

# New York Philharmonic School Day Concerts

Spring Concert

Monday, May 14, 2001

Resource Materials for Teachers

NEW YORK  
PHILHARMONIC  
KURT MASUR, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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## NATIONAL STANDARDS

The New York Philharmonic has an ongoing commitment to support the National Standards for Music Education, summarized here:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

*In addition, our work supports the New York State Learning Standards in Music. The Curriculum Connections section (on pp. 14-18) supports the New York State Learning Standards in other subject areas, such as English, Math, Science & Technology.*

Major funding for the School Day Concerts is made possible by the support of **Susan R. Malloy** and a grant from the **Louis Calder Foundation**.

Dear School Colleague:

**W**e welcome you and your students to the New York Philharmonic's School Day Concerts!

We support your preparatory work in the classroom with:

- 1.** This teacher resource book and supporting recordings, including *Inside the New York Philharmonic*, a videotape backstage tour of the orchestra.
- 2.** A teacher workshop at which these materials will be explored. You are responsible for carrying out the lessons before your students come to the concert. In addition, there are follow-up questions to help focus a post-concert discussion.
- 3.** Materials for your students (student programs).

This New York Philharmonic School Day Concert is on:

**MONDAY, MAY 14, 2001**

**10:30 a.m.** Upper elementary schools (grades 3-6)

**12:00 p.m.** Middle and high schools (grades 6-12)

**BOBBY McFERRIN**, conductor

The concert will include the following pieces:

**BERNSTEIN: Candide Overture**

**MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 4, "Italian"**

**TEACHING THE LESSONS**

To prepare your class for the School Day Concert, complete the lessons included in this guidebook, which focus on the notion of contrast. You can explore contrast in travelling, the contrast between the movements of a symphony, the contrast of different orchestral sounds, and the contrast of different combinations of sound. The first two lessons form one larger unit, as do lessons three and four. Each lesson takes approximately forty-five minutes to cover but they could be developed into larger projects if you so choose. The second lesson would be most suitable to turn into a classroom project. Please feel free to make any adjustments necessary to suit the needs and level of your students.

**STUDENTS WILL:**

- \* Explore the inspiration of Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 4* using personal experience as a resource
- \* Create a mini-travel symphony, comprised of four contrasting movements and inspired by the experience of visiting a foreign place
- \* Explore the many contrasting timbres present in the School Day Concert program, with a focus on the contrasting timbres of the orchestral families and instruments
- \* Invent fresh new timbres by blending selected instrumental sounds together

**YOU WILL NEED:**

- \* Poster paper
- \* Markers
- \* Simple percussion instruments\*
- \* Simple melody instruments, such as recorder (optional)
- \* CDs
- \* CD player
- \* Journals

\*Note: If your class does not have access to a box of percussion instruments, ask your class to bring in homemade percussion instruments or noise makers to use in this lesson. Objects may include homemade shakers, homemade drums, resonant metal containers and so on.

## LESSON ONE

# Visiting a New Place

**S**ymphony No. 4, (*The "Italian"*) by Mendelssohn was inspired by the young composer's travels in Italy. In this lesson, students will draw upon their experiences of visiting new places to better understand Mendelssohn's motivation for this composition. Students will focus on describing their musical ideas rather than realizing them with musical instruments in this lesson. This will provide the foundation for the subsequent lesson, in which your class will begin to bring their musical ideas to life.

**ACTIVITY # 1**

**T**he excitement that Mendelssohn felt upon visiting Italy inspired him to begin composing the "Italian" Symphony. Initiate a class discussion centered on the contrasting feelings students have experienced upon visiting new cities or countries. Students may suggest feelings such as excitement, confusion, nervousness or happiness.

**ACTIVITY # 2**

**E**ach student should choose a special place where they have either visited or where they dream of visiting in the future. They may choose an exotic, distant location or they may select an exciting place they have visited nearer to their home.

**ACTIVITY # 3**

**A**fter they have chosen a location, ask the students to describe the new place with as much detail as possible. What kinds of sounds would they hear? What languages are spoken? How do the people dress? What do they eat? What would it smell like? What is the climate like? Do any special events take place in this location? Encourage students to be as specific as possible.

**VARIATION A**

**I**nvide students to read their descriptions to the class without revealing the name of their chosen place. The other students must guess where the place is based on this description.

## LESSON ONE - CONTINUED

## VARIATION B

**A**fter describing their locations in great detail, students could write poems based on the sights and sounds of their chosen place.

## ACTIVITY # 4

**D**ivide the class into small groups. Each group should choose one of the member's locations for the group project. Ask the students to describe the overall mood or atmosphere of the place. Could it be described as calm and peaceful or as busy and energetic? After discussing the mood of the location, ask them to consider how they could create a musical portrait of this place. Students should focus on describing the tempo, dynamics and instrumentation that would suit the given location. Share the student ideas after the groups have finished their discussion.

## ACTIVITY # 5

**B**efore listening to the first movement of the Mendelssohn *Symphony No. 4*, tell your class about the composer's inspiration for this composition. Mendelssohn took a trip to Italy from his native Germany when he was 21 years old. Ask the students what they think Mendelssohn was trying to express about Italy in the opening of the first movement. After playing a few minutes of the movement, encourage students to share their insights. They may hear joyful, exciting or adventurous qualities in the music. Listen once again so that the students may consider what it is about the music that makes them hear these qualities. Is the tempo fast or slow? Which instruments do they hear predominantly? Are the dynamics loud or soft?

## ACTIVITY # 6

**A**fter the students have shared their ideas, mention Mendelssohn's own words about his trip to Italy. In a letter dated October 10, 1830, he wrote, "This is Italy! What I have been looking forward to all my life as the greatest happiness is now begun and I am basking in it. The whole country had such a festive air that I felt as if I were a young prince making his entry."<sup>1</sup> The happiness and excitement that Mendelssohn felt during his trip to Italy are expressed throughout this first movement.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Downes, *The New York Philharmonic Guide to the Symphony* (New York: Walker and Company, 1976), pp. 586

## LESSON TWO

# Creating a Mini-Symphony

A symphony is traditionally comprised of several contrasting movements. In this lesson, students will build upon their experiences from the previous lesson to create a multi-movement travel symphony. Students will then get a taste of the four movements of the *"Italian" Symphony*, which are based on Mendelssohn's experiences and impressions of Italy.

**ACTIVITY # 1**

Choose one interesting or exotic location as inspiration for your classroom mini-symphony. (The place could be selected from the locations described in Lesson One.) With your class create a brief description of the place. Describe the sights, sounds, smells and overall atmosphere of the place.

**ACTIVITY # 2**

Brainstorm some of the events that occur in your chosen place. Also think about some of the activities that people do in this place. For instance, if your class chose New York City, they might mention events like the Thanksgiving Day parade, a ticker tape parade, a funeral or religious procession, the fireworks on the Fourth of July or New Year's Eve in Times Square. Things that people do in New York City might include: shopping, relaxing in Central Park, skating at Rockefeller Center, or going to a Broadway show.

**ACTIVITY # 3**

Refer to your list and select four of these events or activities on which to base the four movements of your class symphony. Try to pick four contrasting events or activities so that different moods can be created during your symphony. At least one event or activity should have a calm or peaceful atmosphere.

**LESSON TWO - CONTINUED****ACTIVITY # 4**

**D**ivide your class into four groups. Each group will be given one of the selected events as the inspiration for their movement. Students should describe the mood of their movement in detail. Then groups should determine the tempo, dynamics and instrumentation of their movement. Once students have a clear idea of how they want their music to sound, they can begin to experiment with the musical instruments you have in your classroom.

**ACTIVITY # 5**

**W**hen the groups have finished rehearsing, perform the four movements of your travel symphony in the classroom. After the first sharing has taken place, students should begin to determine the appropriate order for the movements. Which movement makes a strong opening? Which movement would make a good ending or finale? Which would provide some contrast during the middle of the symphony? Try performing the movements in different arrangements until the class is satisfied.

**ACTIVITY # 6**

**N**ow play the students an excerpt from each movement of the "Italian" Symphony. Do not reveal Mendelssohn's inspiration for each movement before the first listening; rather ask for the students to share their interpretations of the music. Students should number from one to four in their journals or notebooks. After hearing an excerpt from each movement, they should note their responses beside the appropriate number. What does Mendelssohn express about his trip to Italy in each of the four contrasting movements? Share the student responses.

**ACTIVITY # 7**

**L**isten once more to excerpts from each of the movements. This time, reveal Mendelssohn's inspirations and intentions in each of the movements.

- 1. Allegro vivace (Quick and Lively)** This movement evokes the "sparkle of the Italian sunshine" and the opening violin melody has been described as a "call to adventure." In his own words, Mendelssohn "felt like a young prince making his entry" while he was in Italy<sup>2</sup>



**LESSON TWO - CONTINUED**

**2. Andante con moto (Walking, with motion)** Mendelssohn apparently had difficulty finding inspiration for the slow movement of his symphony during his trip. He may have finally been inspired by a religious procession which he saw in the streets of Naples.

**3. Con moto moderato (Moderately, with motion)** As is the tradition in symphonic form, Mendelssohn includes a graceful dance movement for contrast.

**4. Saltarello: presto (A very fast saltarello)** The saltarello is an old Italian dance form. The skipping rhythms throughout evoke the festive atmosphere of the Roman carnival Mendelssohn attended. Mendelssohn wrote of his astonishment when he was bombarded by sugar candies while attending the carnival. Women he scarcely knew were pelting him with the candies as they drove by in their carriages. He eventually began to partake in the tradition, and threw the candies back at his assailants.

How did student responses upon the first listening compare with Mendelssohn's intentions?

*\*Note: Students may have difficulties revising their symphonic movements and deciding on an effective order for the movements. You may wish to tell students that although the "Italian" Symphony has become a staple of the orchestral repertoire, Mendelssohn was hypercritical of his own work and became obsessed with revising this piece. The London Philharmonic Society, with Mendelssohn conducting, performed it for the first time in 1833. During the next year he began revising and rewriting the symphony. He would not allow it to be published while he was alive. The piece was not performed in Germany until after his death.*

**VARIATION**

Using the recorder melodies on page 12, teach your class melodies from the first, second and fourth movements of the Mendelssohn, emphasizing the contrasting quality of each of the movements. If your students play orchestral instruments, they may enjoy playing these melodies on their instruments.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Downes, *The New York Philharmonic Guide to the Symphony* (New York: Walker and Company, 1976), pp. 586

## LESSON THREE

# Orchestral Timbre and Contrast

Throughout both the Mendelssohn *Symphony No. 4* and the Bernstein *Candide Overture*, the composers use contrasting orchestral timbre to create interest and excitement. In the following activities which focus on timbre, students will gain an increasing awareness of the contrasting sound qualities that are possible in symphonic music.

## ACTIVITY # 1

Separate your classroom percussion or homemade instruments into several categories based on the material from which the instruments are made. Your categories may include metal, hollow wood, solid wood, skin, plastic, and so on.

## ACTIVITY # 2

Ask students to close their eyes. The teacher will play an instrument from one of the categories. The students should then guess which group the selected instrument was from, by listening to the timbre of the instrument. Students should also think of adjectives to describe the sounds from each category, for instance, high or low, soft or loud, dull or bright and so on. Create a list of adjectives for each of your instrumental categories.

## ACTIVITY # 3

Just as your percussion categories have different timbres or sound qualities, so do the different orchestral families. In the *Candide Overture*, Bernstein exploits the many timbral possibilities of the symphony orchestra. Listen to the opening of the Overture, focusing on the contrasts in timbre between the different instrumental families. In the opening moments of the recording, there is a clear alternation between the percussion/brass and the woodwind/strings. During the section beginning at 0'36" the students will have another opportunity to hear the contrast of the instrumental families.

## LESSON THREE - CONTINUED

0'36" - BRASS MELODY	0'47" - BRASS MELODY
0'41" - WOODWIND MELODY	0'53" - WOODWIND MELODY
0'44" - STRING MELODY	0'55" - STRING MELODY

### ACTIVITY # 4

To further develop the idea of contrasting timbre, choose one line of a song that the class knows (such as "Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream"). Repeating only this one line, create as much variation in timbre as possible using the means you have in your classroom. Some ideas to help you create contrasting timbres include:

- \* the entire class could sing the line together (tutti)
- \* a small group can sing the line
- \* a soloist can sing the line
- \* the boys can sing the line
- \* the girls can sing the line
- \* the rhythm of the line may be played on a percussion instrument
- \* the melody can be played on a melodic instrument
- \* the line can be sung at different pitches
- \* the line can be sung at different dynamic levels

Create as much contrast in sound quality as possible but repeat only the one line from the song you have chosen. Discuss the differences in timbre your students noticed upon each repetition.

### ACTIVITY # 5

Listen to the opening of the fourth movement of the Mendelssohn. The melody is first heard played by the two flutes in the low register at :08, (m. 7). At :19 (m. 15) the clarinets join the two flutes, who are now playing the melody at a higher pitch. The violins play the melody at :30 (m. 23) at a lower pitch. At :39 (m. 27), the orchestra joins forces and plays the melody together.

### VARIATION

When listening to the entire movement, encourage students to count the number of times they hear the opening melody or fragments of it repeated.

## LESSON FOUR

# Creating New Instrumental Timbres

In both the Mendelssohn and the Bernstein, the composers create new contrasts in timbre by grouping instruments together. These groupings create a rich vocabulary of orchestral sound. In this lesson, students will experiment with inventing original musical timbres by grouping different instruments together.

**ACTIVITY # 1**

With your entire class, practice singing some different vowel sounds such as ah, ay, ee, iy, oh and oo. To ensure that the students hear the contrasting timbre of each vowel sound, sing each sound for a substantial period of time. In order to create new musical timbres, divide your class into groups and sing different vowel sounds simultaneously in the classroom. For instance, half the class might sing "ah", while the others sing "ee". You could also divide into three groups and try three simultaneous vowel sounds. Discuss how the different combinations change the sound quality.

**ACTIVITY # 2**

Using the instruments you have available in your classroom, create new timbres by making different orchestral groupings. Select a mood that the class will express, such as "exciting." Ask students to suggest an instrument and a rhythm which may be appropriate for this mood. The student might choose to play a rhythm on the jingle bells. Now ask for another student to join in this rhythm, but with another instrument that will fit well with the sound of the jingle bells. Perhaps the cow bell will be added to the jingle bells. Have the students play the rhythm together to create the new sound. You may wish to add a third instrument such as a triangle or tambourine to get the perfect timbre. Select some contrasting moods, such as exciting, tender, angry, sad, joyful or nervous, and create instrumental groupings to convey these moods. Remember that the players should play the same rhythms together as if they were one instrument.

**VARIATION A**

You may wish to divide your class into small groups and give each group a different mood for which to create an instrumental conglomeration.

## LESSON FOUR - CONTINUED

### VARIATION B

Your students may enjoy inventing new names for their instrumental groupings. For instance, if the students have selected the tambourine, drum and maraca, they might call their new sound *tam-marac-rum*.

\* The names of some of the instruments you may have in your classroom include: shaker or maraca, sticks or claves, wood blocks, drums, cymbals, guiro, cow bell, bells, tambourine, finger cymbals and so on.

### ACTIVITY #3

You are now ready to listen to the second movement of Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 4*, focusing on the interesting instrumental groupings that are heard. In the very opening, flutes, oboes, bassoons, violins and violas play the same melody in unison to create one new timbre. Other innovative combinations follow:

- [ :15] – oboes, bassoons and violas play the melody together (m. 4)**
- [ :47] – two flutes are paired with the violins (m. 12)**
- [1:21] – oboes, bassoons and violas return with the melody (m. 20)**
- [1:53] – two flutes are paired with the violins once again (m. 27)**
- [2:12] – oboes, bassoons, viola, flutes and violins join together (m. 32)**

Listen to the opening minute several times, allowing your students to hear these unusual groupings of instruments.

### VARIATION

Using the recorder melodies on page 12, teach your class the melody from the second movement. After students are familiar with the notes, try to create new timbres using this melody by experimenting with different instrumental combinations and groupings. You could contrast the timbre of small group playing the melody with the timbre of the entire class. You could also add some percussion instruments to the melody. If your students play other orchestral instruments, encourage them to create new groupings using their own instruments.

LESSON FOUR - CONTINUED

**Recorder Melodies from Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 4***

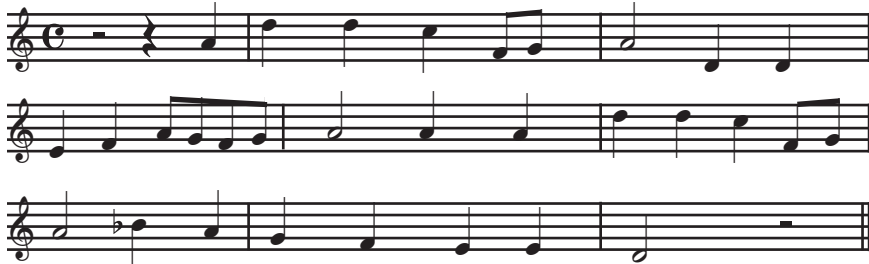
FIRST MOVEMENT: SIMPLIFIED VERSION  
Quick and Lively



FIRST MOVEMENT: ADVANCED VERSION  
Quick and Lively



SECOND MOVEMENT  
At a walking pace, with movement



FOURTH MOVEMENT  
Saltarello: Very Fast



**POST - CONCERT QUESTIONS**

- 1. Did anything surprise you at the concert? What?**
- 2. What was your favorite piece or movement during the concert? Why?**
- 3. After Leonard Bernstein's death, the New York Philharmonic performed the *Candide Overture* without a conductor! What would the musicians have to do differently in order to play without a conductor?**
- 4. What did you learn about Mendelssohn's impressions of Italy by listening to the performance of *Symphony No. 4*?**
- 5. Mendelssohn chose a specific order for his movements. The first movement was fast, the second was slow, the third was a moderate dance, while the last was very fast and energetic. Why do you think he chose this particular order for the movements?**
- 6. How did your work on the mini-travel symphony help you during the concert?**
- 7. Did you hear any repeating melodies or themes? In which pieces or movements did you hear them?**
- 8. Did you notice any interesting instrumental groupings during the performance? Which instruments were paired or grouped together? In which movements or pieces did you notice these groupings?**
- 9. You heard many different instrumental timbres at the performance. On which instruments did you focus as you were listening? Why?**
- 10. Which musical contrasts were most prominent during the concert?**
- 11. How was the experience of attending a live concert different from listening to the CD recordings of the pieces?**

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

# Upper Elementary School

GRADES 3 - 6

Take this opportunity to enrich and expand upon the work your class has done to prepare for the concert.

**MATH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY****Study the attributes of students for contrast.**

\* Contrasts can be found in attributes or characteristics used to sort and classify people or objects into groups. Generate a class list that makes each person different. Ask students to come up with a category to divide the class into 2 groups. The obvious grouping could be boys and girls, however students can come up with a more creative choice. The two groups should separate themselves within the room. These 2 groups should then decide on another attribute to divide the group in 2 again. The new groupings can be tall and short, or dark hair and light hair, etc. All 4 groups should separate around the classroom until each person is in an individual category.

\* When students are in individual categories, they should make a list of all their attributes according to the groups they were in. Collect these lists and read different profiles to the class having them guess the name of the student with those particular attributes. Example: Who is this? This person is a girl with short, straight hair, green eyes, glasses and sneakers, etc. Discuss which attributes are the most general and which are the most specific. Using the data, compute the ratio of one attribute to another. Figure out the percentage of students in each grouping. This will probably work better with the more general categories.

\* Create a bar or pictograph to show the data. This fun activity can be repeated with a variety of subjects: classification of animals, geometric shapes, the students' shoes, genres of literature, etc.

**LANGUAGE ARTS****1. Explore the use of onomatopoeia in writing.**

Onomatopoeia are words that are invented to imitate real sounds, e.g. bang, zip, smash, rip, and crunch. Read *The Remarkable Farkle McBride*, by John Lithgow.

\* The text has many examples of onomatopoeia representing the sounds of instruments in the orchestra. Elicit from the students why the



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author used words like: ka-boom, bang, clang, vroom-pety, and tootle-ee too. Have the students create their own sounds for instruments from the orchestra not written about in the text.

\* Read *what is that sound!*, by Mary L. O'Neill. This is a book of sound poems with wonderful examples of onomatopoeia. Encourage the students to create similar sound poems about a subject of their own choice. Share the poems with the class.

**2. Study oxymorons to emphasize contrast.**

\* An oxymoron is a figure of speech which combines completely contradictory words. Read *Who Ordered The Jumbo Shrimp? and Other Oxymorons*, by Jon Agee. This text has over sixty illustrated oxymorons that are truly comical. Ask the students if they have ever tried jumbo shrimp? Elicit what is unusual about this phrase.

\* When the irony is discovered, generate a list of other contradictory expressions the students may have heard, e.g. pretty ugly, drag race, accidentally on purpose. After reading Jon Agee's book, challenge the students to create original illustrated oxymorons.

\* Share the oxymorons with the class. Students may want to play charades and have the class guess their oxymoron before showing their illustration.

**3. Study point of view to emphasize contrast.**

\* Point of view is an important element in understanding and interpreting literature. Read *The Pain and the Great One*, by Judy Blume, a story told from two siblings' opposing points of view. Talk about each sibling's complaints. Point out the contrast in perspective.

\* Briefly talk about fairy tales the students are familiar with. Have each student write a short version of a fairy tale from a different character's point of view.

\* Share the fairy tale's new perspective with the class. Older students may wish to study debating. They could debate the point of view they have taken in the fairy tale, with another student taking the point of view of a different character.

\* Other topics can be debated. One to consider might be whether students should get homework on the weekends and on holidays. Have students debate opposing points of view.

**C U R R I C U L U M   C O N N E C T I O N S****4. Use literature to illustrate contrast.**

\* Use an author study to compare and contrast two or more books written by the same author. There are many popular authors with a large body of work. You might consider: Patricia Pollaco, Gary Paulsen, Betsy Byars, Louis Sachar, or Katherine Paterson. To develop these ideas you might:

\* **Ask students: what are the similarities in the text?**

\* **Ask students: how are the texts different?**

\* **Create a Venn diagram comparing the authors' work.**

\* Older students may craft a literary essay, comparing and contrasting the texts. Use your Read Aloud to encourage interest in the orchestra. Read *Inside Out, A Musical Adventure*, by Elizabeth Swados. This book tells of twins, who find themselves hurled into a new universe where the planets are instruments with people living inside them. Your class will enjoy this fun and imaginative book and get psyched for their visit to the Philharmonic.

**S O C I A L   S T U D I E S****Use your social studies curriculum to compare and contrast different cultures.**

\* Study the diversity of cultures in the world. Consider: location and geography, history, government, environment, economy, holidays and traditions. You may want to introduce a research study at this time.

**New York State Curriculum****Grade 3 - Communities Around the World.**

Choose two countries to compare.

**Grade 4 - Local History and Government.**

Compare the Iriquois and the Algonquin.

**Grade 5 - The United States, Canada, and Latin America.**

Choose two countries to compare.

## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

### L A N G U A G E A R T S

**The Remarkable Farkle McBride** by John Lithgow,  
Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2000.

**what is that sound!** by Mary L. O'Neill,  
Atheneum, New York, 1966.

**Who Ordered The Jumbo Shrimp? And Other Oxymorons** by Jon Agee,  
Michael Di CapuaBooks, Harper Collins Publishers, 1998.

**The Pain and The Great One** by Judy Blume,  
Simon and Schuster, 1984.

**Inside Out, A Musical Adventure** by Elizabeth Swados,  
Little, Brown and Company, 1990.

### S O C I A L S T U D I E S

**Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum**

The State Education Department, Albany, New York 12234.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

# Middle & High Schools

GRADES 6 - 12

Here are a few ideas that relate to contrast you may wish to explore with students; for other lesson ideas you may wish to consult some of the terrific web-based resources for teachers, such as The Gateway at <http://www.thegateway.org> or AskEric at <http://www.askeric.org/Virtual/Lessons>.

## MATHEMATICS

\* Study contrasting angles: have students observe a number of different angles (or angles that are parts of shapes) and then measure them with a protractor to record the number values that create the visual contrast. Then, ask students to start with contrasting number values to help them create contrasting angles. What strategies did they use to create their new angles or shapes? Which strategies were most effective? Least effective?

\* Stock market study: have students keep track of a number of stocks or mutual funds for a specific period of time (2 weeks or longer). Have them record their highs and lows and how the group of stocks fares comparatively over that time. What kinds of contrast do they observe over time? If they make a hypothetical investment in these stocks, how did they do? Did they buy or sell? How did that affect the outcome of their overall investment?

## SCIENCE &amp; TECHNOLOGY

\* Investigate contrast in space: have students research the latest findings on the scale of the universe. You might want to connect this to a visit to the Rose Center for Earth and Space and their "Scales of the Universe" exhibit, which demonstrates contrast - from the enormous expanse of our observable universe to the smallest subatomic particles - by using the 87-foot Hayden Sphere as a basis for comparison.

## LITERATURE

\* Do a genre study: have students read a comedy and a tragedy (Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *As You Like It*, or O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *The Man Who Came to Dinner* by Kaufman and Hart, for instance). Have students compare the characters, settings, and other techniques used in the tragedy with those used in the comedy you select. How do writers use particular genres to express their ideas and sensibilities?

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

**BERNSTEIN:  
CANDIDE OVERTURE**

**B**ernstein's operetta *Candide* took two years to write, finally opening on Broadway in 1956. It was full of satire, which is to say it made fun of the U.S. government and society at the time. *Candide* was Bernstein's longest piece ever, with nearly two hours of music. It was not liked by Broadway audiences and it closed after two months. But its overture took on a life of its own. New York Times critic Harold Schonberg called it "a smart sophisticated little piece," and in its first two years, it was performed by nearly 100 orchestras.

At the New York Philharmonic's 150th anniversary celebration concert in 1993, the Orchestra performed the *Candide* Overture in honor of Bernstein, whom they called "Lenny," and who had died four years before. As a special tribute to Bernstein, the Philharmonic performed the overture without a conductor. This is a pretty hard piece to perform that way! The *Candide* Overture is still Bernstein's most popular concert work. Full of brilliant, exciting melody and rhythm, it makes a perfect opening number encore!

**MENDELSSOHN:  
SYMPHONY NO. 4, "ITALIAN"**

**T**he inspiration for the *Italian* Symphony was a trip Mendelssohn made to Italy in 1830-31, on the urging of Goethe and Zelter, not long after the visit to Scotland that inspired his *Hebrides Overture* and *Scottish Symphony*. The trip began with a two-week visit with Goethe in Weimar—it would be the last time Mendelssohn saw the great poet—before the composer continued south to Munich, Pressburg, and finally Italy, where he arrived in October. Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples, Genoa, and Milan all delighted him, and he returned to Germany in October of 1831. In a letter, he wrote, "The whole country had such a festive air that I felt as if I were a young prince making his entry." The trip hardly made a dent on his composing. Writing to his sister Fanny, on February 22, 1830, he reported: "I have once more begun to compose with fresh vigor, and the Italian symphony makes rapid progress; it will be the happiest piece I have ever written,

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especially the last movement. I have not yet decided on the Adagio, and think I shall reserve it for Naples." According to his own account, the new symphony was meant to embody not only his impressions of the art and landscape he had encountered, but also the vitality of the people with whom he had come in contact.

The symphony proved an enormous success at its premiere. Mendelssohn's friend, Ignaz Moscheles, who served on the orchestra's board and had doubtless been instrumental in arranging for the commission, wrote in his diary about the performance, "Mendelssohn was the outstanding success of the concert; he conducted his magnificent A-major Symphony and received rapturous applause." But Mendelssohn had misgivings and soon began tinkering with the score, despite the objections of both his sister Fanny and his close friend and musical colleague Ignaz Moscheles. It's difficult to understand the composer's diffidence in this regard, since the work's immediate impression of perfect balance is born out through repeated listenings. Nonetheless, Mendelssohn wrestled with the score for years, claiming that the *Italian Symphony* cost him "some of the bitterest moments I have ever endured," and never allowed it to be played in Germany during his lifetime. He offered the piece, in a piano reduction, to the English publishing firm of Cramer & Co., but (according to George Macfarren, writing in an 1875 program book of the the London Philharmonic Society) the firm "declined it upon the ground that his works had not been profitable which they had already printed! Its publication thus delayed, was not again sought by Mendelssohn." At his death, he left sketches for extensive revisions, which no conductor or scholar has ever accepted as even vaguely improving on his original conception. The piece seems perfectly balanced as it is, and audiences have embraced it completely, making it one of his most perennially popular works.

The *Italian Symphony* is extroverted from the outset, when violins launch the vigorous first theme over the propulsively repeated notes of the woodwinds. After a second theme, rather more leisurely than the first, a solo clarinet tries out the initial theme in the minor, prefiguring the nervous tension that will reign over much of the movement's contrapuntal development section. The listener grows lost in the maze of Mendelssohn's themes, but the solo oboe intones an A—held for

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nine-and-a-half measures, then a similarly extended F-sharp, to help guide the way, and the principal theme soon emerges out of the depths of the orchestra. In terms of sheer energy, one is tempted to think of the first movement of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* as a sort of model for the *Italian Symphony*, with which it shares the bright key of A major.

The Beethoven's Seventh parallel continues with the second movement, which is here a slightly mournful slow march, noble and restrained. Moscheles claimed that the tune was derived from a Czech pilgrim's song, which would be an odd inspiration for an "Italian" symphony; other commentators prefer to imagine chant-infused religious ceremonies of a more cispidane persuasion. This is the last point at which we're likely to think of Beethoven: the third movement, in fact, resolutely avoids the world of the Beethovenian scherzo in favor of the more old-fashioned minuet-and-trio, perhaps an early Romantic vision of Haydn, with horns seeming to add their gentle punctuation from afar to introduce the trio section in the middle. In a letter to Fanny, Mendelssohn had said, "I want to turn Lili's Park into a scherzo for the symphony," referring to a lighthearted poem Goethe had written for a friend of his, Lili Schonemann. It seems likely that, in the end, the movement took an entirely different course, and that Goethe has nothing to do with this gracious non-scherzo.

For the finale Mendelssohn plays a trick of sorts. Many symphonies begin in the minor mode and end in the major, but it is difficult to think of another example of one that begins in the major and ends in the minor, as this one does. One could not ask for a firmer rebuttal of the old saw which claims that major-key music is happy and minor-key music is sad. Mendelssohn calls his last movement a *Saltarello*, which is a traditional dance, dating at least to the fourteenth century, that involved a good deal of hopping about. (Its name derives from the verb *saltare*, which means "to jump.") Some purists have maintained that it's not really a saltarello at all, but rather a tarantella; not knowing the first thing about how saltarellos were actually danced in Italy in 1830, I'm happy to give Mendelssohn the benefit of the doubt. In any case, it's the most unmistakably Italianate movement of the symphony, a breathless *perpetuum mobile* in which rhythmic energy combines with buoyant counterpoint. Its coda is masterful: the piece seems to have pretty much

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danced itself into exhaustion—the orchestra finally reduced to nothing more than first violins whispering the rhythmic motif, pianissimo, over the cellos and double basses—when it suddenly rebounds with a sudden, huge crescendo for a punchy, forte ending. One thinks of the composer's report of a party he enjoyed with friends, penned in a letter to his parents from Rome on January 17, 1831: "Afterwards we danced, and I wish you could have seen Louisa Vernet dancing the saltarella (sic) with her father. When at length she was forced to stop for a few moments, she snatched up a tambourine, playing with spirit, and relieving us, who rally could scarcely move our hands any longer. I wished I had been a painter, for what a superb picture she would have made."

— from a program note by James Keller, *New York Philharmonic Program Annotator* (abridged)

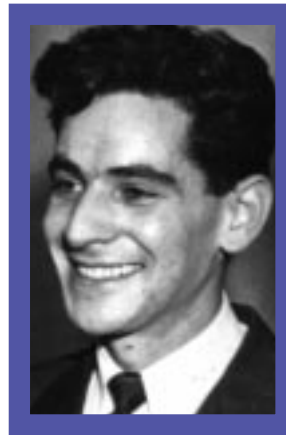


## MEET THE COMPOSERS

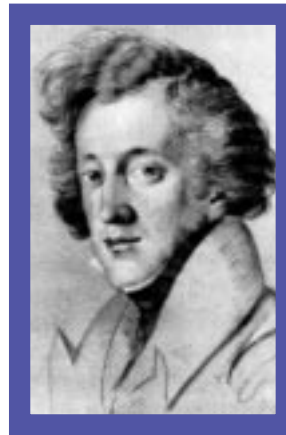
**LEONARD BERNSTEIN 1918-1990**

**T**he amazingly talented Leonard Bernstein was many things to many people. He was an accomplished pianist, conductor, composer, educator, and author. He was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts and graduated from Harvard. He also studied conducting at the Curtis Institute of Music and at the summer institute at Tanglewood. "Lenny," said one of his friends, "is doomed to success."

When Bernstein was just 25, he made the front page of the New York Times and rocketed to world fame as a last-minute substitute conductor of a New York Philharmonic broadcast. Later, he became the Philharmonic's Music Director, and launched a series of televised Young People's Concerts that won many, many friends for classical music. He was also an inspiring teacher who influenced a whole generation of American conductors in summer classes at Tanglewood. He wrote a hit Broadway musical, *West Side Story*, that is considered one of his best works. Bernstein was the first American-born and trained conductor to achieve international stardom.

**FELIX MENDELSSOHN 1809-1847**

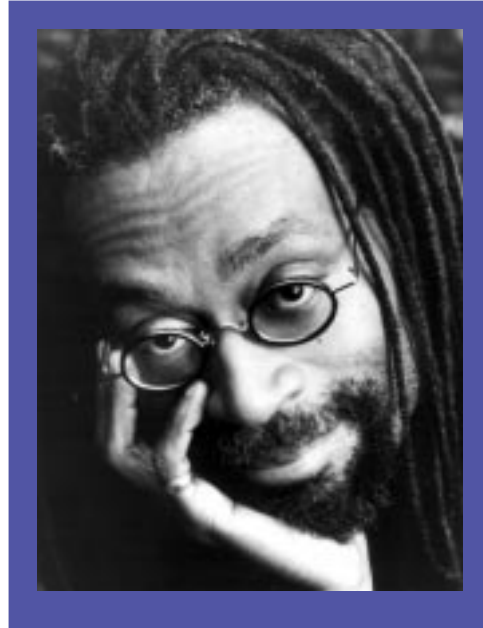
**F**elix Mendelssohn came from a prominent Jewish family in Berlin, and his grandfather, Moses Mendelssohn, was a widely respected scholar. The Mendelssohns were wonderful parents who encouraged every sort of interest in their children: Felix and his sisters spent their days studying music, literature, art, and horseback riding. When Felix began to show a genius for music, the Mendelssohns began to hold weekly salons in their home so that he could perform and conduct his own compositions. In adulthood, Mendelssohn was famed throughout Europe as a composer, conductor, and pianist. The English especially loved his music, and he wrote his great oratorio, *Elijah*, for his London public. Mendelssohn also gave piano lessons to Queen Victoria. He died quite suddenly when he was only 38.



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## BOBBY McFERRIN

**B**orn in New York to two classical singers in 1950, Bobby McFerrin began studying music theory at age 6. His family moved to Los Angeles when he was 7. An accomplished pianist, McFerrin studied at California State University and Cerritos College before he began touring with the Ice Follies and various show bands and dance troupes. In 1977, he became inspired to become a singer. He enjoyed a triumphant debut at the 1981 Kool Jazz Festival in New York, and soon began collaborating with such artists as Herbie Hancock and Wynton Marsalis. In 1983 he made his first groundbreaking unaccompanied solo vocal album, *The Voice*. McFerrin circulates widely as a guest orchestral conductor. He is Creative Chair for the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and holds a faculty position at the University of Minnesota.



## CREDITS

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## NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC



**T**he New York Philharmonic, the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States and one of the oldest in the world, has played a leading role in American musical life since its founding in 1842. The Philharmonic has always championed the new music of its day, giving many important works, such as Dvorak's Symphony No. 9, "From the New World," their first performances. The pioneering spirit of the Orchestra continues, with works by major contemporary composers scheduled each season. In 1991 Kurt Masur became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic, bringing his personal stamp to an Orchestra that has felt the influences of Mahler, Toscanini, Bernstein, Boulez, and Mehta. Among the many distinguished composers, conductors, and soloists who have performed with the Philharmonic are Anton Rubinstein, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Richard Strauss, Rachmaninoff, and Stravinsky. Today the Philharmonic plays some 200 concerts a year, most of them in Avery Fisher Hall, during the 35 weeks of its subscription season. In 1922, the Philharmonic was the first major orchestra to broadcast a live concert. Decades later, a television series hosted by Leonard Bernstein, the CBS Young People's Concerts, captured young imaginations. Since 1976, the Orchestra has appeared regularly on "Live From Lincoln Center." The Philharmonic is the country's only symphony orchestra to be radio-broadcast live on a national scale, and on a regular basis. On February 18, 1999, the Philharmonic performed its 13,000th concert – a milestone unmatched by any other orchestra.

**G L O S S A R Y   O F   M U S I C A L   T E R M S**

<b>COLOR</b>	The distinctive quality of a sound (also called "timbre")
<b>CONDUCTOR</b>	Leader of the orchestra
<b>DYNAMICS</b>	The loudness and softness of musical sounds
<b>FINALE</b>	The last movement of a multi-movement piece, such as a symphony
<b>GUIRO</b>	A scraped percussion instrument
<b>INSTRUMENTATION</b>	The instruments chosen to play a melody or theme
<b>MELODY</b>	The tune of a piece of music
<b>MOVEMENT</b>	Self-contained section of a large composition (such as a symphony or concerto); each one usually has a different tempo marking
<b>ORCHESTRATION</b>	The choices that a composer makes in the use of musical instruments in a piece
<b>PHILHARMONIC</b>	Literally, "loving harmony" or "loving sound"
<b>PITCH</b>	How high or low a given note is
<b>RHYTHM</b>	Patterns of sound and silence
<b>SALTARELLO</b>	An old Italian dance form; a fast dance involving jumping movements
<b>SOLO</b>	When a musician performs alone
<b>SYMPHONY</b>	Can mean the same as "orchestra" or a large-scale piece written for the orchestra, usually in three or four movements
<b>TEMPO</b>	How fast or slow a piece of music is played
<b>TIMBRE</b>	The sound quality
<b>TUTTI</b>	The entire group of musicians playing together simultaneously
<b>UNISON</b>	Playing (or singing) of the same note or same tune by all musicians performing