance citations, entries should be formatted clearly, distinguishing between live events and recorded media. For live theater, a typical entry might include: Playwright. Title of Play. Directed by [Director]. Performed by [Company Name]. [Venue], [City]. [Date]. For musical performances, cite the recording artist, album title, label, and year. For online performances, include the title, platform, and URL.

Conclusion: Ensuring Accurate Representation

Mastering **chicago manual of style quoting performances** is an essential skill for scholars engaging with the arts. By adhering to the principles of clear identification, contextualization, and attribution, writers can accurately represent the dynamic nature of performances in their scholarly work. The careful documentation of dialogue, musical elements, choreography, and visual staging ensures that readers can understand the specific performance being analyzed, preserving the integrity of the research and honoring the work of the artists involved.

FAQ

Q: How do I cite a play I saw performed live if I'm quoting dialogue?

A: If you are quoting dialogue from a live performance that is not yet published as a script for that specific production, you may treat it as a personal communication. Your footnote or endnote should detail the play title, playwright, director, performing company, venue, and date. You would then follow the general guidelines for personal communications within CMOS, potentially noting the actor who delivered the line

if it's relevant to your analysis.

Q: What if I'm quoting a specific interpretation of a song from a live concert?

A: When quoting a specific interpretation of a song from a live concert, your citation should focus on the performance itself. Include the song title, the performing artist, the name of the concert or tour, the venue, and the date. If the interpretation involves changes to lyrics or a unique instrumental arrangement, describe these details and attribute them to the performer.

Q: How do I differentiate between quoting a published script and a live performance of a play in Chicago style?

A: This is a crucial distinction. If you are quoting from a published script, you cite it as a literary work, using page numbers for your citations. If you are referencing the performance you saw live, your citation in the footnote or endnote must clearly indicate it's your observation of that specific production, providing details like the director, actors, venue, and date.

Q: Can I use direct quotes from a dance performance?

A: You cannot "quote" a dance performance in the same way you quote spoken dialogue. Instead, you would describe the choreography, movement, and spatial relationships using detailed prose. Your citation would point to the specific choreographic work, the choreographer, the dance company, and the performance details (venue, date).

Q: What if I'm citing a performance that was streamed online?

A: For online streamed performances, cite the title of the work, the performer(s) or company, the platform it was streamed on, the URL, and the date you accessed it. If it was a live stream, also include the date and time of the broadcast.

Q: How do I cite a musical performance that features improvisation?

A: When analyzing improvisation in a musical performance, describe the improvisational passage as accurately as possible. Your citation should include the work title, the performing artist(s) or ensemble, the album or concert details, and the specific track or section where the improvisation occurs. You are essentially describing an aural event.

Q: Is it necessary to cite the director of a play when quoting dialogue?

A: It is not always mandatory to cite the director when quoting dialogue, especially if you are citing from a published script. However, if your analysis specifically engages with the directorial choices that influenced the performance or interpretation of the dialogue, then including the director's name in your citation or explanatory text is highly recommended for clarity and completeness.

Q: What is the difference between citing a composer and a performer in music citations?

A: Citing a composer typically refers to the original musical work, and you would cite a published score or a scholarly edition. Citing a performer refers to a specific rendition or interpretation of that work, and your citation would point to the recording or live performance, including the artist's name and the performance context.

Q: If I only watched a clip of a performance online, how should I cite it?

A: If you are referencing a clip of a performance viewed online, treat it as a specific instance of media. Cite the source of the clip (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo), the title of the video, the uploader or creator of the clip, the URL, and the date of access. If the clip is from a larger work (like a film), also provide details of that original work if relevant.

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