

Symphonic Tricks & Treats



2024.25
Concerts
for
Schools

MSO MILWAUKEE
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

KEN-DAVID MASUR / MUSIC DIRECTOR



Welcome!

On behalf of the musicians and staff of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, we are so excited to welcome you and your students to Allen-Bradley Hall at the Bradley Symphony Center for *Symphonic Tricks and Treats*. We can't wait to have you here for a fun, educational, and engaging musical experience.

To help prepare your students to get the most out of this concert, this guide contains key background information and activities for all of the featured musical selections and their composers. It is our hope that you will find this resource to be a valuable tool in preparing your students to enjoy *Symphonic Tricks and Treats*. We will be using the National Association for Music Education lesson plan format as well as listing the corresponding national standards for both music and core subject areas as applicable. We invite you to review these materials and provide feedback – we want to know what you think! This season, we've included a new worksheet to use as an assessment of student knowledge before or after the concert!

You can also preview the concert repertoire by accessing the Spotify links embedded in this guide. More information about how to access the playlist is found below.

Special thanks to our MSO volunteers for their support of MSO Education initiatives. We thank the docents and ushers who generously give their time and talents every season.

Thanks to the following people for their contributions to these concert preparation materials:

Nathan Hickox-Young, MSO Concerts for Schools & Education Manager, content author
Courtney Buvid, MSO ACE & Education Manager, curriculum contributor
Laura Huebner, Dotted Design, graphic design

Again, we are so excited to welcome you and your students to the Bradley Symphony Center for this concert!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Whitney

Director of Education, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Audio Guide

The MSO uses Spotify as the Audio Guide to accompany this Teacher Resource Guide. A playlist for this concert has been created for your ease of use for listening to repertoire. There are also clickable Spotify icons next to the pieces in the guide that will take you directly to the musical piece.

To access the Spotify Playlist for this concert, please follow these instructions:

Click **Symphonic Tricks and Treats***

-OR-

Visit the MSO's Concerts for Schools webpage [here](#) and start listening!

If you have any issues using Spotify, please contact the MSO Education Department at edu@mso.org.

**You will need to create an account with Spotify to access this free, ad-supported service. There are no entry fees to sign-up.*

Get to Know Us!



About the Milwaukee Symphony

➤ *Learn more about the MSO's mission and history!*

MSO Education Department

➤ *Learn more about our wide variety of programs and initiatives!*



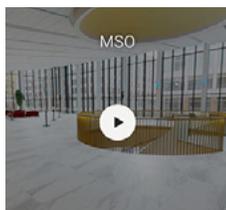
About Ryan Tani

➤ *Learn more about our conductor for this concert!*



About the Orchestra

➤ *Learn more about all of our musicians in the orchestra!*



Bradley Symphony Center

➤ *Discover the home of the MSO by taking a virtual tour!*

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Concert Preparation

We can't wait to welcome your class to the Bradley Symphony Center to hear the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra! Whether it's your first symphony concert or you're a seasoned audience member, here are some suggestions on ways to get the most out of the performance. There is always something new to learn and experience!

Before You Go

Listen to the pieces

- ◇ Have you heard any of these pieces before?
- ◇ Do you have a favorite?
- ◇ Is there a piece you are excited to hear live?
- ◇ Make thoughtful observations as you listen to the pieces. What instrument families do you hear? Changes in dynamics? Tempos?

Go deeper

- ◇ Read the biographies and program notes.
- ◇ Were there any composers you had never heard of before?
- ◇ Did you learn anything new or interesting that you didn't know before?
- ◇ Have fun in the [MSO's Bitmoji Classroom!](#) Full of interactive elements including a virtual tour of the Bradley Symphony Center, rooms focused on the four families of the orchestra, and more!

On Stage

Look around

- ◇ Have you been to the Bradley Symphony Center before?
- ◇ Are there any instruments you haven't seen before?

- ◇ What observations do you make about the orchestra and the conductor?
- ◇ Watch the conductor. Can you figure out which instruments will play by where they are pointing or looking?

Listen closely

- ◇ Can you name which instruments are playing based on how they sound?
- ◇ How do the different pieces make you feel?
- ◇ What instruments are used to create different sound effects?
- ◇ Listen for the melodies and try to remember one you'll be able to hum later.

Homeward Bound

Reflect

- ◇ Was there anything that surprised you during the concert?
- ◇ Did you have a favorite moment you'd like to tell your family about later?
- ◇ Was your experience different from your classmates?
- ◇ Do you have questions for the musicians? Or want to say "Thank You"? Send us a letter!

Mail: Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Attn. Education Department, 212 W Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, WI, 53203

Email: edu@mso.org

Rules and Reminders

- ◇ No outside food or drink (except water) allowed in Allen-Bradley Hall.
- ◇ No flash photography or recordings.
- ◇ Visit the bathroom before the concert so you don't miss a moment of the action!
- ◇ Show your appreciation by clapping! When the conductor lowers their hands or baton, the piece is over. The orchestra appreciates your energy and support.
- ◇ If you get separated from your group, ask an usher for help.

Accessibility Resources

Social Narratives: Visit our KultureCity Venue page [here](#) to access the Bradley Symphony Center social story. A *Symphonic Tricks and Treats*-specific social narrative will be available on our website prior to the concert.

- ◇ **Sensory Bags, Weighted Lap Pads, & Noise Canceling Headphones:** Sensory bags containing special KultureCity VIP badges, fidget tools, noise canceling headphones and other resources are available for checkout, at no cost, on concert days. Noise canceling headphones and weighted lap pads can also be checked out individually. Find an usher or staff member on the concert day or make a request ahead of time by emailing Nathan Hickox-Young at hickoxn@mso.org. A photo ID will be requested as security.

- ◇ **Quiet Areas:** The Bradley Symphony Center has a Quiet Room located in the pre-theater lobby on the first floor. The Quiet Room, equipped with a sink, comfortable seating, and warm lighting is available for anyone who needs a private space to escape for a few minutes. Additional Quiet Areas are located in the Historic Exhibit on the lower level and in the Phone Booth Area on the second level. These spaces can be an escape for those feeling overwhelmed for as little or as long as they need. If you need assistance finding any of these Quiet Areas, please find an usher or Front of House staff member.
- ◇ **Hearing Loop & Infrared Listening System:** Allen-Bradley Hall is equipped with a tele-coil or T-coil Loop system. No additional assistive listening devices are required for patrons with compatible hearing aids or cochlear implants. Allen-Bradley Hall is also equipped with an infrared listening system. Assistive listening devices are offered free of charge and can be requested from an usher or staff member on the concert day or by making a request ahead of time with Nathan Hickox-Young at hickoxn@mso.org. A photo ID will be requested as security.

Teachers - We value your feedback! Be sure to review these materials and let us know how your concert experience was following the performance. We want to know what you think! Preview the concert survey [here](#).



The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra has partnered with KultureCity to make the Bradley Symphony Center and all of the programs and events that the venue hosts to be sensory inclusive.



Symphonic Tricks and Treats

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra | Ryan Tani, *conductor*

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF/arr. Henry J. Wood
Prelude in C-Sharp minor, Opus 3, No. 2

EDVARD GRIEG
"In the Hall of the Mountain King" from *Peer Gynt*, Suite No. 1, Opus 46

CLARICE ASSAD
Nhanderú

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS
Danse macabre, Opus 40

MODEST MUSSORGSKY/orch. Rimsky-Korsakov
Night on Bald Mountain

JOHN WILLIAMS
"Hedwig's Theme" from *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Suite for Orchestra



The MSO thanks the following funders for their generous annual support that makes Concerts for Schools programming possible: United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF), Herzfeld Foundation, Hearst Foundations, Westbury Bank, Townsend Foundation, Educators Credit Union, and the Eleanor N. Wilson and Irene Edelstein Memorial Funds as administered by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation.

Concerts for Schools is supported in part by grants from the Milwaukee Arts Board and the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin. Additional support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and Milwaukee County Arts Fund (CAMPAC).

PROGRAM NOTES

In this dark and stormy concert, we will dive into some seriously mysterious melodies. You will hear dancing skeletons depicted by the xylophone in Saint-Saëns's *Danse macabre*, the flurry of strings mimicking Hedwig's ascent contrasted with the ominous "In the Hall of the Mountain King" by Edvard Grieg, and much more! This program invites students to experience firsthand the many different tools composers use to create the chilling themes we all love!

*Note: Words in **bold** indicate that the definition can be found in the glossary.*



SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873-1943)

Called a “six-and-a-half-foot scowl” because of his height and his demeanor by his contemporaries, Sergei Rachmaninoff is one of the most famous **composers** of the early 20th century. He was an accomplished composer, but he was also famous as a conductor and a concert pianist. Rachmaninoff was known for his music but also his stature; the composer was six feet and six inches tall by most accounts and his hands could stretch almost twelve inches from the tip of his thumb to the end of his pinky!

Rachmaninoff began learning the piano at the age of 4, and after advancing very quickly in just a few years, his family sent him to study music at the Moscow **Conservatory**. His teacher, Nikolay Zverev, was a strict mentor, but under his guidance the young Rachmaninoff graduated from the conservatory at only 19 years old. While at the conservatory Rachmaninoff also began composing music. His famous piece, the Prelude in C-Sharp minor, was first performed in the year 1892, the same year he graduated.

Rachmaninoff’s first few compositions were wildly successful. When he performed his own Prelude in C-Sharp minor on a concert in

1899, a critic called the performance, “an object lesson to the many amateurs who know [the Prelude] by heart.” However, not all of Rachmaninoff’s work was so well received. His first symphony was performed extremely poorly which led to harsh reviews of the piece. This sent Rachmaninoff into a deep three-year depression, where he did not publish any music. Luckily, he was able to get the help he needed, and returned to the stage with one of his most famous works, his Piano Concerto No. 2, dedicated to the hypnotherapist that helped him recover.

Rachmaninoff wrote several other famous works including more piano preludes, tone poems, and even two more symphonies. While the composer’s appearance may have been that of a moody giant with expansive hands, Rachmaninoff’s music is known for its romantic line and beautiful phrasing. The New York Times once printed, “To hear Mr. Rachmaninoff interpret the piano is to listen to an amazing exhibition of imagination and commanding musicianship.”

Prelude in C-Sharp minor (arr. Henry Wood) Spotify

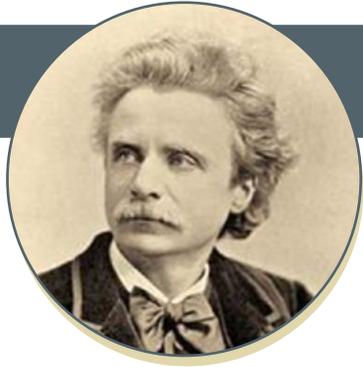
The Prelude in C-Sharp minor is one of the most famous pieces that Rachmaninoff composed, but Rachmaninoff did not like the piece! He felt that it overshadowed some of his better earlier work and he didn’t understand why it was played so much or why people always asked for it. After a concert in 1923, a headline read, “Rachmaninoff Hissed for Refusing [to play the] Prelude in C-Sharp Encore!” Part of the reason may have been that while the piece was widely popular, Rachmaninoff saw almost no profit from it. He sold the rights for the equivalent of about 20 dollars in today’s world soon after it was written. Publishers would continue to sell the piece internationally, changing the name to fanciful titles with fictional backstories.

The piece also went on to be arranged many times for all varieties of instruments and styles. The arrangement by Henry Wood takes the piano prelude and orchestrates it, making it so this solo piano work can instead be played by a full orchestra. There were other arrangements, however, that took the motives and themes from the piece and completely changed the style. For example, the Duke Ellington band performed Chappie Willet's arrangement of the Prelude in C-Sharp minor for Jazz Band! Though Rachmaninoff was older by the time this recording was released, he was still able to listen to it and confessed that he was "enchanted."

Activity Idea

After listening to the Prelude in C-Sharp minor, discuss what kind of emotions you think Rachmaninoff was feeling when he was writing it. If there was a story to go with it, what do you think it would be? Listen to the piece again and try to imagine a story Rachmaninoff might have had in his head, or create your own!





EDVARD GRIEG (1843-1907)

Edvard Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway. His mother began to teach him to play piano at age 6, and by age 9 he was composing his own music. Edvard Grieg received his formal music education from the Leipzig Conservatory in Germany at the age of 15. In 1861 he made his debut as a concert pianist in Sweden. He had an active career as a pianist, but every summer he went home to his cottage in Norway to compose. In 1865, Grieg became one of the founders of Euterpe. The group was formed with his friend Rikard Nordtraak and was meant to promote new Scandinavian music by young composers. Grieg was waiting in Rome for Nordtraak later that year when

he received word that his friend had died. Although a sad time for Edvard Grieg, it led to an important first meeting with renowned playwright Henrik Ibsen, the author of *Peer Gynt*.

Many of Grieg's compositions are rooted in the sound of Norwegian folk songs including his sets of *Lyric Pieces*. He was exceptionally skilled at representing his native land through music and is regarded as a hero in Norway for providing his people with their own musical identity. Other successful works include his Piano Concerto in A minor, *Peer Gynt*, the song-cycle *Haugtussa*, and *Symphonic Dances, Opus 64*. He died on September 4, 1907.

"In the Hall of the Mountain King" from *Peer Gynt Suite*

Henrik Ibsen wrote the drama *Peer Gynt* in 1867. In 1874 he asked Edvard Grieg to compose the incidental music for the play. Grieg originally struggled to compose for the work, writing to a friend saying, "It is a terribly unmanageable subject." As he continued to immerse himself in the work, the more confident he became with the story and how he wanted to portray it with music. The score was finished in 1875, and the staged premiere took place in 1876 with Grieg conducting.

Peer Gynt tells the tale of Peer's epic journey all over the world after leaving his life as the village troublemaker. "In the Hall of the Mountain King" describes Peer Gynt's adventure in the underground Kingdom of the Trolls. The troll theme is repeated many times, getting faster and louder each time. The beginning of the piece starts out very low and quiet with the theme being passed back and forth from the cellos and double basses to the bassoons. As the tempo and dynamics increase, more instruments are added to the texture. In this new section, the higher strings, oboe, and clarinet are now playing the theme. This depicts the trolls moving faster and faster as they creep up on Peer. Finally, the entire orchestra is playing at **fortissimo** giving the feeling of intense fear and danger. Luckily, Peer escapes by the skin of his teeth!

Activity Idea

This piece was originally written as **incidental music**. Use the glossary to define this term with your students. List the adjectives and feelings that come to mind when listening to this piece and discuss how music can enhance other art forms. What are some techniques that composers can use to achieve these feelings? (Dynamics, Tempo, Texture, etc....)



CLARICE ASSAD (b. 1978)

Brazilian-American composer Clarice Assad is a living composer that has made an impact in the fields of classical music, world music, pop, and jazz. She has a very musical family, with both her father and uncle being accomplished musicians in their own right. Assad was born in Campo Grande, Brazil, and began having musical success there as a singer when she was still a child. She was paid to sing jingles on the radio, and she even appeared in a few pop songs. At 15, Assad and her brother moved to France to be with their father. It was in France that her piano skills flourished, studying with a professor at

Le Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris. Assad moved back to Brazil for a while and then eventually came to the United States to study music. After she graduated, her career took off. She is now a Grammy Award-nominated composer with more than 70 works to her credit. She has been commissioned by internationally-renowned organizations, festivals, and artists and is published in several different countries. As a performer, she is a celebrated pianist and inventive vocalist who inspires and encourages audiences' imaginations to break free of often self-imposed constraints.

Nhanderú YouTube

Nhanderú, pronounced (nyuh-dey-roo) means “God” in Tupi-Guarani, which is a subfamily of the Tupian languages spoken by a group of indigenous peoples living in areas of the Amazon basin. Natives from Tupi-Guarani tribes, like many other societies, often practiced a ritual called rainmaking (or rain dance) which is intended to invoke rain through prayer.

During the ceremony, they summoned spirits of the land as well as their ancestors to bring in the rain to ensure soil fertility and abundant harvest and to frighten away the spirits of the lost world. In most rituals, the “dancers” embody one or more spirits (a higher power) expressed through rhythmic gestures and movements. In addition to chanting, some instruments, such as rattles of various sizes and types, flutes, and drums are used. Legends have it that the rain provoked by the ritual holds the spirits of ancient chiefs. When the water droplets begin to fall, it sets off a great battle between our reality and the spiritual world.

The composition *Nhanderú* bases itself on the connection between the material and the unseen worlds, focusing on ritualistic practices through faith, prayer, and gratitude.

Activity Idea

The piece is based upon a rain dance, and a rain dance can take many different forms. Ask your students what they think a rain dance might look like. You could also play the piece and let your students choreograph and perform their own rain dances!



CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835-1921)

A child **prodigy**, Camille Saint-Saëns had his first recital at the age of 11 and is considered one of the most talented musical prodigies of all time. He began music lessons as a toddler with his mother and his great aunt Charlotte, who moved in with the family to teach piano. The boy had perfect pitch, which meant that he could sing any musical pitch without prompting and identify it correctly. His first composition is dated 22 March 1839, when he was just three and a half years old. By age 10, Saint-Saëns was able to play all of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas by memory — a talent he showed off by allowing audiences to choose which one they wanted to hear on the spot.

Camille Saint-Saëns was not afraid to be original. Believing that most French composers were too conservative, Saint-

Saëns set out to rejuvenate French music with his own composition and by founding the Société nationale de musique (National Music Society) to encourage the composition and performance of new works. Also intrigued with the technological developments in French organ building, he included the organ in his Third Symphony, a technique which had not previously been explored. In addition to music, Saint-Saëns was a great intellectual, writing poetry, scientific papers, and scholarly essays on music, history, and other topics. He studied geology, archeology, botany, and organized concerts of Franz Liszt's music. He also loved to travel, visiting North Africa, South America, and many locations throughout Europe.

Danse macabre Spotify

Danse macabre is an early example of a **symphonic poem** telling the story of a famous French folk tale, where once a year, skeletons leave their graves to be merry and dance together. The piece starts with twelve Ds from the harpist to signify the clock striking midnight. It is a deceiving beginning as the orchestra plays elongated **chords** underneath the clock chimes, giving the feeling of a clear and calm evening. We are left with **pizzicato** playing from the cellos and double basses that mimic the sound of tip-toeing feet when suddenly an eerie violin is heard! The solo violin represents the character "Death" and is playing in **scordatura tuning**, meaning the violin is tuned in a unique way to create haunting effects. The violin is playing tritones, which have been referred to as the "Devil's interval," and are being used to call the skeletons to dance.

After the spooky introduction, the main waltz theme is heard for the first time by a solo flute. Throughout the piece, the theme is repeated in various sections of the orchestra and creates different imagery to contribute to the story line. The most vivid image Saint-Saëns creates is the dance between "Death" and the skeletons, using the xylophone to imitate the sound of the skeletons rattling bones. The piece progresses with energy and glee until

“Death’s” lamenting solo, possibly hinting on the sadness that the end is near. However, the orchestra reignites for a climactic ending before hearing the rooster crow at daybreak, played by a solo oboe.

Activity Idea

One of the iconic sounds and moments in *Danse macabre* is the depiction of the skeleton playing his own rib cage which is played by the xylophone. This image is kind of spooky, but the reality is that we play on our bones all the time! From clapping to making beats on our legs, we are constantly playing on our own bodies. Have your students make up beat patterns without using any instruments, just body percussion!





MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839-1881)

Modest Mussorgsky began his musical studies at an early age. His mother was his first piano teacher. At 13, he entered the Guards' School to prepare for a military career, but remained very interested in music and began composing while still attending military school. When he was 18, Mussorgsky left his post as junior officer of the Preobrazhensky Regiment to concentrate on music and became a composition student of the Russian composer Mily Balakirev. Unable to study composition in a thorough way, Mussorgsky made friends with several of the most important Russian composers of his time. His contact with noted composers is what helped him develop his own talents.

Mussorgsky was passionate about composing in a distinct style that portrayed

Russian life vividly and realistically. This led him to become known as one of the members of "The Five," or "The Mighty Handful." The group was comprised of other composers who shared a strong interest in creating music that was uniquely Russian in nature. It included Mily Balakirev, Aleksandr Borodin, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and César Cui. Mussorgsky wrote in many musical genres such as opera, orchestral music, and piano works even though his output of songs was small. He is best known for the popular *Night on Bald Mountain*, his opera *Boris Godunov*, and *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a piece originally written for piano in 1874 after the death of a friend.

Night on Bald Mountain Spotify

Mussorgsky began thinking about this piece as early as 1860, but it wasn't until 1867 that he finally composed the music in a flurry of inspiration. It took him less than two weeks to write all of the orchestra parts! Following Mussorgsky's death in 1881, his friends arranged and orchestrated many of his compositions for publication and in 1886, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov produced a heavily edited version of *Night on Bald Mountain*, which is the one we know best today. Mussorgsky's original composition, *St. John's Night on the Bare Mountain* (written in 1867), was not performed until the 20th century.

Based on Russian folklore, *Night on Bald Mountain* is a musical fantasy that tells the story of a witches' gathering, taking place on St. John's Eve on Bald Mountain (sometimes called Bare Mountain). According to legend, witches and sorcerers would gather on the mountain for a night of wild adventure and merriment. The ominous atmosphere is set by incredibly fast triplets played in the upper strings. The woodwinds respond with frantic ascending and descending lines, leading to a dramatic presentation of the main theme by the tubas and trombones. Four main themes are introduced throughout the piece and explored within various instrument families. Unusual to the rest of the piece, a majestic

fanfare can be heard numerous times by the trumpets. After the return of the first main theme and a climactic trumpet fanfare, bell chimes are heard signaling that morning is coming. Three solo instruments with light and gentle tones, the flute, clarinet, and harp, also help to paint a picture of daybreak and conclude the piece.

Activity Idea

Did you notice that the original title of this work was *St. John's Night on the Bare Mountain*? Through all of the edits and revisions, the piece became known as *Night on Bald Mountain*. Have your students research the history of *St. John's Night on the Bare Mountain* for some background to the piece! You could also play a game of telephone with your students, using the starting phrase "St. John's Night on the Bare Mountain" and see what title your students produce at the end. For an extra challenge, play this piece loudly while they try to whisper to each other to make it even more difficult.





JOHN WILLIAMS (b.1932)

John Williams grew up around music and film. As a child he learned to play piano, clarinet, trombone, and trumpet, and his father played drums for many of the famous Warner Brothers cartoons. After serving in the Air Force in the early 1950s, Williams attended The Juilliard School, where he studied piano and composition. Soon after, he moved to Los Angeles, beginning what is widely regarded as one of the most successful careers in Hollywood history.

Williams is best known for his movie music. He has composed music for almost 80 movies, including the *Harry Potter* films, *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, *Jaws*, the *Indiana Jones* movies, and all the *Star Wars* films. Like all skilled composers, Williams has developed his own special style, including a natural ability to write musical themes or motifs that immediately bring to mind a specific character.

“Hedwig’s Theme” Spotify

The music of John Williams has been an integral part of countless beloved movies for almost forty years. Williams frequently uses leitmotifs (melodies designed to represent characters or ideas) in his film music that create lasting impressions of memorable scenes and characters.

Williams wrote the full scores for the first three *Harry Potter* films. “Hedwig’s Theme,” however, is woven throughout all eight movies. While named for Harry’s owl, “Hedwig’s Theme” more broadly represents Harry’s magical world. The theme is primarily played on the celeste. The celeste looks similar to an upright piano but inside the hammers strike metal chime bars rather than strings to produce a bell-like sound that casts a magical mood. Another important theme in the piece, played by the strings, is the “Nimbus 2000.” The Nimbus 2000 is the name of Harry Potter’s flying broomstick. Soon after “Hedwig’s Theme” is introduced, the strings begin to rumble very softly as if the Nimbus 2000 is preparing for flight. The strings take off as they quickly play embellished scales in a duet with the brass section who is now playing “Hedwig’s Theme.” Keep your ears peeled for the change in music.

Activity Idea

Composer Richard Wagner was famous for his use of **leitmotifs** – a short motive or melody which is always associated with the same character in music. John Williams also uses leitmotifs throughout his music. Have students listen to “Ride of the Valkyries,” “The Shark Theme” from *Jaws*, and “Hedwig’s Theme,” listening for the leitmotifs. How are the leitmotifs in each piece similar or different? Tell students they will have the chance to write their own leitmotif. First have students decide who or what the leitmotif will represent. Using bells, hand percussion, voices, or other classroom instruments, have students compose their leitmotif and share it with the class. Does it sound like the character they are trying to represent?

ARRANGING



Lesson 1 – Rachmaninoff’s Little Prelude

Subject

General
Music

Level

3-5

Duration

25 minutes

Materials

- A device to play music on – Speaker or Computer
- Possible paper and pencils if utilizing the Venn Diagram

Lesson Objectives/ NAFME Standards

MU:Re7.2: Describe how specific music concepts are used to support a specific purpose in music.

MU:Cn10.0: Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding.

(MU:Cr1.1: Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose.) –
Extension Activity

Summary of Tasks

1. Listen to the original piece: Prelude in C# minor by Rachmaninoff. Depending on time and length of attention span, you may play just a portion. (Linked in the resources.)
2. Have the students identify what instruments are present (piano).
3. Play the orchestral arrangement of the Prelude in C# minor by Rachmaninoff. (Linked in the resources.)
4. Ask the students what they heard from the pieces and how they were the same and how they were different. A physical component can be added to aid this such as a Venn Diagram.
5. Have the students identify some of the instruments that they think they hear. (This can be done in a broad sense or more specifically. For example, a student might say “I hear an orchestra” or if you would like to get more specific, you could break it down into the instruments. This can be paired well with a lesson on instrument families as well. If students are struggling with this, you can play examples of what different instruments sound like and ask, “Did you hear something that kind of sounded like this?”)
6. Consider playing Chappie Willet’s jazz arrangement of the Prelude (linked in the resources) or the ragtime version arranged by George Cobb entitled “Russian Rag” (linked in the resources.) Repeat steps 4 and 5.
7. Guide the students to realize that the melody was all the same but the instruments playing and the style that the melody was played in was different. They will most likely get there on their own, but you may need to facilitate this.
8. Bring up the term “arrangement” and ask if students have heard of this before.
9. Grove Music Dictionary Online defines “arrangement” as “The process of reworking a musical work to create a new or different version of it.”
10. Help the students understand that this concept of arrangement is not only for this piece but can be done with almost any piece of music and in many different ways.

Assessment

If students use the Venn Diagram, they can turn this in, otherwise this is an informal assessment of engagement and understanding.

Take Home/Extension Tasks

Make your own arrangement!

For older grades and for students who master the concept of arranging quickly, you can have students make their own arrangements of a popular tune. This can be something they might know from your class like "Row Your Boat," or something they might have heard on the radio that they can sing.

Assemble different instruments in front of the class. Sing the song a cappella to make sure everyone is familiar. Add in or take out different instruments, effectively creating different arrangements. Ask the students what instrument they would like to add and then have them play it. This might be the teacher's responsibility depending on class and grade level. If you have the capabilities, you could even record a few different versions so that the students could hear their own arrangements back.

RHYTHM AND STEADY BEAT

Lesson 2 – The Rhythms of the Mountain King

| Subject | Level | Duration | Materials |
|---------------|-------|---------------|--|
| General Music | 1-5 | 20-30 minutes | A device to play the music and a whiteboard or smartboard to display the rhythms |

Lesson Objectives/ NAFME Standards

MU:Pr4.2: With limited guidance, demonstrate knowledge of music concepts (such as beat and melodic contour) in music from a variety of cultures selected for performance.

MU:Pr6.1: With guidance, perform music with expression.

MU:Re7.2: With guidance, demonstrate how a specific music concept (such as beat or melodic direction) is used in music.

Summary of Tasks / Actions:

1. To introduce steady beat, ask students to copy your movements as you play the first section of “In the Hall of the Mountain King.” Show the steady beat and change body parts at the ends of phrases as an added challenge for students. Assess that students are demonstrating the steady beat accurately. Stop the recording before the tempo changes.
2. To introduce rhythm, ask students to echo rhythmic patterns by tapping, clapping, or using body percussion. Use the rhythms found in the beginning of “In the Hall of the Mountain King.” (For this lesson the contrasting patterns will be referred to as Rhythm A and Rhythm B.)
3. Discuss the terms steady beat and rhythm. How are they different? The same? Can you have one without the other? Explain the importance of feeling the steady beat as we perform rhythms in music.
4. Introduce and learn Rhythm A and Rhythm B with the students in a method of your choosing. Examples: echo the rhythms measure by measure, notation, listening, etc.



5. Provide a visual guide of Rhythm A and Rhythm B on the board. Have students perform the rhythms along with the recording of "In the Hall of the Mountain King" using tapping, clapping, or body percussion.
 6. Break the students off into partners. Once students are comfortable with steady beat and rhythm, introduce the following challenge. One person will be the Beat Keeper and the other will be the Rhythm Tapper. Students will feel the beat as they perform the rhythms. Stop the recording before the accelerando and have partners switch roles before restarting.
-

Assessment

Informal assessment in which students are able to identify the difference between the steady beat and the rhythm.

Take Home/Extention Tasks

Do not stop the music when it starts to accelerando and have the students try to follow along!

TEMPO AND DYNAMICS



Lesson 3 – Building Intensity

| Subject | Level | Duration | Materials |
|---------------|-------|---------------|---|
| General Music | 2-4 | 10-25 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology to play the piece Optional: Scarves, pool noodles, other physical props |

Lesson Objectives/ NAfME Standards

MU:Re7.2: With limited guidance, demonstrate and identify how specific music concepts (such as beat or pitch) are used in various styles of music for a purpose.

MU:Pr4.3: Demonstrate and describe music's expressive qualities (such as dynamics and tempo).

Summary of Tasks

- Start by listening to "In the Hall of the Mountain King" with your students. Have students close their eyes while they listen. When they notice a change in the music, they should raise their hand.
- Discuss what changes the students heard and list them as a class. What happened in the music? (Possible examples: the music got faster, the music got louder, it felt different, more instruments were playing, etc.) Play the piece again so students can observe more changes. It may also help to use the "think, pair, share" method as you create your list. (Students think to themselves, pair up and talk to each other, and then share with the class).
- Introduce and explain dynamics and tempo. In their most basic form, they are used to express a change in music.
 - Dynamics = the volume of the music
 - Crescendo = Gradually getting louder
 - "In the Hall of the Mountain King" started at pianissimo and ended at fortissimo.
 - Tempo = the speed of music
 - Accelerando = Gradually getting faster
 - "In the Hall of The Mountain King" started andante and ended allegro.
 - Discuss other dynamic and tempo terms as necessary.
- Have students demonstrate the changes happening in the music with their bodies.
 - Tempo - Have the students start by marching in place keeping a steady beat while listening to "In the Hall of the Mountain King." As the music accelerates, students will continue keeping a steady beat while marching, but will have to march faster to keep up with the new tempo.
 - Dynamics - Using scarves, body levels, or a different prop, have students depict the dynamic changes of "In the Hall of the Mountain King" by moving their scarves more frantically as the dynamics increase.

Assessment

Informal assessment of student's ability to recognize tempo and dynamic changes in a piece of music.

Take Home/Extension Tasks

Play other songs that use tempo and dynamics to evoke a change in music and see if students recognize these concepts in other pieces.

Try using other selections from this concert or create your own playlist.

MUSICAL STORYTELLING

Lesson 4 – Night on Bald Mountain

| Subject | Level | Duration | Materials |
|---------------|-------|---------------|---|
| General Music | 3-8 | 35-45 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology to play the piece Worksheet of the 5 W's Worksheet of Comic Strip Format |

Lesson Objectives/ NAfME Standards

MG1.Cr.2.e: Improvise sounds and movement to accompany artistic play and music by use of voice, instruments, and a variety of sound sources.

CMP1.Cr.1.e: Discover musical ideas through simple rhythm and melodic patterns.

MP1.Cr.2.e: Improvise sounds and movement to accompany artistic play and music by use of voice, instruments, and a variety of sound sources.

MG2.P.5.e: Explore music through both reading and aural approaches.

Summary of Tasks

1. Challenge students to actively listen to a piece of music by giving them the following questions to consider. "What do you hear? What changes are happening? What do you notice? How did you feel?"
2. Discuss what students heard while they were listening. Tell students the piece was telling a story and ask what they think the story might be about based on what they observed in the music.
3. Listen to the piece again having students listen for the story. What kind of story is being told? Who are the characters? What did you 'see'?

WHO?

Who are the main characters?

How are they described in the story?

WHAT?

What is the scary story about?

What is the problem and how is it resolved?

WHEN?

When does the story take place?

WHERE?

Where does the story take place?

WHY?

Why is the main character in danger?

Why is there a problem?

4. Tell students that *Night on Bald Mountain* is a musical fantasy about a witches' gathering on St. John's Eve on Bald Mountain. A musical ghost story! Using the piece *Night on Bald Mountain* as inspiration, students will use the '5 Ws of Scary Story Writing' template to create their own scary story.
 5. After gathering the 5 Ws of their story, have students depict their scary story using a cartoon strip format. Students should use at least five cartoon strip frames to tell their story using pictures and simple dialog. A piece of paper folded hot dog style and divided with pencil markings can be used for the cartoon strip template.
 6. Have students share their story and cartoon strip and explain how the music influenced their choices.
-

Assessment

This will be a formal assessment where students can hand in their creations.

Take Home/Extension Tasks

Watch Disney's interpretation of *Night on Bald Mountain* in the original *Fantasia* movie. Have students compare/contrast their interpretations to Disney's interpretation. (Note: Links to the video are included in the Resources section).

Print and Online Resources

Instruments and the Orchestra

Koscielniak, Bruce. *An Introduction to Musical Instruments and the Symphony Orchestra: The Story of the Incredible Orchestra*. 2000.

Levine, Robert. *The Story of the Orchestra*. 2001. General, child-friendly guide to the orchestra, instruments, and composers. CD included.

[The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, by Benjamin Britten. Game.](#) Interactive website that introduces and describes the instruments of an orchestra through numerous mini-games.

[Utah Symphony/Utah Opera Instruments of the Orchestra Video Series](#) (short videos profiling musicians and their instruments in the orchestra).

[Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Bitmoji Classroom.](#) Interactive website.

Composers, Pieces, and General Background

[Dallas Symphony Orchestra Kids website.](#) Biographical information about composers.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, *Prelude in C# minor*

[Prelude in C# minor](#) - Performed by Rachmaninoff

[Prelude in C# minor, Arr. Wood](#)

["Russian Rag" arranged by George Cobb](#)

[Prelude in C# minor, as arranged by Chappie Willet](#)

Edvard Grieg, "In the Hall of the Mountain King"

[Daníel Bjarnason conducts the Iceland Symphony Orchestra](#)

[Animated telling](#)

Clarice Assad, *Nhanderú*

[Piece and Informational Video](#)

[Sergio and Clarice Assad House Concert](#)

Camille Saint-Saëns, *Danse macabre*

[Camille Saint-Saëns, *Danse macabre*](#) performed by the Northern Illinois University Philharmonic Orchestra (video - about 7:30")

Harwell Celenza, Anna. *Saint-Saëns Danse Macabre*. 2013. (book)

Modest Mussorgsky, *Night on Bald Mountain*

[Andris Poga conducts the Frankfurt Radio Symphony](#)

Fantasia (1940). *Night on Bald Mountain* (video). PLEASE NOTE: some images may be frightening to some children. Please preview before showing it to students.

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

John Williams, "Hedwig's Theme" from *Harry Potter*

[John Williams, "Hedwig's Theme."](#) Live in concert at the BBC Proms (5:00)

[Music Express Magazine Interview with John Williams](#) (about 14 minutes)

Symphonic Tricks and Treats Worksheet

(Hint: Use the whole guide!)

SHORT ANSWER:

1. What does the conductor do with their hands or baton to show the piece is over?
2. Which instrument does Camille Saint-Saëns use to mimic the sound of a skeleton playing his own rib cage?
3. What composer was called “a six-and-a-half-foot scowl” by his contemporaries?
4. Edvard Grieg’s compositions are often rooted in the sound of what nation’s folk songs?
5. Which composer(s) on this program is/are still alive?
6. What instrument did most of these composers on this program first learn?
(HINT: Some say it was the KEY to their success)
7. What do you call a drama (or stage work) where all the words are sung instead of spoken?
8. How many composers on this program have Russian Heritage?

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Optional Word Bank: | Four | Russian | Raises them |
| Sergei Rachmaninoff | Piano | Norwegian | Flute |
| Two | Clarice Assad | Lowers them | Opera |
| Edvard Grieg | Xylophone | John Williams | |

Symphonic Tricks and Treats Worksheet Answer Key

1. Lowers them
2. Xylophone
3. Sergei Rachmaninoff
4. Norwegian
5. Clarice Assad and John Williams
6. Piano
7. Opera
8. Two

Glossary

Accompaniment: Instrumental or vocal parts that support a more important part.

Ballet: An artistic dance performed to music using very precise, formalized steps.

Beat: The unit of musical rhythm.

Cadence: A sequence of notes or chords comprising the close of a musical phrase.

Chord: Three or more musical notes played at the same time.

Classical Era or Period: The time in music history from the early-1700s to early-1800s. The music emphasized the use of formal structures while offering variety and contrast within a piece. Composed works were expressive and polished, with clearer divisions between sections and lighter textures.

Compose: The act of writing music.

Composer: A person who writes music.

Composition: An original piece of music.

Concertmaster: The first violin in an orchestra.

Concerto: A composition written for a solo instrument and orchestra. The soloist plays the melody while the orchestra plays the accompaniment.

Conductor: One who directs a group of performers. The conductor indicates the tempo, phrasing, dynamics, and style with gestures and facial expressions.

Conservatory: A college for the study of classical music or other arts.

Crescendo: A gradual increase in the volume of music.

Decrescendo: A gradual decrease in loudness.

Director: A person who guides the making of a film. The director controls a film's artistic and dramatic aspects.

Duet: A performance by two people.

Duration: The time that a sound or silence lasts, represented by musical notes and rests with fixed values with respect to one another and determined by tempo.

Dynamics: Loudness or softness of a composition. The symbols in sheet music indicating volume.

Ensemble: A group of two or more musicians.

Excerpt: A smaller musical passage taken from a larger movement or work.

Flat: A symbol showing that the note is to be lowered by one half-step.

Folklore: The traditional beliefs, customs, and stories of a community transmitted orally from generation to generation.

Form: The structure of a piece of music.

Forte: A dynamic marking indicating to play loud.

Fortissimo: A dynamic marking indicating to play very loud.

Genre: A category that identifies a piece of music as belonging to a certain style or tradition.

Harmony: The pleasing combination of two or three pitches played together in the background while a melody is being played. Also refers to the study of chord progressions.

Incidental Music: Music used in a film or played as background music to enhance a particular atmosphere.

Instrumentation: Arrangement of music for a specific combination of instruments.

Key: The system of notes or pitches based on and named after the key note.

Key signature: The flats and sharps at the beginning of each staff line showing the key of music the piece is to be played.

Legato: Indicating a musician to perform in a smooth, flowing manner, without breaks between notes.

Leitmotif: A recurrent theme throughout a musical or literary composition, associated with a particular person, idea, or situation. Translates from German as "leading motive."

Major: One of two modes of the tonal system. Music in major keys has a positive, affirming character.

Mass: In music, the setting of the primary text of the Roman Catholic liturgy to music.

Melody: A succession of pitches in a coherent line, the principal part.

Minor: One of two modes of the tonal system. Can be identified by a dark, melancholic mood.

Motif/motive: Primary theme or subject.

Movement: A separate section of a larger composition.

Natural: A symbol showing that the note is returned to its original pitch after it has been raised or lowered.

Notation: The methods of transcribing music into print.

Opera: A drama where the words are sung instead of spoken.

Opus: A musical work, abbreviated to Op. Often used with a number to designate a work in its chronological relationship to a composer's other works.

Orchestra: A large group of instrumentalists playing together.

Orchestration (v. orchestrate): Arranging a piece of music for an orchestra.

Patron: A person who financially supports a composer or artist.

Piano: A dynamic marking indicating to play softly.

Pianissimo: A dynamic marking indicating to play very softly.

Pitch: The frequency of a note determining how high or low it sounds.

Pizzicato: A technique where a stringed instrument is played by being plucked, rather than bowed.

Premiere: The first official performance of a work.

Prodigy: A person, especially a young one, endowed with exceptional qualities or abilities.

Program music: Music that is descriptive, narrative, or that develops a nonmusical subject.

Quartet: A set of four musicians who perform compositions written for four parts.

Repertoire: A collection or body of standard works performed regularly.

Rest: A period of silence in a musical line.

Rhythm: Pertaining to time, played as a grouping of notes into accented and unaccented beats.

Romantic Era or Period: The time in music history during the early 1800s to early 1900s. Composers explored new realms of sounds to convey originality and individuality. The music was characterized by an emotional, expressive, and imaginative style.

Scale: Any set of musical notes ordered by pitch.

Scordatura Tuning: A technique in which players of string instruments tune their strings to different notes from normal tuning

Score: The depiction, often in book or bound form, of a musical work containing all the parts stacked vertically and rhythmically lined up. (V. Scored: To write or arrange for a specific instrument or instruments.)

Sharp: A symbol showing that the note is to be raised by one half-step.

Solo: Music performed by only one instrument or voice. (N. Soloist: The person performing the solo line.)

Sonata: Music of a particular form consisting of four movements. Each movement differs in tempo, rhythm, and melody but they are bound together by subject and style.

Songwriter: A person who composes words, music, or both especially for popular songs.

Staccato: Indicating a musician to perform each sound with sharp, detached breaks between notes.

Staff: Five horizontal parallel lines and spaces between them on which musical notation is written.

Symphonic Poem (tone poem): An instrumental composition intended to portray a particular story, scene, or mood.

Symphony: Three to four movement orchestral piece, generally in sonata form.

Tempo: Indicating speed.

Texture: The way in which tempo, melody and harmony are combined in a composition that determines the overall quality of the sound in a piece. Often described in relation to density as thick or thin or in relative terms such as by the number of parts or voices present.

Theme: A melodic or sometimes harmonic idea presented in a musical form.

Timbre: The quality that makes a particular musical sound have a different sound from another, even when they have the same pitch and loudness.

Time Signature: Numeric symbol in sheet music determining number of beats per measure.

Tone: A note or pitch. Also, the quality and character of sound.

Tritone: An interval of three whole tones (an augmented fourth).