



PHILHARMONIA FANTASTIQUE:

the making of the orchestra



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Welcome to the BSO Midweeks!

On behalf of today's conductor Moon Doh, the members of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and the BSO Education Department, we are delighted to welcome you to our 2023-2024 Midweek Concert Series. We are thrilled to have you join us here at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall.

This year we are celebrating 100 years of Midweek Concerts! The BSO's Midweek Concert Series is not only the longest running education initiative at the BSO, but the first regular educational concert series of any orchestra in the country. Our rich history of educational programming started with the first Midweek Concert on February 16, 1924, and we are pleased to be providing students from Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware, Washington, D.C., and beyond with exciting and engaging education concerts to this day.

This Midweek Concert Season, we present four concerts: *Music to Give You Goosebumps*, *The Nutcracker: A Magical Tale in Mount Vernon*, *Jazzing the Symphony*, and *Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra*. Each concert incorporates an Arts-Integrated, STEAM-Activated approach to create a relevant, interactive, and interdisciplinary experience.

About This Guide

On the next pages you will find the Teachers' Guide for *Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra*, written by a highly skilled group of Maryland educators with specialism in Music, Drama, Science, English/Language Arts, and Visual Arts, led by award-winning curriculum writer and editor, Richard McCready.

At the start of the guide is a "Snapshot" of your concert experience. This will give you a sense of what to expect in the concert, along with some thoughts about the various curricular connections, and music we suggest you listen to in the classroom before the performance.

Beyond the Snapshot pages you will find an activity called a "Symphony" with three smaller activities, or "Movements," to signify the various directions that you can explore in order to prepare for this concert. Each Movement in the Symphony may be used in any order you wish. We have also highlighted the various cross-curricular links that align with the Symphony so that you may jump to areas that are of particular interest to you and your students. We hope that your students try at least one activity prior to coming to the concert so they can make the most of their live experience at the Meyerhoff.

Each activity is written to encourage students' natural sense of creativity and exploration. They will be able to read the activity pages or you can read the activities with them. Some of the activities are scientific, some are movement games, some employ and encourage art skills, and some involve storytelling and role-play. You best know your students, their capabilities, and their interests. You should encourage students to try the activities that you feel most appropriate for them and for your classroom. Encourage other teachers in your building to try some of the activities as well.



These guides are designed and intended as a mere starting point for exploration, with the essential piece being the work that is created by the student, for the student. Our ultimate goal is to facilitate a strong connection between the music performed by the BSO and the everyday lives of your students, so that they may continue to take music with them wherever they go.

Please feel free to share your students' work with us at the BSO—we love to see where the ideas from these activities might take your students and all the inspired, arts-integrated work they will produce in the classroom. If you wish to share any materials with us at the BSO, please send them to education@bsomusic.org.

We hope you enjoy this guide, your explorations that are yet to come, the concert experience, and sharing your creative work with us.

Warmly,

Brian Prechtl
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Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra **Concert Program**

Below is the list of pieces that will be performed on the *Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra* Midweek Concert. Please take a moment to listen to these pieces in advance of the concert on YouTube, Spotify, or iTunes.

- ❖ PAUL DUKAS: Fanfare pour précéder *La Péri*
- ❖ JOHN WILLIAMS: "Nimbus 2000" from *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* Suite
- ❖ PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY: Waltz from *Serenade for Strings*, op. 48
- ❖ BRIAN PRECHTL: "Shout" from *A Cord of Three Strands*
- ❖ MASON BATES: *Philharmonia Fantastique*



Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra **Snapshot for Teachers and Students**

Teachers: please note that this guide is provided as a supplement to the official educational materials produced for *Philharmonia Fantastique*. We encourage you to use our curriculum materials in tandem with the official [Philharmonia Fantastique Youth Concert Resource Guide](#).

Today's concert features a riveting multimedia experience as Mason Bates' *Philharmonia Fantastique* introduces you to the four families of the orchestra – winds, brass, strings, and percussion. But before we hop into Bates' Grammy Award winning work, we have curated a special set of four short pieces to introduce you to the musicians of your Baltimore Symphony Orchestra!

We start with a piece by French composer Paul Dukas – a fanfare that serves as a miniature **overture**, or introduction, to the ballet *La Péri*. Dukas is most well-known as the composer behind *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, where we see Mickey Mouse try his best to attempt his master's sorcery in the movie *Fantasia*. This fanfare from *La Péri* is his next most popular work. In this piece we feature our **brass** section – made up of the French horn, trumpet, trombone, and tuba. Can you tell what role each instrument plays? As you listen, think about what instruments are playing the melody versus what instruments are playing the harmony. Do some instruments play both?

John Williams is one of the world's most popular living composers. Having written the soundtracks to countless popular films, Williams' music is instantly recognizable and is always a crowd favorite. If you attended our *Music to Give You Goosebumps* concert back in October, you will have already heard several selections by John Williams. Much like "Hedwig's Theme" and "Harry's Wondrous World," "Nimbus 2000" also comes from the film *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. "Nimbus 2000" serves as the flying theme throughout the *Harry Potter* series and brings Harry's magical flying broomstick of the same name to life. This piece features the **woodwind** section – made up of the flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon, and their larger (or in the case of the flute, smaller) cousins, the piccolo, English horn, bass clarinet, and contrabassoon.

Up next, we'll hear a **movement**, or a section of a larger work, from Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*. Like the title implies, this piece features – you guessed it – the string section! The **strings** are made up of violins, viola, cello, and double bass. The movement of this work you'll be hearing is the second movement, which is a **waltz**, or a ballroom dance, normally in triple meter. Dancers performing a waltz turn rhythmically around and around as they travel across the floor. Tchaikovsky's waltz primarily features the violin section but gives all the strings a chance to shine as the music progresses. As you watch and listen, pay attention as the melody weaves between each instrument. See if you can imagine the dancers weaving around the floor.



Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra **Snapshot for Teachers and Students**

Our final piece before *Philharmonia Fantastique* was written by one of the Baltimore Symphony's very own percussionists, Brian Precht! "Shout" is the third movement of a larger work entitled *A Cord of Three Strands*. As you've probably figured out, this piece will feature our **percussion** section. While a typical percussion section is made up of about 3-5 people, you'll notice that they have the most instruments to play out of anyone else in the orchestra! Precht's piece features the claves, tom-toms, cymbals, snare drum, whistle, and more. As the title suggests this is an exuberant and energetic piece which will make you want to get up and dance. But those aren't the only percussion instruments out there! In *Philharmonia Fantastique*, you'll hear all these instruments as well as glockenspiel, marimba, djembe, congas, vibraphone, triangle, crotales, and much, much more.

At long last, we've reached the main event – *Philharmonia Fantastique*! Please read more about this groundbreaking work below, as taken from the official *Philharmonia Fantastique* website.

"Philharmonia Fantastique portrays the four families of the orchestra, each with their own unique sound worlds and musical motifs: the slinky, sophisticated noir-jazz of the woodwinds; the lush romanticism of the strings; the aggressive techno-fanfares of the brass; and the percussion section "drum circle" in all its versatility. Ultimately the work's message is one of unity: the diverse instruments of the orchestra are most powerful when working together as one giant instrument.

Guided by a magical Sprite, the film shows violin strings vibrate, brass valves slice air, and drum heads resonate. Imaginatively blending traditional and modern animation styles, it is a kinetic and compelling guide to the orchestra that engagingly illustrates the intricacies of how instruments work individually and collectively to produce such a huge range of sound.

Nearly every aspect of the production mirrors the central thesis that the orchestra is the ideal marriage of tradition and innovation. The title itself is a nod to Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* (a striking dramatic storm with innovations in orchestration), but the music of *Philharmonia Fantastique* ventures beyond the bounds of classical to bring in elements of jazz and techno. The combination of music and animation echoes classics like *Fantasia* or *Peter and the Wolf*, but with a fresh approach and a new journey led by the Sprite.

The film features a unique hybrid of animation and live action filming. Guided by Jim Capobianco, the animation team created a hand-drawn, 2D style reminiscent of 1950's French films. To look inside instruments, the team used high-definition special effects cameras, including probe lenses, to peer inside a violin, flute, and up close to brass valves. The film also features sound design built from the key clicks of woodwinds, taps on the body of string instruments, and vintage analogue synthesizers."



Symphony: Pulling Together to Make Harmony



In the *Philharmonia Fantastique* concert you will hear four short pieces of music featuring the four individual instrument families of the orchestra (brass, woodwind, strings, percussion) and then a longer piece of music which features all the instruments together. This last piece of music is *Philharmonia Fantastique* by American composer Mason Bates. You will hear the music as you watch a movie about the orchestra. The movie shows a magical character called Sprite who is made of the instrument families (one of his arms is brass, another is woodwind, and his legs are strings and percussion).



Sprite hears the instrument families and interacts with the instrument. Each instrument family plays different music, but after some conflict where the instrument families challenge each other, the music comes together so that everyone is joining together in harmony at the end of the piece.

The movie is available for you to watch before the concert [here](#) and you can access an excellent package of supporting documents and activities [here](#). These resources are made so incredibly well that we suggest you take advantage of them before the concert as they will enhance your appreciation of the concert.

Central to the movie is the concept of the four families of instruments of the orchestra. You should certainly know what these are and what each family of instruments sounds like (though we promise to remind you when you come to the concert). In addition, we recommend that you explore the idea of how four individuals or groups can create their own art, how that can lead to challenges between the groups, and how they can all pull together in the end to create harmony and agreement. The following are brief ideas on how you might try this with your classmates.



Movement One – Sound Bath

This concert is all about how each instrument family of the orchestra is unique, yet works together beautifully and harmoniously! An ensemble is a group of performers performing music together. Divide the class into 4 groups. Each group will take the following work bank words and about 5 minutes to create a 20-30 second sound piece (using body percussion and/or classroom instruments) that represents the adjectives in the word bank. You can find the words below and also on page 26 of the [Philharmonia Fantastique Youth Concert Resource Guide](#).

Brass: aggressive, muting, mouthpiece, pursing/buzzing, valves/pistons, animal horns, tubes, shiny, loud, air column, fanfare.

Percussion: crashing, drum circle, unpitched, energetic, pitched, shaking, striking/tapping, crashing, scraping/brushing, texture.

Strings: romantic, bridge, bows, lush, plucking, sound box, wood, vibrating, resonate.

Woodwinds: slinky, ancient, conical, breath, hollow, reeds, keys, sophisticated, blowing, buzzing, bell, air/wind blowing, mouthpiece.



Round One

Show what your group created. Listen to the other groups and see if you can find any connections. **THE BIG QUESTION:** Is this an ensemble? Do these four groups fit together the way the orchestra families fit together?

Round Two

Brainstorm how your group can connect to the other groups to make a large ensemble, yet still shows your unique sound. Perform again, this time stagger-starting each group, making adjustments to blend the group sounds. Do all of the groups work together as a large ensemble? Was this easier or more difficult for the groups to connect?



Movement Two – The Neighborhood Around Us (A Collaborative Collage Mural)

Using your neighborhood for inspiration, brainstorm ideas of things that must work together, even though they are different, to make up your neighborhood. Some ideas may be housing, stores, roads, people, plants etc.

Break into groups of 3-4 people and assign each group one of the brainstormed categories. Within your smaller group brainstorm different ideas that each of you can make that represent your category. Collage your ideas out of colored paper. Use crayons or markers to add smaller details. Once you have completed your individual pieces come back together as a large group.

Now using a large piece of bulletin board paper, work together to assemble your small pieces into a large mural of your neighborhood.



Movement Three – Signature Moves

Stand in a circle of no more than eight and count off the number of people in the circle.

- Student 1 begins by presenting a short gesture and sound (their signature move!) to the rest of the group. Then the group repeats both the move and the sound back. Make sure you do them exactly as they were presented to you..
- Student 2 presents a short gesture and sound and everyone repeats it. **Now** the group performs moves and sounds 1 and 2 in order.
- Student 3 presents a short gesture and sound and the group repeats it. **Now** the group performs moves and sounds 1 through 3 in sequence!

Follow this same pattern until everyone has presented their signature moves and sounds and the group has performed the entire sequence together. You've just created a sequenced dance song! Try your dance song together and see how fast you can play it as a group!

Hint: When you are coming up with your gesture and sound, try to think of something that contrasts in some way with the person before you, so it's easier for everyone to remember the sequence.

Variation: Re-Sequence and Mashup Your Samples!

Now choose a DJ to stand in the middle of the circle. Have the group begin a backbeat to start. Then, whenever the DJ points at someone they perform their signature gesture and sound. Try it with the group echoing the moves and sounds right back!

Now try creating a song/dance sequence with the group that has the following titles:

1. We Are All Strangers Here
2. We Are All Friends Here

What different choices do you make when you try to represent isolation and difference, versus community and unity?



Curriculum Connections

Fine Arts Standards

❖ **Creating**

- 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

❖ **Performing**

- 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

❖ **Responding**

- 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

❖ **Connecting**

- 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Resources

❖ **Philharmonia Fantastique on Apple Music**

<https://music.apple.com/us/music-video/philharmonia-fantastique-the-making-of-the-orchestra/1652599566>

❖ **Philharmonia Fantastique Youth Concert Resource Guide**

<https://www.paperturn-view.com/edie-demas-group/philharmonia-fantastique-youth-concert-resource-guide?pid=MTg184743&v=6.157>



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