



# FIREBIRD!

2017 Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra  
Middle School Youth Concert



## Teacher Resource Materials

## Acknowledgments

The Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra is grateful to the area music and classroom teachers, school administrators, and teaching artists who have collaborated with the Symphony on this Youth Concert and the accompanying resource materials. We recognize the following major donors for their support of the 2017 Middle School Youth Concert.



Worthington Family Foundation

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Cover Image and Firebird Illustration by Kelsi Hardin

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# Introduction

Dear Teachers,

Music can tell us stories. It can paint a picture in our minds. It can transport us to new places. It can evoke any sort of emotion in us.

The music on this year's Middle School Youth Concert shows us many different ways that music can be more than just music.

Debussy paints a musical picture with his *Nocturnes*, a piece inspired by the impressionist paintings of James McNeill Whistler. In *Nuages*, he uses parallel chords, evocative instrumental colors and softly repeating *ostinati* to evoke the image of slow-moving clouds.

Local composer Michael Schachter mimics the sounds of a Klezmer band and a shofar to transport us to a different place in *Freylekhe Tanzen*. His "joyful dance" might take the listener to a Jewish wedding or a solemn moment of worship.

And Stravinsky's *Firebird* tells the epic story of Prince Ivan and the Firebird who helps the Prince to free his beloved princess from an evil wizard. Even without dancers, costumes and scenery that originally helped to tell the story, Stravinsky's music proclaims Prince Ivan's victory. Stone statues come back to life and lovers are united.

We are happy to welcome a young violinist to our stage at this concert. Ann Arborite Chihiro Kakishima will perform the first movement of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*. I hope that this performance will also tell a story to your students: the important narrative of hard work and a love of music that can lead to a fulfilling life as a musician.

Thank you for joining us at Hill Auditorium for our second annual Middle School Youth Concert. I'll see you at the Symphony in March!



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# How to Use These Materials

PDFs of these materials are available for download at: [www.a2so.com/teacher-resources/](http://www.a2so.com/teacher-resources/)

The materials for this concert have been developed with the Middle School audience in mind. The pieces on the concert are longer and more complex than those for our elementary-aged audiences. And, the concepts included in this book are a bit more sophisticated and get a little more into the meat of the music. You'll find activities that tackle the basics of musical form; there's more history and context; and some of the activities assume the students are beginning string players, capable of playing simple melodies.

This booklet of resource materials is divided into two large sections:

**Starting on page 6, you'll find Student Pages.** These pages, written to the student audience, could be copied and distributed for students to read and work through on their own. Even better, students can download and view them as PDFs on their computers or tablets and access recordings of the music using the included hyperlinks. The Student Pages include program notes for each piece and activities to "dig a little deeper" on their own. Be sure to let Michael Schachter introduce students to his piece, *Freylekhe Tanzen*, by watching the video that is linked to on page 10. If you have time, you might assign them one of these extension activities to do at home and then have them present it to the class. The Student Pages end with information about the Ann Arbor Symphony, the concert experience, and a glossary of musical terms used throughout these materials.

**The next big section, which begins on page 22, includes Classroom Activities.** These are activities that you can pick and choose from to further familiarize your students with the concert repertoire. There are activities that will help students explore different types of Jewish music, that will introduce them to Sonata Form, and that will challenge them to compose using a pentatonic scale. Musical examples are included that will give them the opportunity to get acquainted with the themes and forms of some of the pieces on their own instruments.

Throughout, you'll find links to video and audio recordings. These materials are available as PDFs on our website ([www.a2so.com/teacher-resources/](http://www.a2so.com/teacher-resources/)) so that you can easily click on the hyperlinks throughout the text to access video and audio recordings as you teach.

We would love to hear how you like these materials. Please let us know if the concepts are too easy or too advanced, if the amount of material is too much or too little, and if these materials were helpful in preparing your students for the concert or following up with them after. Your feedback is so valuable as we constantly strive to improve this, and all of our education programs.



Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra  
Firebird! 2017 Middle School Concert

# Student Pages

# Overview

The music on this concert spans over 150 years of composition: from Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*, composed in the middle of the **Romantic period**, to Schachter's *Freylekhe Tanzen*, composed just a few years ago.

## 1607: People first began organizing musicians into orchestras

People have been making music on instruments for longer than we'll ever know. But it was Claudio Monteverdi, an Italian composer, who first began organizing those musicians into a group called an orchestra. Like today's orchestras, Monteverdi's orchestras consisted of musicians grouped into sections by instrument, and most of those instruments were bowed string instruments.

## 1844: Mendelssohn composed *Violin Concerto, Op. 64*

Thanks to composers like Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, the symphony orchestra was well established by the time Mendelssohn was composing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was working during the **Romantic period**, a time in music history when people liked music that was emotional, dramatic and imaginative. And audiences went crazy over extremely talented musicians, or **virtuosi**.

## 1899: Debussy composed *Nocturnes*

Debussy was composing at the end of the **Romantic period**. During this time, composers often based their music on stories, poems or other non-musical ideas. Debussy was inspired by the **Impressionist** paintings of Claude Monet and James McNeill Whistler. Their paintings were often concerned less with the object itself and more with how light affected that object. Similarly, in Debussy's music, melodies are indistinct but the harmony and mood of the music is paramount.

## 1910: Stravinsky composed *The Firebird*

Stravinsky wrote *The Firebird* as the **Romantic period** was coming to an end. In the first 14 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, composers wrote really big pieces of music for huge symphony orchestras. *The Firebird*, originally written to accompany ballet, is no exception. Stravinsky used a huge orchestra to tell the epic Russian tale of the *Firebird* using music, elaborate scenery and costumes, and dance. In 1914, with the start of World War I, everything changed. As men and women turned their attention towards the war, they shied away from huge concerts.

## 1931: Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra performed its first concert

In 1842, the New York Philharmonic became America's first professional orchestra. Through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, other cities followed suit: Saint Louis in 1880, Detroit in 1887, Chicago in 1891. After being founded in 1928, the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra offered its first major concert program in 1931. Today, professional symphony orchestras are a part of the cultural life of most large- and mid-sized American cities.

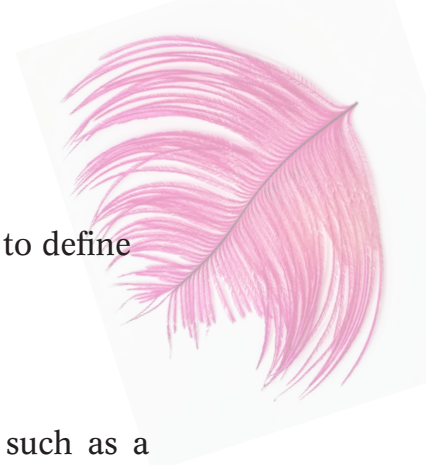
## 2011: Schachter composed *Freylekhe Tanzen*

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and through today, composers draw from all different styles and influences to compose music for symphony orchestra. There is no single style that dominates. Some composers write **minimalist music**, where just a few small musical ideas unfold slowly over a long period of time, creating a trance-like mood. Others are harkening back to music of the **Classical** and **Romantic periods** to create what we call **Neo-Classical** or **Neo-Romantic music**. And many composers look to other musical styles for inspiration: music of other countries and cultures, or folk, popular and rock music from their own culture. Some even include electronic instruments and other modern technology.

## 2016: A<sup>2</sup>SO performed first Middle School Youth Concert

The A<sup>2</sup>SO has been performing daytime youth concerts for students in Southeast Michigan for decades. Last year marked our first concert specifically for Middle School students.

# Absolute Music or Program Music



There are many different ways to describe and categorize music. One way is to define it as either program music or absolute music.

Absolute music is instrumental music that is simply music.

Program music is music that expresses an extra-musical idea such as a mood, a story or an image.

**There are some pieces that are clearly one or the other.**

● **Examples of Absolute music include works such as:**

Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*.

Bach's *Fugue in G minor*.

Or, frequently, a composer's *Symphony No. 1* or *Sonata in A*.

● **A lot of pieces fall somewhere in the middle.**

Michael Shachter's *Freylekhe Tanzen* doesn't depict a certain story or image, but he imitates the sound of the shofar and a raucous Klezmer band to make the orchestra play a "joyful dance."

Beethoven never called his *Symphony No. 5* program music, but many people insist that he depicted the image of fate knocking at the door in his famous work.

● **Examples of Program music include works such as:**

Operas like Mozart's *Magic Flute*, which tells a story that plays out on stage.

Ballets like Stravinsky's *Firebird*, which originally accompanied dancers who brought the story to life.

Debussy's *Nocturnes*, which use music to imitate the mood evoked by a set of paintings.

Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, which tells the story of an artist, using only music.



# Michael Schachter

## Freylekhe Tanzen



### About the Piece:

#### *Freylekhe Tanzen*

Michael's music draws from an eclectic brew of influences including jazz and New Orleans, Renaissance polyphony, Jewish liturgy and **Klezmer**, and South Indian classical music.

*Freylekhe Tanzen* was composed in 2011 as his thesis for his Master's in Composition. The work is heavily steeped in the liturgical and folk music of European Judaism. You'll hear the sounds of the **shofar** (an instrument made of a ram's horn) and **Klezmer** tunes from Romania, Bulgaria, Spain and Russia.

The title *Freylekhe Tanzen* means "joyous dances" in Yiddish. The first half of the piece centers on a slow triple meter dance style known as a **Zhok**. The second half of the piece focuses on a lively duple meter style known as **Freylekh**, a popular **Klezmer** dance.

**Did you know?**  
Michael Schachter  
lives and works in  
Ann Arbor.

### About the Composer

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Michael frequently embarrassed his parents by singing loudly at restaurants. He has been studying the piano since he was five years old, but it was not until middle school that he developed a serious passion for performing and creating music. In high school he studied classical piano, jazz piano, and composition. He went to college at Harvard University, where he studied composition and orchestration. Following his graduation, he traveled to Chennai, India, where he studied South Indian classical singing and **vina** playing.

While living in Chennai, Michael and his wife, Allie, lived and worked at an **NGO** that provides a wide array of human services, and upon returning to the United States they founded a non-profit organization that sponsors education and living expenses for child victims of human trafficking.

Michael is currently working on a Ph.D. in Music Theory and Composition at the University of Michigan.

# Dig a little deeper into Freylekhe Tanzen

## Michael Schachter introduces his piece

Watch this video of Michael Schachter talking about his composition:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQ2WRG\\_xHZ4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQ2WRG_xHZ4)

Answer the following questions:

What does the title of the piece mean?

What is a shofar?

What is Klezmer music?

What have you learned about the life of a composer?



## Klezmer

Watch this video of the Maxwell Street Klezmer Band performing *Mazl Tov Dances*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n21e2ghSo4k>. Think about the musical elements that create the unique sound of *Klezmer* music and make some notes about them in the chart below.

Instruments	Tempo	Unusual sounds	Dynamics

## Think about it

**Klezmer** is a style of folk music of the Jewish people. Most **Klezmer** tunes have been orally passed down: they weren't written down, people just taught them to their families and friends to keep them alive through generations. People would play a tune over and over until everyone in the community knew it. Today, some **Klezmer** music has been written down in order to preserve it. In Jewish culture **Klezmer** music is often used at celebrations such as Bar or Bat Mitzvahs (a religious ceremony and party celebrating a Jewish boy's or girl's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday) or at weddings. It gives people a sense of unity and brings them joy.

Is there any music that serves a similar purpose in your life? Any tunes that you just know but are not sure where they come from? Any songs that everyone in your community knows that have become part of your culture? Are there songs specific to certain celebrations or holidays?

Choose a song or set of songs, find a recording or a video, and write a short paragraph about the significance of the music in your own community. Share your findings and thoughts with your class.



# Felix Mendelssohn

## First movement of Violin Concerto, Op. 64

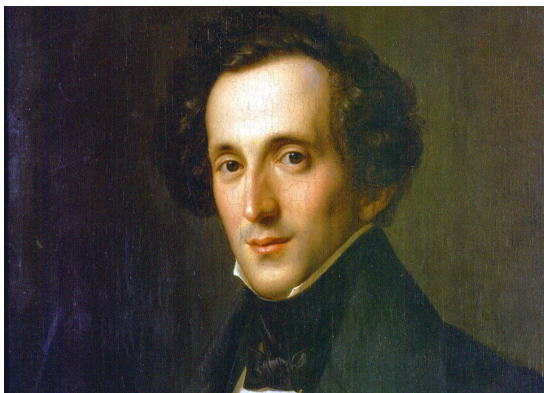
**Did you know?**  
Mendelssohn was one of the first composers to use a baton while conducting.



### About the Composer

Born in Germany in 1809, Mendelssohn was a child prodigy. He began taking piano lessons at age six and gave his first public concert at age nine. Between the ages of 12 and 14, he wrote 12 string **symphonies** to be performed at his parents' parties. He published his first piece of music – a piano quartet – at age 13 and composed his first full **symphony** when he was 15. The most successful work of his teenage years was music to accompany Shakespeare's play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This music is still frequently performed by orchestras. Despite his early death at age 38, Felix Mendelssohn was one of the first significant **Romantic** composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Felix was not the only musical genius of his family. His sister Fanny was equally talented. Because composing was not an acceptable career for women at the time, she was forced to give up her dreams of becoming a professional musician, though she continued to compose. Some of the music published under Felix's name was actually written by Fanny. In fact, the Queen of England once told Felix what her favorite piece of his music was, and it turned out to be one of Fanny's compositions.



*Felix Mendelssohn*

### About the Piece:

#### *Violin Concerto, 1st movement*

A violin **concerto** is a piece of music written for solo violin with an orchestra. In a **concerto**, the soloist (in this case, the violinist) and the orchestra can interact in different ways: the soloist could play alone, the orchestra could play alone, the orchestra could play something to support the soloist, or the soloist could join in like a member of the orchestra. *Concertos* usually have three movements. At the concert, you will hear the first movement of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*.

Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto* was the last piece that the composer wrote for large orchestra. It took Mendelssohn six years to write it and it remains one of the most often-played **concertos** for violin. In this piece, Mendelssohn did something innovative: he wrote the three movements **attaca**, meaning there is no break between them. He did this to keep the audience from clapping between the movements.



## Chihiro Kakishima



Chihiro Kakishima, a freshman at the University of Michigan, has played violin for 13 years. She took up the instrument when she was five years old, wanting to be just like her violin-playing older brother. She grew up in a very musical home: both her grandmother and mother played piano and they went to many concerts as a family.

Chihiro doesn't ever remember being scared to play her violin in front of people. But she recalls getting nervous about other things involved in the performance: "My earliest memories of recitals were mostly thinking about making sure to lift my bow really, really high after finishing my last note, bowing before and after the performance and smiling. Basically, I was nervous about everything except actually performing!"

Chihiro attended Logan Elementary School, Clague Middle School and Skyline

High School in Ann Arbor. She has been a part of many ensembles including the Detroit Civic Youth Ensemble, Michigan Youth Symphony Orchestra, Michigan Youth Arts Festival, and the All-State High School Orchestra, where she served as concertmaster in 2015. Her quartet won the 2015 chamber competition hosted by the Michigan Chapter of the American String Teachers Association and was featured at the Michigan Youth Arts Festival later that year.

During the summers of 2012 and 2014, Chihiro attended Indiana University's Summer String Academy, where her quartet performed at a master class given by Brandon Vamos of the Pacifica Quartet. It was this experience that convinced her to study music in college: "After having the experience of working with amazing musicians at the camp, I couldn't imagine quitting music after high school. I was curious to see what other learning experiences music had to offer. And now I love it more than I ever expected I would!"

Chihiro won the 2015 Michigan Pops Orchestra concerto competition, received third place at the Rosalie Edwards Youth Music Competition, was finalist of the Michigan Youth Arts Festival Soloist Audition, and finalist of the Dexter Youth Concerto Competition. She has studied under Tami Lee Hughes, David Lamse, Paula Elliott, Alicia Doudna, Ching-yi Lin, Brenda Brenner, Kathryn Votapek, and Haixin Wu. She currently studies with Aaron Berofsky, concertmaster of the A<sup>2</sup>SO.

Chihiro likes to draw and enjoys traveling to Japan to visit family and friends. Both of these hobbies serve as inspiration in her music.

Chihiro is very excited to be performing the Mendelssohn *Violin Concerto* on the A<sup>2</sup>SO's 2017 Middle School Youth Concert: *Firebird!*



# Dig a little deeper into Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto

## Friends and Collaborators

Oftentimes a composer will write a **concerto** for a close musical friend. Mendelssohn wrote the *Violin Concerto* for his childhood friend Ferdinand David, who was the **concertmaster** of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. Composers will sometimes collaborate with a soloist to create something that will feature their abilities. It took Mendelssohn and David six years of frequent correspondence – mostly by letters, since there were no phones then – to complete the **concerto**.

Research the following **concertos** to find out who they were written for. Find out the person's name, their relationship to the composer, their occupation, and for what they were best known.

Johannes Brahms, *Piano Concerto No. 2*  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Clarinet Concerto*  
Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Concerto No. 5*  
Carl Nielsen, *Violin Concerto*



Ferdinand David



Anna-Sophie Mutter

## The Virtuoso

A **virtuoso** is someone who displays exceptional technical abilities on their instrument. They often tour the world playing recitals or performing as soloists with different orchestras where they wow audiences with fast technique and beautiful tone. The idea of the **virtuoso** musician gained popularity during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The tradition of the **virtuoso** continues today as many people still attend concerts to watch their favorite soloist perform.

Examples of famous **virtuosi** of the past are Frederic Chopin, Niccolò Paganini, Glenn Gould, and Franz Liszt. Yo-Yo Ma, Lang Lang, Martha Argerich, and Anne-Sophie Mutter are just a small representation of today's **virtuosi**.

Choose a **virtuoso** of the past and one of the present who performs on your favorite instrument and answer the following questions:

How old were they when they first began playing their instrument?

Did they go to a regular school? What was their childhood like?

Do they come from a musical family?

For what are they best known?

# Claude Debussy

## Nuages from Nocturnes

### Did you know?

During the coal shortages of World War I, Debussy traded compositions for coal to heat his house.

### About the Composer

Debussy was born in a suburb of Paris in 1862. He was the oldest of five children in a poor family. While staying with his aunt in southern France, he started piano lessons at the age of seven. He was accepted into the Paris Conservatory at age 10 to study piano.

Debussy was a very creative and original composer. He disliked the strict rules of his composition class at the Conservatory. He preferred to improvise and come up with his own imagined harmonies and scales. Throughout his career he wrote pieces outside the mainstream that both confused and fascinated listeners, and offended others. During his lifetime, his pieces were often disliked. He only gained real recognition after his death.



Claude Debussy



James McNeill Whistler, *Nocturne in Blue and Silver - Chelsea*, c. 1871

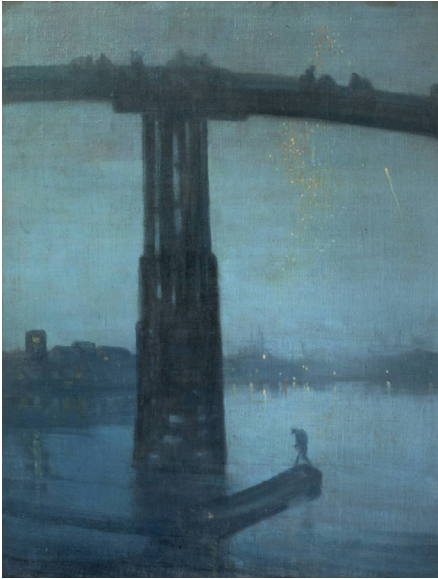
### About the Piece: *Nuages* from *Nocturnes*

Debussy loved writing music inspired by art-work and poems. His *Nocturnes* were inspired by the paintings of an American artist named James McNeill Whistler. The word **nocturnes**, which in French means “nights,” was used by **Romantic** musicians to refer to short, dreamy pieces. They are often very calm like lullabies. Whistler borrowed the musical term to title his paintings, which are dreamy, impressionist paintings of night scenes. Then Debussy borrowed the term back from him for his musical composition.

Debussy’s *Nocturnes* include three movements: *Nuages* (clouds), *Fêtes* (parties), and *Sirènes* (sirens or mermaid-like creatures that used their voices to lure sailors into shipwrecks). The first movement, *Nuages*, will be performed on the concert. *Nuages* depicts a slow-moving, solemn gray sky full of clouds streaked with white.



# Dig a little deeper into Debussy's Nocturnes



James McNeill Whistler, *Nocturne in Blue and Gold: Old Battersea Bridge*, 1872-1875

## Music and the Visual Arts

Debussy was inspired by the impressionist paintings of James McNeill Whistler (two of which are shown to the left) to compose his *Nocturnes*. Throughout history, musicians and artists of different media have inspired each others' work.

Listen to Debussy's *Nocturnes* (<https://youtu.be/obv33I2Kf10>) while examining Whistler's paintings. What kind of words would you use to describe the paintings? Can you use similar words to describe Debussy's music? Do the images match up with the music? How did Debussy transfer the mood of the paintings into music?

Now choose one of the other paintings below. Take some time to really examine the painting. How would you describe it? What is it about or what sort of mood does it evoke in you? Imagine you are a composer. If you were to write a piece of music inspired by the painting, what sorts of elements would it have?

Then listen to the music that was inspired by the painting you chose. Are you surprised by the composer's choices? Do you think the musical elements align with the visual elements of the painting?



Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera (Allegory of Spring)* inspired

Ottorino Respighi's *Botticelli Tryptich*

<https://youtu.be/hy6rkBZ8K1E>

Vincent Van Gogh's *Starry Night* inspired

Henri Dutilleux's *Timbres, espace, mouvement (or the Starry Night)*

<https://youtu.be/HLIEb0EMzzw>



Katsushika Hokusai's *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* inspired

Claude Debussy's *La Mer*

<https://youtu.be/SgSNgzA37To>



# Igor Stravinsky

## The Firebird Suite

### Did you know?

The premiere of Stravinsky's Ballet *The Rite of Spring* was met not only with boos and hisses from the audience but also with riots, fights, and general mayhem in the audience and on stage.

### About the Composer

Stravinsky was born in Saint Petersburg, Russia in 1882. He grew up in a very musical family. Stravinsky took piano lessons as a boy. He studied music theory and tried his hand at composition. But despite his passion for music, he chose to study Law when he went to college.

It was obvious that Stravinsky's heart was not in his Law studies. He barely went to class and composed whenever he had a free moment. Stravinsky eventually decided to return to music.

Stravinsky went on to become one of the most famous composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, composing music for ballets, operas, and for symphony orchestras.

Stravinsky lived in many places. After leaving Russia during World War I, he moved to France. He later ended up in the United States, where he lived in Los Angeles and New York City.



### About the Piece: *The Firebird Suite*

The *Firebird Suite* is a set of short instrumental pieces taken from Stravinsky's ballet of the same name. The ballet was written in 1910 and was first performed in Paris. It was an instant hit.

*Firebird* tells the story of Prince Ivan's quest to win the heart of the Princess Tsarevna. But first, he must defeat the evil magician Koschei, "the Deathless."

Prince Ivan meets the Firebird in Koschei's enchanted forest and she gives him one of her feathers. She says that it will help him if he is ever in trouble. The Prince then finds 12 beautiful princesses outside Koschei's castle, including the Princess Tsarevna. The Prince follows the women inside, where he is confronted by Koschei. After waving the feather, the Firebird appears and forces Koschei and his demons to dance until they fall into a deep sleep.

The Firebird then shows Prince Ivan how to kill Koschei's soul. With Koschei dead, the enchantment he had placed on the forest lifts, and the princesses are freed. Prince Ivan and Tsarevna fall in love and get married, living happily ever after.



# Dig a little deeper into Stravinsky's Firebird Suite

## Firebird: The Art of ballet

Music itself can paint pictures and tell stories. But sometimes music combines with other art forms to achieve mesmerizing storytelling. In operas and musicals, singing, acting, costumes, and scenery combine with music to bring stories to life. In movies, music joins acting, cinematography and film production to enchant the viewer. And in ballet, music and dance join forces, with the help of costume and set design, to bring stories to life in a spectacular fashion.

Stravinsky didn't create the *Firebird* all on his own. First of all, he worked with the **choreographer** Michael Fokine. Fokine was known for being able to memorize the entire score of a ballet and have all the dance moves perfectly worked out before any rehearsals started. The idea for the production came from Sergei Diaghilev, the **impresario** of a touring ballet company known as the Ballet Russes (or Russian Ballet), which travelled around Europe and America showing audiences the beauty of Russian ballet. Finally, before it hit the stages, set designers created beautiful scenery and costume designers dressed the dancers in spectacular costumes.



*New York City Ballet production of The Firebird, 2016*

## What's that?

A **Choreographer** is the person who creates and directs the movements of a ballet.  
An **Impresario** is a theatrical producer who hires ballerinas and presents ballets.

Watch this video of the Mariinsky Ballet performing the end of the *Firebird* ballet. In it, you'll see the prima ballerina Diana Vishneva and the other dancers performing Fokine's original choreography.

<https://youtu.be/MOW-JuZqQMmk?list=PLT1RB6Jo-ETrz0ggZymwv8wqDIRgRx-Sof>

They will perform two of the three sections of the ballet that you'll hear at the concert:

(1) **The Infernal Dance**, where the Firebird forces Kostchei and his demons to dance; and (2) **The Berceuse**, where the Firebird puts everyone into a deep sleep before showing Prince Ivan how to kill Koschei's soul..

As you watch the video, think about how all the art forms – the music, the choreography, the sets, the costume design – come together to tell the story of the Firebird.

# About the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra

The Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1928 by a group of music-loving friends who at first called themselves the “Ann Arbor Community Orchestra.” They offered their first concert in November of 1931. Since then, the A<sup>2</sup>SO has had 13 conductors who have built it up from a group of amateurs in 1931 to a fully professional orchestra in 1986.

Besides performing 6 Main Stage Concerts, 2 Family Concerts, 3 Youth Concerts, and 1 Holiday Pops Concert each year, the A<sup>2</sup>SO provides Education and Outreach programs that reach over 30,000 people in Southeast Michigan every year.

## Meet Some Musicians



My name is **Arie Lipsky**.  
I am the **conductor**.  
I also conduct the **Ashland Symphony Orchestra** in Ohio.  
I started playing the flute when I was **6 years old** and the cello when I was **11 years old**.  
When I’m not conducting, I like to **read, play chess and practice yoga**.

My name is **Becky Bloomer**.  
I play the **trumpet**.  
I started playing when I was in **6th grade**.  
When I’m not performing with the A<sup>2</sup>SO, I am **teaching trumpet to Middle & High school students**.  
I like to **take pictures and watch TV**.



My name is **Tim Michling**.  
I play the **oboe**.  
I started playing when I was **10 years old**.  
When I’m not performing with the A<sup>2</sup>SO, I am **working at the Citizens Research Council of Michigan**, where I analyze state and local public policy.  
I like to **read, cook, and learn new things**.

My name is **Kathryn Votapek**.  
I play the **violin** and  
**I’m the A<sup>2</sup>SO’s Associate Concertmaster**.  
I started playing when I was **7 years old**.  
When I’m not performing with the A<sup>2</sup>SO, I am **teaching violin at the University of Michigan**.  
I like to **read, cook, knit, do puzzles, listen to operas and take care of my two kids**.





# The Concert Experience

## Welcome to Hill Auditorium

Hill Auditorium is the main concert hall at the University of Michigan. Hill Auditorium first opened its doors on May 14, 1913. Former University of Michigan Regent Arthur Hill donated \$200,000 and former University Musical Society President Charles Sink raised \$150,000 towards the construction of the concert hall. The hall was designed by the Detroit firm of Albert Kahn and Associates. This architectural firm constructed many notable buildings, including the River Rouge plant in Dearborn, Michigan.

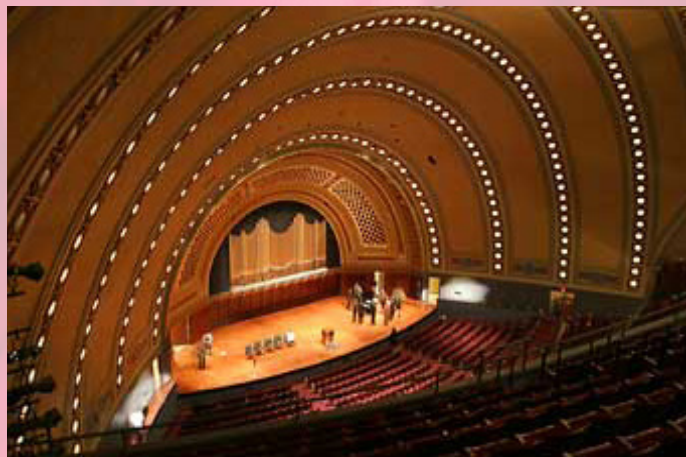
Albert Kahn, in collaboration with noted acoustical engineer Hugh Tallant, set out to develop a hall with perfect acoustics. The idea was to design a massive auditorium where audience members could hear from every seat. The result was an auditorium in the shape of a megaphone, allowing every single audience member to hear the performers clearly. It is said that from the focal point on the stage center, a dime can be dropped and heard in the last row of the balcony.

Hill Auditorium is the largest performance venue on the University of Michigan campus with seating for up to 3,538 audience members. The auditorium itself covers 23,000 square feet of ground and stands approximately 70 feet high. There are three levels of seating in the concert hall. The concert hall houses a colossal organ, manufactured by a Detroit company for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It contains 3,901 pipes ranging in size from a drinking straw to a tree trunk.

Some of the world's most famous musicians have performed at Hill Auditorium, including Bruce Springsteen, Melissa Ethridge, Chris Rock, Yo-Yo Ma, Leonard Bernstein, Benny Goodman, Dave Brubeck, Wynton Marsalis, Elton John, The Grateful Dead, Bob Marley, Jimmy Buffet, Lupe Fiasco, and countless others. The Ann Arbor Symphony performs regularly at Hill Auditorium and at the Michigan Theater in downtown Ann Arbor.

## Hold the applause...

Just as people often pause before starting a new sentence or topic of conversation, the orchestra pauses before beginning a new idea. In orchestral music, those pauses happen between **movements**, which are sections of a larger piece. Each **movement** has its own distinct characteristics: tempo, key, themes, etc. It is customary to not applaud between the **movements** of a piece so as to not disrupt the flow of musical ideas. You'll know when a piece is over because the conductor will put his or her arms down and turn around to face the audience. That's when the clapping will begin.



## Concert Program

Schachter, *Freylekhe Tanzen*

Mendelssohn, First movement from the *Violin Concerto*

Debussy, *Nuages* from *Nocturnes*

Stravinsky, *Firebird Suite*

Infernal Dance of King Koschei

Berceuse

Finale

# Glossary

**Absolute music:** Instrumental music that is simply music. Unlike program music, absolute music refers to no particular extra-musical idea, mood or image.

**Aleatoric music:** Music in which some element is left to chance.

**Attaca:** A musical direction at the end of a movement indicating that the next movement should follow immediately with no break. It means “attack,” as in “attack the next movement immediately!”

**Cadenza:** A solo passage near the end of a concerto that gives the soloist a chance to show off his or her technique and ability to improvise, or make up a melody on the spot.

**Choreographer:** The person who creates and directs the dance movements of a ballet.

**Classical Period:** An era of musical composition that began around 1750 and ended around 1820. Famous composers from this period include Haydn and Mozart. Classical music is defined by its clear, light textures and formal clarity.

**Coda:** The last section of a piece of music. In Italian, coda means “tail.”

**Concerto:** A piece of music for one or more soloists with orchestra. The word “concerto” comes from a Latin word meaning “to work together.”

**Concertmaster:** The leader of the first violins in an orchestra.

**Finale:** The last movement of a multi-movement work such as a symphony or concerto.

**Freylekh:** A lively circle or line dance in East European Jewish culture. A dance in 4/4 time that is popular at Jewish weddings.

**Glissando:** A continuous slide upward or downward between two notes.

**Impresario:** A theatrical producer who hires ballerinas and presents ballets.

**Impressionism:** A term most commonly used for a style of late 19<sup>th</sup>-century French painting made famous by Claude Monet. It also has been used to refer to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century French music that is concerned with portraying landscapes or images of water and light through subtle textures suffused with instrumental color.

**Klezmer:** Originally a Yiddish term meaning *musician*, klezmer refers to a musical tradition cultivated by Ashkenazi Jews in Eastern Europe.

**Minimalist music:** A style of music from the 20<sup>th</sup> century that uses very few – or minimal – musical materials. Musical themes are repeated over and over again and only change gradually.

**Movement:** A large section of a symphony or concerto. A symphony usually has four movements, a concerto usually has three.



**Neo-Classical / Neo-Romantic music:** Music composed in the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> century that draws heavily from the musical styles and forms of either the classical or romantic period of music.

**NGO:** An abbreviation for Non-Governmental Organization, which is any non-profit, voluntary citizen's group. They are usually funded by donations and rely on volunteers.

**Nocturne:** A composition inspired by, or evocative of, the night. Most nocturnes were short piano pieces written in the 19th century.

**Ostinato / Ostinati:** (*plural*): A continuously repeated musical phrase. An ostinato could be a melody or a rhythm.

**Pentatonic scale:** A musical scale with five notes per octave, as opposed to the seven-note major and minor scales. Pentatonic scales are found in many different folk music traditions.

**Program music:** Music that expresses an extra-musical idea such as a mood, a story, or an image.

**Romantic period:** An era of musical composition that began around 1800 and ran up until about the start of World War I in 1914. Much of the music played by orchestras today was written during the Romantic period by composers including Beethoven, Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Liszt and Mendelssohn.

**Rubato:** The practice disregarding strict time, *robbing* some note-values for expressive effect and creating an atmosphere of spontaneity.

**Shofar:** The biblical ram's-horn trumpet. It is still used today in Jewish liturgy to call congregations to repentance before the Day of Atonement.

**Sonata Form:** A type of composition in three sections (exposition, development, and recapitulation) in which two themes are explored according to set key relationships. It forms the basis for much classical music, including the sonata, symphony, and concerto.

**Suite:** A piece made up of a series of short movements. It originated during the Baroque period, when each movement would have the character of a particular dance. In the Romantic period, suites were frequently made up of movements of an opera or ballet.

**Symphony:** A large piece of music for orchestra, usually in four movements.

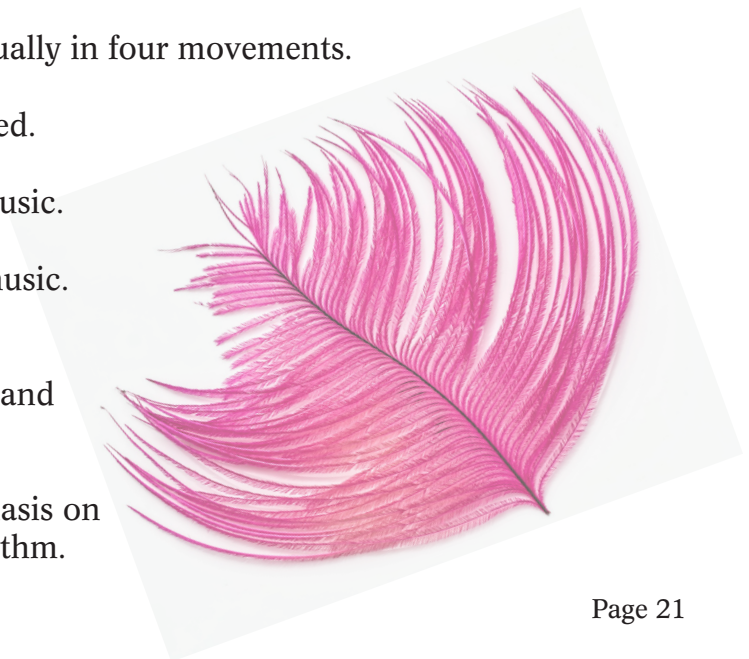
**Tempo:** The speed at which a piece of music is played.

**Theme:** A distinct, recurring melody in a piece of music.

**Vina:** A string instrument used in Indian classical music.

**Virtuoso / Virtuosi:** (*plural*): An extremely talented performing musician with crowd-pleasing technical and interpretive abilities.

**Zhok:** A slow Jewish dance in 3/8 meter with emphasis on beats 1 and 3, sometimes described as a limping rhythm.





Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra  
Firebird! 2017 Middle School Concert

# Classroom Activities

# Classroom Activities: Schachter, Freylekhe Tanzen



## Jewish culture

When someone says they are Jewish, they could be referring to either to their religion or to their family's cultural or ethnic roots. As an ethnicity, "Jewish" refers to a person's ancestry, which they could trace back to the Ancient Hebrews of Israel. Judaism is the predominant religion of the Jewish people. It is a monotheistic religion with roots in the ancient Hebrews, to whom the Torah (God's law) was revealed, as told in the first five books of the Bible.

There are many expressions of Jewish culture: language, food, holidays and celebrations, clothing, literature, and, of course, dance and music. Composer Michael Schachter employs two musical elements of Jewish culture in his composition.

## Klezmer

One Jewish musical element that Schachter uses is **Klezmer** music: dance music that originated among the Jewish people of Eastern Europe. Students can explore the musical elements of **Klezmer** on page 10 of this guide. To further explore **Klezmer** with your students, show them this video of **Klezmer** dance at a Jewish wedding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGEGpXosjWI&list=R-DUGEGpXosjWI#t=35>. During the video, ask students to pay attention to the instruments, the costumes, and how the rhythms make the music easy to dance to.



## Shofar

The other Jewish musical element that Schachter uses is the sound of the **shofar**. A **shofar** is a ram's horn that is used as an instrument in Jewish liturgy. A person buzzes their lips into the narrow end of a **shofar**, just as they would with a modern brass instrument. And, like a natural horn (a brass instrument without any keys or valves), the **shofar** can produce a limited range of notes, most notably the perfect 5<sup>th</sup> used to announce religious holidays.

Use the following video to introduce the students to the sound of the **shofar**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jR20-0sy1Y>

On the next page is a short excerpt from Schachter's *Freylekhe Tanzen*. In this excerpt, string instruments mimic the sound of the **shofar** using upward leaps in free rhythms. Students can try to play this excerpt on their instruments.

## Freylekhe Tanzen

Listen to Michael Schachter's piece and discuss the **rubato**, **tempo** changes, the **shofar** sound, and **glissandos** that give it its distinctive sound. <http://www.michaelschachter.com/music/freylekhe-tanzen/>



# Musical Examples

## Schachter's Freylekhe Tanzen

measures 231-233

The musical score is divided into two sections. The first section, labeled "Liberamente - ca. 6\"", shows the initial part of the piece. The second section, labeled "ca. 3\"", shows a later part of the piece. The instruments are Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, and Bass. The score includes performance instructions such as "do not coord." and "possible".

**Liberamente - ca. 6"**

**ca. 3"**

**ca. 1" ca. 4"**

Violin 1  
*fff* do not coord. *fff* possible

Violin 2  
*fff* do not coord. *fff* possible

Viola  
*fff* do not coord. *fff* possible

Cello  
*fff* do not coord. *fff* possible

Bass  
*fff* do not coord. *fff* possible

# Classroom Activities:

## Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor, mvt. 1

### Introduction to Sonata Form

Sonata form is a musical structure that is commonly found in first movements of symphonies, concertos, and sonatas. It has three main sections: exposition, development, and recapitulation. These sections are generally identified through melodic **themes** and harmonic movement. The first movement of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto* has a few added small sections; the **cadenza** and the **coda**. The **cadenza** showcases the soloist's virtuosity and the **coda** finishes off the movement.

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Exposition</b>		<b>Development</b>	<b>Cadenza</b>	<b>Recapitulation</b>		<b>Coda</b>
	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 1 and/or Theme 2		Theme 1	Theme 2	
	<i>I</i>	<i>V in major or III in minor</i>	~~~~~		<i>I</i>	<i>I</i>	

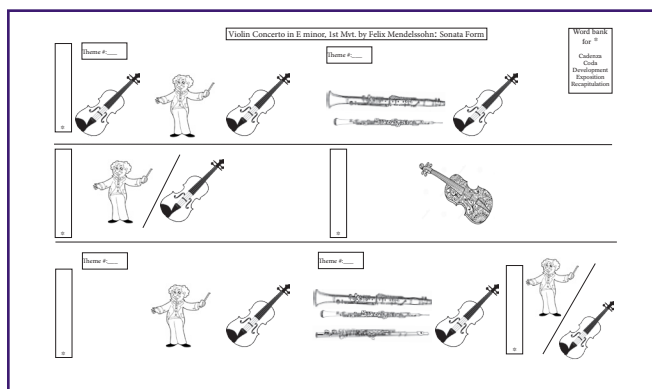
### Video Listening Map

Listen to the piece with the listening map video: <https://youtu.be/MNxj0yauXeY>. Students may need help understanding that **Theme I** has two parts. You could play the video more than once, asking students to raise hands at the start of each new **theme** or section.

### Performance Activity

Make copies of the musical examples on the next page. In order to help the students better understand and retain the music have them play the main **themes** on their instruments, sing them, or clap their rhythms. These can then be cut into theme cards, with students raising the appropriate card when they hear the **theme**.

### Coloring Listening Map



Make copies of the Listening Map insert and distribute to students. Play the recording of the first movement of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto* in E minor and instruct students to color the violins based on the **themes** and label the major sections and **themes** of sonata form.


*The colors suggestion below correspond to the video listening map.*

*Theme I: orange  
Theme II: pink*

# Musical Examples: Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor, mvt. 1

## Theme I-1


Violins  
Violas  
Cellos  
Basses



*p*

## Theme I-2


Violins  
Violas  
Cellos  
Basses



*cresc.*  
*sf*

## Theme II

Violins  
Violas  
Cellos  
Basses



*tranq.*  
*pp*



# Classroom Activities:

## Debussy's *Nuages* from *Nocturnes*

### Reactive Artwork as Listening Map

While Debussy's *Nuages* is programmatic, it does not attempt to tell a story like Stravinsky's *Firebird* and so many other programmatic pieces do. Instead, it evokes a mood or an impression of an object: in this case, the impression of moving clouds or the atmosphere created by watching slow moving clouds.

Guide students in creating reactive artwork to show what the music evokes in them. On the next page is a frame with three parts. Using the audio from this link ([https://youtu.be/IkmwzG7cB\\_U](https://youtu.be/IkmwzG7cB_U)), play up to 4:50 and ask students to draw something to match the music in the first box using crayons or colored pencils. You may need to replay that section more than once, or allow silence at the end of the section for them to finish their drawing. Then, play from 4:50 to 6:10 for the second box. And, finally, play from 6:10 to the end for the third box.

After the students have completed their artwork, have them share what they created and look for similarities among their finished products. Lead a discussion about what musical elements may have contributed to the visual elements they chose for their own artwork. Some things to note:

Debussy wrote about this piece: "*Nuages* renders the immutable aspects of the sky and the slow, solemn motion of the clouds, fading away in grey tones lightly tinged with white."

In the first section, Debussy makes use of **ostinati**, repeating melodic phrases that don't develop or change. These **ostinati** give the impression of movement, but without any harmonic direction. Many people hear this as an analogy for slow-moving clouds.

Debussy frequently creates harmony using parallel chords. Such chords don't provide the tension and release we expect in traditional harmonies. This might contribute to the feeling of floating.

### Pentatonic Composition

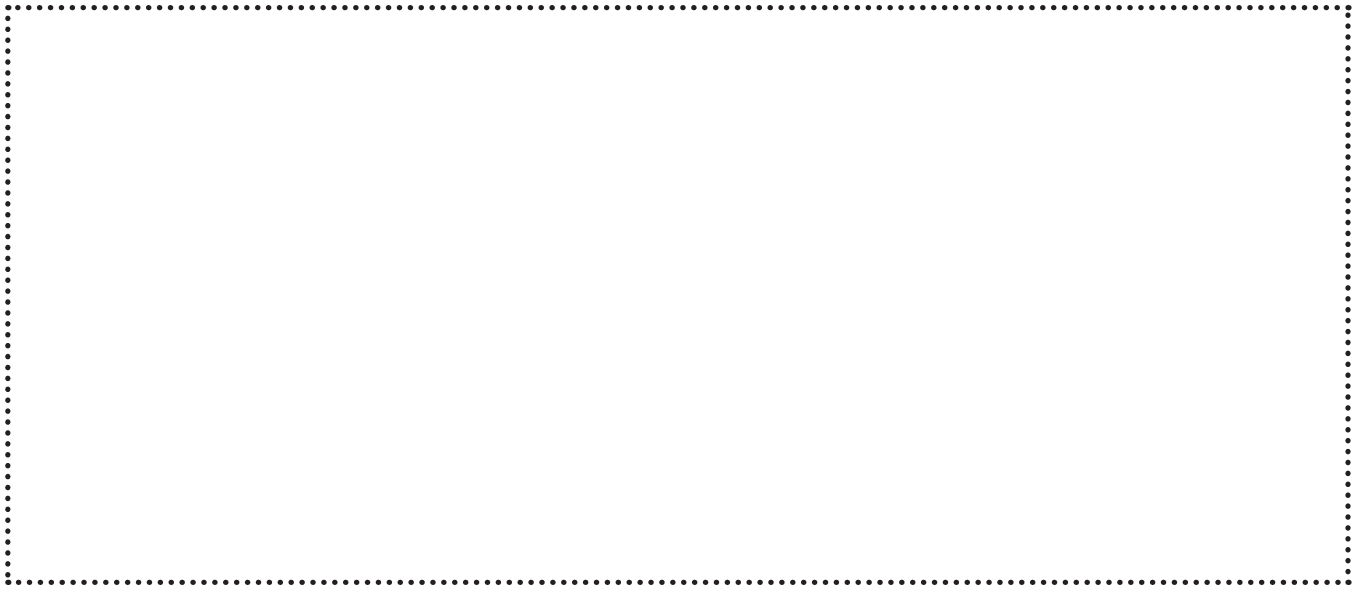
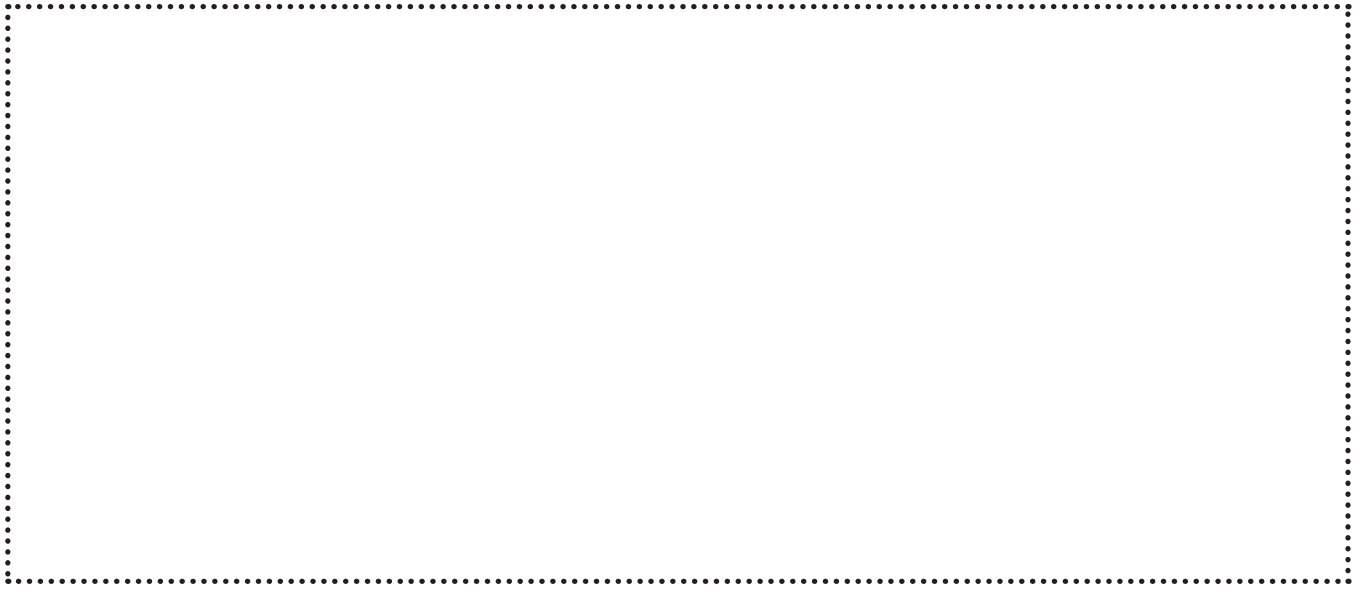
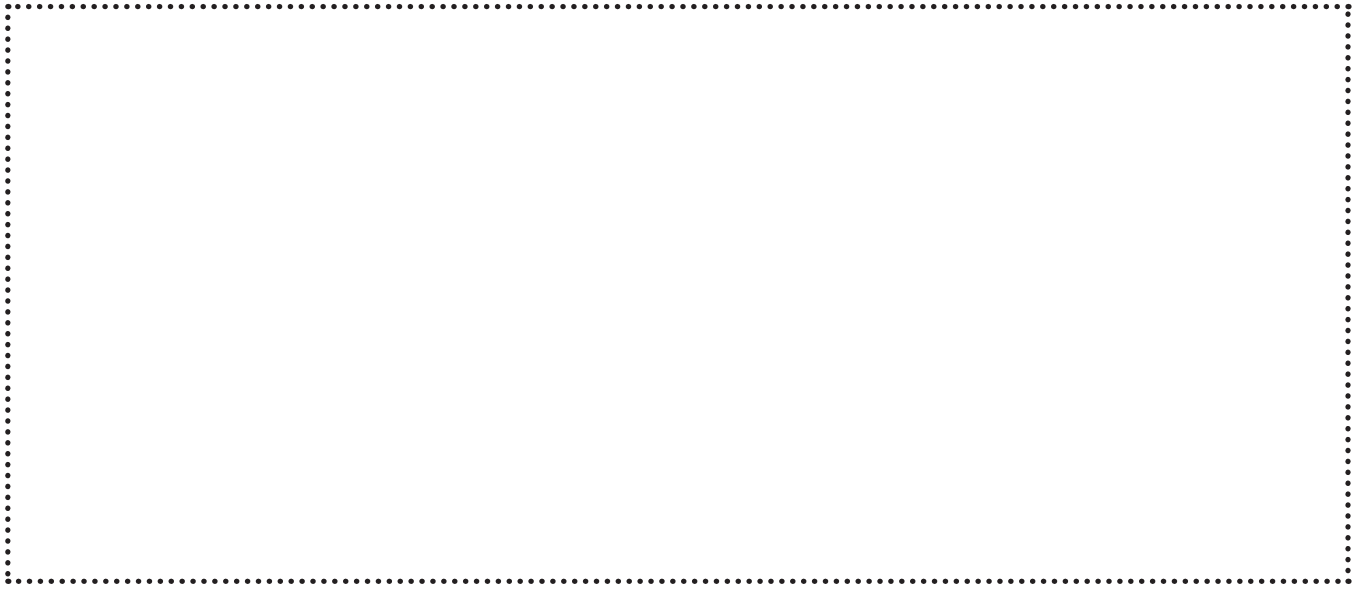
The middle section of Debussy's *Nuages* employs a **pentatonic scale** in the melody played by the flute and harp. Debussy was inspired by Indonesian Gamelan music he heard at the 1899 World Exposition in Paris. Indonesian music and music from many Asian countries makes frequent use of the **pentatonic scale**.

Have students work in small groups to write short compositions using a **pentatonic scale**. Debussy's **pentatonic scale** is the five black piano keys. But, if students have access to other instruments, transposing that to the natural notes will likely be easier: F-G-A-C-D.

After they've composed a short melody, students could add a drone accompaniment by choosing one, two or even three notes from the **pentatonic scale** to be the drone underneath their melody. Have students perform their compositions for the class.



**Debussy's Nuages from Nocturnes**



# Classroom Activities:

## Stravinsky's Firebird

### Perform the Firebird Finale

If your students are string players, familiarize with the *Finale* of the *Firebird Suite* by performing it.

A simplification of the *Finale* can be found on the following pages. On page 30 is the main melody, transcribed into treble, alto and bass clefs. This can be played by a solo instrument or any small group of instruments. Let students take turns playing the melody.

The rest of the class can provide the accompaniment. On pages 31 and 32 are accompaniment parts for a string orchestra.

### Firebird as Folk Tale

*The Firebird* is a Russian folk tale that was passed down orally for many generations. When folk traditions are passed down from one person to another, elements of the story gradually change in the re-telling.

Today there exist innumerable versions of the *Firebird* folk tale, many of them in the form of books with beautiful illustrations. Have students examine different versions of the story – individually or in small groups – and compare the stories and their illustrations.

All the versions listed below are available at the Ann Arbor District Library, with call numbers beginning J 398.209472. An internet search for the *Firebird* turns up even more versions.

Misty Copeland, *Firebird* (2014).

Demi, *The Firebird* (1994).

Selina Hastings, *The Firebird* (1993).

Rachel Isadora, *Firebird* (1994).

Bernard Lodge, *Prince Ivan and the Firebird: A Russian Folk Tale* (1993).

Ruth Sanderson, *The Golden Mare, The Firebird, and The Magic Ring* (2001).

Gennadii Spirin, *The Tale of the Firebird* (2002).

Another great version for comparison is the *Firebird* that is included in *Fantasia 2000*.

After comparing multiple versions, challenge students to come up with the most basic story of the *Firebird* that encompasses all the variants they have discovered. What do they think the original story might have sounded like before generations of changes and embellishments?



# Musical Examples: Stravinsky's Firebird

## Melody in Treble Clef

Musical notation for the melody in Treble Clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 3/2 time signature. The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and D5. The second staff continues with quarter notes E5, D5, C5, B4, and A4. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a final half note G4. Dynamics include *p* (piano) at the beginning and *ff* (fortissimo) at the end.

## Melody in Alto Clef

Musical notation for the melody in Alto Clef. The first staff begins with an alto clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 3/2 time signature. The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and D5. The second staff continues with quarter notes E5, D5, C5, B4, and A4. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a final half note G4. Dynamics include *p* (piano) at the beginning and *ff* (fortissimo) at the end.

## Melody in Bass Clef

Musical notation for the melody in Bass Clef. The first staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 3/2 time signature. The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and D5. The second staff continues with quarter notes E5, D5, C5, B4, and A4. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a final half note G4. Dynamics include *p* (piano) at the beginning and *ff* (fortissimo) at the end.

## Accompaniment - Violin 1

Musical score for Violin 1 accompaniment, measures 1-7. The score is written in treble clef, 3/4 time, and B-flat major. It consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains measures 1-7. The second staff continues the pattern. The third staff contains measures 7-8, ending with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and a repeat sign. The music features a consistent eighth-note triplet accompaniment.

## Accompaniment - Violin 2

Musical score for Violin 2 accompaniment, measures 1-7. The score is written in treble clef, 3/4 time, and B-flat major. It consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains measures 1-7. The second staff continues the pattern. The third staff contains measures 7-8, ending with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and a repeat sign. The music features a consistent eighth-note triplet accompaniment.

## Accompaniment - Viola

Musical score for Viola accompaniment, measures 1-7. The score is written in bass clef, 3/4 time, and B-flat major. It consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains measures 1-7. The second staff continues the pattern. The third staff contains measures 7-8, ending with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and a repeat sign. The music features a consistent eighth-note triplet accompaniment.

## Accompaniment - Cello

Musical score for Cello accompaniment, measures 1-7. The score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 3/2. The music consists of a continuous eighth-note triplet pattern. Measure 1 starts with a dynamic marking of *p*. Measure 7 ends with a double bar line, a fermata over the final note, and a dynamic marking of *ff*.

## Accompaniment - Bass

Musical score for Bass accompaniment, measures 8-14. The score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 3/2. The music consists of a continuous eighth-note triplet pattern. Measure 8 starts with a dynamic marking of *p*. Measure 14 ends with a double bar line, a fermata over the final note, and a dynamic marking of *ff*.



# Concert Program

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

10:30 a.m.

Hill Auditorium

Arie Lipsky, Conductor  
Laura Raynor, Host  
Chihiro Kakishima, Violin

**Schachter**, *Freylekhe Tanzen*

**Mendelssohn**, First Movement from *Violin Concerto*, Op. 64

**Debussy**, Nuages from *Nocturnes*

**Stravinsky**, *Firebird Suite* with Illustrations by Kelsi Hardin

Infernal Dance of King Kashchei

Berceuse (Lullaby)

Finale



Violin Concerto in E minor, 1st Mvt. by Felix Mendelssohn: Sonata Form

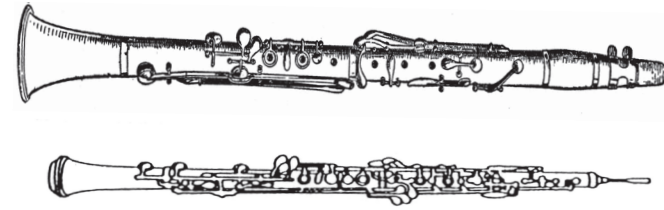
Word bank  
for \*  
Cadenza  
Coda  
Development  
Exposition  
Recapitulation

Theme #: \_\_\_\_

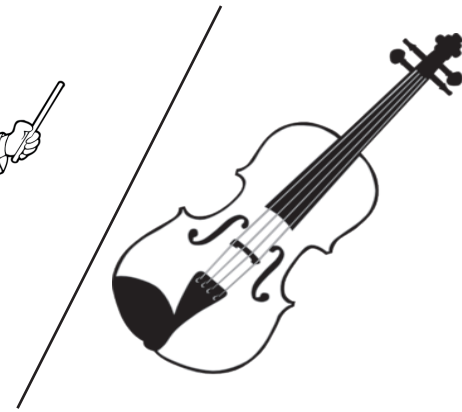
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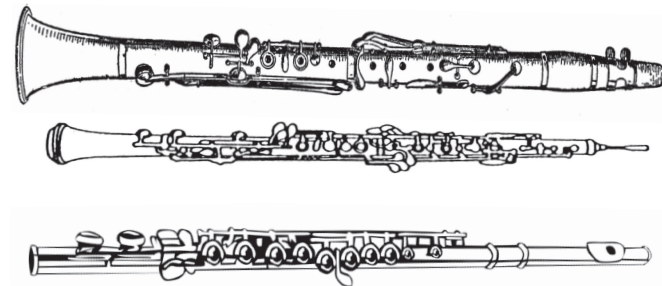


Theme #: \_\_\_\_

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Theme #: \_\_\_\_



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