



Many Strings

Music Information for Teachers

Table of Contents

1. Native American Music.....	2-3
2. Gregorian Chants.....	4-5
3. Renaissance Music.....	6-8
4. Johann Sebastian Bach.....	9-10
5. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.....	11-12
6. Ludwig Van Beethoven.....	13-15
7. <u>The Planets</u> by Gustav Holst.....	16-18
8. <u>The Moldau</u> by Bedrich Smetana.....	19-21
9. <u>1812 Overture</u> by Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky.....	22-23
10. <u>Scheherazade</u> by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov.....	24-25
11. <u>Billy the Kid</u> by Aaron Copland.....	26-28
12. <u>Mount St. Helens Symphony</u> by Alan Hovhaness.....	29-31
13. <u>Mysterious Mountain</u> by Alan Hovhaness.....	32-33
14. <u>God Created Great Whales</u> by Alan Hovhaness.....	33
15. John Williams, Film Composer.....	34
16. Jazz, An American Invention.....	35-36
17. Sources – Teacher Resources.....	37



Many Strings

Music Appreciation: Native American Music

Native American Music in North America

There are over 200 tribes of Native Americans in the United States. Their traditional music emphasized rhythm (through drums, rattles, etc.) and melody (through singing and chanting.) The melody is often carried through words, traditional language patterns, and syllables. The songs were created and performed for a variety of reasons, including honoring nature, love, victory in battle, a good harvest, for children as game songs, and lullabies. Traditional music utilized wooden, stone, and clay flutes, rattles, drums, rhythm sticks with notches, rocks, shells, voice, and in some areas, string instruments with moveable bridges.

California Native American Music

California Native Americans sang and danced, and continue to perform, in order to honor their heritage and ensure success with the “spirits.” Their dances are dramatic opportunities to communicate with the “spirits” about their needs, for example what type of game to hunt, the need for rain and good crops, etc.

Southern California Indians used flutes, whistles, rattles, drums and musical bows. Many of these instruments were made from elderberry wood, reeds, turtle shells, deer hooves, bones and hollow logs. The “bull roarer” whistle was made with a piece of flat wood and string. As the wood was whirled around it made a “roaring” sound. Flutes were especially popular during courting. They were shaped like tubes and had holes for changing the pitch. Rattles were made of gourds, split tulle sticks, deer and goat claws, and cocoon bunches. The tulle stick rattles were made by splitting the tulle down to the middle and tying off the bottom so that when you hit the stick it made a “clapping” sound.

San Diego County Native American Music

There were four main tribes and languages in the San Diego County area when the Spanish arrived. They were the Kumeyaay (spoken by the Kumeyaay and the Diegueno), Cahilla, Luiseno, and Copeno. Each group continues to preserve and honor its language through elders, tribal education centers, and musically at tribal halls and pow-wows. Both the Kumeyaay and Luiseno had stringed instruments with one or two strings. The string was stretched across a bow and the pitch was changed by moving a bridge. The San Diego area tribes also had flutes made of wood and bone. The Luiseno had a basket drum that was “scratched, stick drums, and an instrument similar to a “tambourine” made from a bent tree limb.



Many Strings

Music Appreciation: Native American Music (cont.)

Five Recommended Recordings

Note: The Indian Store in Escondido, California (338 West El Norte Parkway, 760-746-1303) is an excellent source for this music, art, and instruments. I have found their staff to be very knowledgeable and helpful. There are many beautiful recordings, and the store has a listening center for you to sample and suggestions regarding new recordings.

1. Under the Green Corn Moon: Native American Lullabies by Silver Wave Records
2. Solo Flights: Various Native American Artists, Sampler Series Vol.1 by Sound of America Records
3. Sacred Spirit: Chants and Dances of the Native Americans by Virgin Records
4. Footprints of Our Ancestors: Native American Flute Music by whirlwindstudios.com
5. Traditional Kumeyaay Music by Gloria Castaneda

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: My students enjoyed and valued both traditional and contemporary Native American music. The students also enjoyed playing along with the recordings using a variety of traditional instruments.
2. Music-Art: Sand painting or Native American-inspired artistic responses can be enhanced by Native American music. I found the flute music to be especially well suited to accompany graphic art projects.
3. Music-Film: Discovering Native American Music and Pow-Wow were very informative films that provided a visual demonstration of the music.
4. Music-Geography: The students can make a map showing historical and present-day geographic boundaries of local and California Native American groups.
5. Music-Instrument Creation: Making gourd shakers, and other percussion instruments mentioned above, is not difficult and they can be decorated in traditional patterns.
6. Music Shared: I had many Native American students with parents that were involved in traditional music. They were very often willing to share that music with my class, thereby providing the best experience of the original music of the area.

(Regarding sources for the information on Native American music, please refer to the Table of Contents list of references. Additional information was also acquired from interviews and conversations with Native Americans in Valley Center, California, and Ernest Siva, a Native American musicologist. Information was also acquired from visits to the California missions in San Diego, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Barbara, and La Purisima.)



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Gregorian Chants

“Chant: *n.* a simple melody to which a psalm may be sung, esp. in choir...*v.* to sing a chant...” (Webster)

Chants were the music of the church during the Middle Ages. There were, in fact, a number of “chant” traditions. Gregorian Chants became the most common and enduring form. These are the chants that were organized by Pope Gregory the Great (540-604.) They were sung in unison, without any accompaniment. Their melodies were built on a number of musical scales, two of which approximate our modern major and minor scales. The use of these chants during Europe’s “Dark Ages” helped preserve them and provided a foundation for Western music. The early Christian Chants probably had their origins in older Hebrew and Greek chants. Pope Gregory established the Sistine Choir to train monks. The music spread throughout papal Europe. This effort at standardization was not entirely successful, however, as a number of churches in Italy and Spain maintained independent chant traditions. Between 1500 and 1700 a method of musical notation was developed to preserve the Gregorian chant tradition. Still, experimentation and creativity could not be suppressed. By 1600 the chants were being modified with complex harmonies and counterpoint. This creativity continued to evolve in the missions of the “New World” where Native American musical traditions were welcomed by some missionaries and integrated into the local chant tradition. Percussion, syncopation, and fast tempos made for some rather “jazzy” chants. After a period of decline in popularity the traditional chants were revived by the Benedictine Monks of Santo Domingo De Silos through their very popular CDs.

California History during the Period of the Chants

- Cabrillo explored San Diego bay
- Drake sailed the California coast
- Viscaino mapped California’s coast and urged Spain to colonize California
- California Missions project began

Five Recommended CDs

1. Gregorian Chant: The Ecclesiastical Year in Gregorian Chant, Sony.
2. Gregorian Chant, by Archiv.
3. Psallite! A Renaissance Christmas, Chanticleer Records. This CD is very exciting and has some compositions that reflect the musical dialog that took place in the missions.
4. Salve Festa Dies: Gregorian Chants for the Seasons of the Year, Female voices, Naxos
5. Armada, Music from the courts of Philip II and Elizabeth I. Secular music from the 1500’s for comparison with the Sacred nature of the chants, Virgin Classics



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Gregorian Chants (cont.)

Lesson Opportunities

Chants were most often experienced by my students as peaceful. However, some students perceived them to be sad or serious. They can be introduced to the students at the beginning of the day or after recess, thereby providing a quiet moment. The students were able to recognize their “sacred” mood, that they were sung in a church by a small number of participants, that they are relatively short in length, that they are old, and that there are no instruments. They were also able to notice that they are sung in Latin (tradition), and that music can be beautiful in a “foreign” language. In South America they were also sung in Spanish and Portuguese. Students also appreciated that without the musical scales that were memorialized in these early musical traditions modern music would not have such a great foundation. These chants can be contrasted with Native American tribal music, Hebrew chant traditions, and Russian chant traditions. Some of the Russian chant traditions also interacted with the Native American musical traditions in Northern California, Oregon, and Washington.



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Renaissance Music/Music of the Age of Discovery

Historical Context: 1450-1600

Music from this period is generally referred to as Renaissance Music. This was a period of creative experimentation with instruments and arrangements that developed between the Middle Ages and the Baroque period. These musical forms developed after the Medieval Chants and evolved into the Baroque period of Vivaldi, Bach, etc. The word “renaissance” is derived from the French word for “rebirth” or “flowering.”

Between 1450 and 1600 Europe recovered from the “dark ages.” This recovery was stimulated by commerce, exploration, colonization, exploitation of “discovered lands,” and science. During the Renaissance Europe began to emerge as a powerful force in the world. Columbus and Magellan restructured the European view of the world. Copernicus restructured man’s understanding of the Universe. Leonardo da Vinci’s curiosity and creativity ushered in a celebration of man’s intelligence and power, and the art of Michelangelo celebrated man’s emotional dimension. Musical forms multiplied and began to play a role in all aspects of society.

World History

1455: Gutenberg Bible was made with movable print.

1488: Dias sailed around Africa, opens up direct trade with India

1492: Columbus discovered the “New World”

1500: Pinzon “discovered” Brazil

1513: Balboa sailed into the Pacific

1519: Magellan began first circumnavigation. Cortez begins conquest of Mexico

1543: Copernicus argued that Earth and planets orbit the Sun

1558: Elizabeth I became queen of England

1564: Shakespeare was born

1588: England defeated the Spanish Armada

1609: Galileo confirmed Copernicus’s theory of the solar system



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Renaissance Music/Music of the Age of Discovery (cont.)

United States History

1507: Waldseemuller (the map maker) named the western hemisphere “America”

1524: French explored North America

1539: De Soto explored “New Spain” from Florida to the Mississippi

1540: Coronado explored North America as far as present day Kansas City

1542: Cabrillo explored Upper California

1577: Drake explored Northern California

1585: Raleigh sent colonists to Virginia, Roanoke Island

1607: Jamestown was established

Renaissance Music

1450: The organ, clavichord, viol, oboe, trombone, beak flute, trumpet, and crumhorn are popular instruments

1475: Lute is the most popular instrument

1500: Modern violin family is developed

1524: German Protestant Church encourages new types of sacred music

1530: Madrigal singing develops

1558: Queen Elizabeth I encourages new forms of music, sacred and secular

1600: Opera develops, as the Baroque Period

The development of the printing press ushered in an intense period of musical culture. Music could be shared throughout Europe. Music moved from the court and church to the pub, the village square and the home. Music became a popular form of family entertainment and became a viable profession.

Polyphonic (music voiced in parts) developed. Later, song and ballad styles developed with the melody sung and instruments providing accompaniment. This style formed the basis of modern folk, rock, and country music.

Experimentation in harmony developed in order to add complexity to the melody. “How to [play the lute, recorder, etc.]” books multiplied. Love songs, ballads or story songs, drinking songs, and dance music became increasingly popular. New and more technically capable instruments were also developed, e.g. the recorder, harpsichord, bagpipe, and the Spanish guitar. Music became part of everyone’s life, whether rich or poor.



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Renaissance Music/Music of the Age of Discovery (cont.)

Six Recommended CDs

1. A Renaissance Tour of Europe, The New York Kammermusiker, Dorian Recordings.
2. Armada by Fretwork.
3. Praetorius: Dances from Tersichore by New London Consort.
4. Psallite by Chanticleer.
5. The Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Eliabeth I directed by Philip Cave.
6. ...Per Flauto by Ganassi-Consort, Koln.

Renaissance Music is still very popular today. There are many choices regarding recordings; they are readily available on amazon.com or iTunes.

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: Renaissance music is very easy to listen to and enjoy. It has enchanting melodies and a generally soft nature. While the music is playing students can be guided to produce written notes about historical information and their comments about the music.
2. Music and Art: An exploration of Renaissance art, architecture, clothing, money, technology (ships, weapons, maps, etc.) can be enhanced by playing Renaissance period music.
3. Music and film: There are generally many audio-visual (AV) resources available because of the importance of this historical period.
4. Music and Geography: The Age of Discovery and Exploration is a rich source of information for charting the explorers, the colonies, their industries (i.e. the Columbian Exchange), and competitions/struggles of the early explorers.



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Johann Sebastian Bach (Germany, 1685 – 1750)

Bach and His Music

Bach had to endure the loss of his mother, and less than a year later, his father. They had provided his initial music training. He was adopted by his brother, who continued his music education. As a young boy, his music education was provided by the Lutheran Church where he was part of a “professional” boy’s choir. After his voice matured he continued his musical career as an instrumentalist. He was especially gifted on the organ and harpsichord. (The piano had not yet been invented.) While the Catholic Church provided their congregation with Gregorian Chants, Bach was employed throughout his career to provide the Lutheran Reformation with “new” music.

Bach’s style celebrates the Baroque Period, and he is considered by many musicologists as the period’s greatest composer. He developed “counterpoint” to new heights: “the weaving together of two or more melodic line to make a tightly knit, complex texture.” (Lloyd’s Encyclopedia of Music.) “Counterpoint was in Sebastian Bach’s blood...compare any of Bach’s Brandenburg Concertos with any of Handel’s concerti grosse: neither is artistically superior...[but with Bach] listen to what happens between the top line and the bass; it isn’t just chords.” (Galway’s Music in Time.) I find this counterpoint character to be most obvious in his organ and harpsichord compositions.

Additional Biographical Information

Bach had 20 children. He had seven children by his first wife, Maria Barbara. After she died he married a famous singer, Anna Magdalena, with whom he had 13 additional children. Bach was a very religious man who was dedicated to his family. Bach’s life, however, contains a number of surprising incidents: he was confined to a dungeon for a month because he wanted to be excused from his employment, he was dismissed once for unsatisfactory performance, he was detained and questioned after getting into a fight with a former student, he took an unexcused extended absence of three additional months and walked hundreds of miles to study under a master organist.

During his life Bach wrote over 1,200 pieces of music. Unfortunately many were misplaced and lost during his lifetime and after his death. His music was rediscovered and popularized by Felix Mendelssohn in the 1800’s (Mendelssohn composed many wonderful pieces, but may be best known for “Here Comes the Bride.”)



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Johann Sebastian Bach (cont.)

Additional Biographical Information (cont.)

Bach had a very successful musical career. He championed a method of tuning keyboard instruments that allowed the musician to expand in range of the instrument and also provided for maximum flexibility in what keys the music could be played. This strategy was very helpful in developing the modern piano. Bach was also a tireless advocate for the importance of music in the church.

American History and Bach

- During his lifetime the first pipe organ was brought to the English colonies (Virginia)
- Singing societies became popular in the colonies
- France established a presence in Detroit and New Orleans
- England, Scotland, and Wales were unified as Great Britain

Five Recommended CD's

1. J.S. Bach: Organ Favorites, Ruebsam, Naxos.
2. Bach: Brandenburg Concertos, Musica Antiqua Koln, Archiv.
3. J.S. Bach Concertos for Harpsichord and Stings, Trevor Pinnock and English Concert, Archiv.
4. A Bach Celebration, Christopher Parkening, EMI.
5. Bach: English and French Suites, Safri Duo, Chandos.

Lesson Opportunities

Music Appreciation: Children can quite easily perceive the counter-point interactions between the right hand, left hand, and foot pedals in the Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor which results in a kind of musical tag. I found them to be also quite intrigued by Bach's life, his adventures and the good natured Brandenburg Concertos. Finally, they experienced the guitar-symphonic transcriptions on A Bach Celebration as very calming, and the Safri Duo's approach to be quite "jazzy."



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791, Austria)

Biographical Notes

Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria. His father was a violinist in the Archbishop's orchestra. Mozart began his formal music education at age four. By age six he was ready to tour Europe as a "boy-wonder" on the harpsichord, organ, and violin. During his travels he absorbed the musical cultures and traditions found throughout Europe. In England he met J.S. Bach's youngest son, Johann Christian Bach. During his trip to England he wrote his first of forty-one symphonies. In Italy he was very well received and decorated by the Pope.

Unfortunately, his talent in music did not always extend to his social or professional relationships. He worked hard to find employment beyond Salzburg, which was not appreciated by the local Archbishop, who fired him.

He traveled throughout Europe and at times made substantial amounts of money, which he and his wife, Constanze, spent rather freely. He and Constanze had six children, but only two survived. He died at the age of 35 after enduring a great deal of financial stress. He had established himself as an outstanding musician and composer, but had failed to sustain an income proportionate to his talent or his popularity.

During his short life he composed 18 operas (including *The Magic Flute*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, etc.), forty-one symphonies, six violin concertos, the very famous *Clarinet Concerto K622*, twenty-five piano concertos, dance tunes (which were a continuing source of income), and more.

While Bach composed Baroque music for the Protestant Reformation, Mozart composed beautiful music for the Catholic Church, including the *Mass in C minor*, whose performance included Constanze as a soloist. He composed nineteen masses. The piano had just been invented, and he embraced this new technology in his work as a marvelous musical advance. He also championed the Classical Period's musical style. He was praised and appreciated by Beethoven, Haydn, and an adoring public.

He died very young, and was buried in an unmarked grave, the location of which is still unknown.



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (cont.)

Mozart's Life and American History

- Portola led a land expedition up the California coast
- Junipero Serra established the San Diego Mission, and other missions throughout California
- French and Indian Wars
- Boston Massacre: British soldiers, legally defended by John Adams, fired on an angry crowd and killed five colonists.
- Boston Tea Party
- Declaration of Independence
- Revolutionary War
- Washington became President
- Handel's Messiah is performed in New York
- "Yankee Doodle" adopted by the colonists as a fighting song
- First music store opened in the U.S.
- First piano is built in the U.S.

Five Recommended CDs

1. Mozart: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, by Bruno Walter and the Columbia Orchestra, CBS Great Performances recordings
2. Mozart: Clarinet Concerto and Oboe Concerto, by Christopher Hogwood and The Academy of Ancient Music
3. Mozart: Piano Concertos Nos. 23 and 24 by Jenő Jando, Concentus Hungaricus, Antal conductor, on Naxos
4. Mozart: Symphony No. 41 "Jupiter," and Nos 25 and 32 Symphonies, by Naxos
5. Violin Concerto No. 5 with Heifets and the Chamber Orchestra, by BMG/RCA

Lesson Opportunities

My students were quite captivated by the thought of someone being so good at such a young age, and dying so young. I used the Mozart's piano concerto as an introduction to that form of classical music and the children had no problem identifying it as a type of music in which the piano and the orchestra "talk" to each other. They also enjoyed his Eine Kleine Nachtmusik ("A Little Night Music".) They were able to differentiate between Mozart's symphonies and Beethoven's by noticing the somewhat lighter orchestration (Mozart's orchestra's were smaller than Beethoven's) and its pure ornamental melodic beauty.



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827, German)

Biographical Notes

Beethoven's mother died in his youth. His father was a court musician. He appreciated Ludwig's talent and set up a regime whereby he might benefit financially from his son being recognized as a "child prodigy." The young Beethoven was required to practice for long periods of time. Beethoven's father was also an alcoholic. Beethoven had a very difficult childhood, but was blessed with world class musical talent.

While Mozart wrote music at lightning speed, Beethoven was slow and meticulous. He was able to support himself with his performances and compositions. His skills as a conductor, pianist, and composer were in great demand. While his career was making excellent progress, however, he experienced a tragedy: he was going deaf. He began to withdraw socially. He was overcome with grief, but his stubbornness and genius prevailed, and his career continued to soar even though he was not able to hear his own compositions. He said, "I will struggle with fate; it shall never drag me down. (Beethoven)" To continue composing, at first he focused on the vibrations of his pianos and later relied on his mental understanding of his music.

He wrote music with little regard for established "conservative" rules. He increased the size of his orchestra to fit his musical taste. He was very concerned that his intended tempo and dynamics were recognized as fundamental to the music. In his 9th Symphony he added a choir with soloists. This had never been attempted in a symphony. He wanted his music to be powerful. The "Ode to Joy" in his 9th Symphony reflects this attitude. He also wanted his music to participate in the political struggles of his day (the birth of democracy in the United States and the democracy movement throughout Europe); thus, the claim in the 9th Symphony that "all men are brothers." He was very critical of the old political hierarchy with its kings and queens, and of the authoritarianism of Napoleon. He viewed himself as a musical revolutionary and challenged the world to establish a new age of liberty.

Beethoven wrote nine symphonies, five piano concertos, one violin concerto, 32 piano sonatas (including the Moonlight) and many other pieces including masses, overtures, and songs. His contributions provided the "Classical" period of music (1730 – 1820) with an exalted concluding moment, and his focus on emotional expression through sophisticated harmonies, chord progressions and local folk traditions ushered in the "Romantic" period of music (1815-1910.)



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Ludwig Van Beethoven (cont.)

Personal Information

Beethoven was a court organist when he was twelve. He became one of the finest pianists of his time. This component of his career, however, was abbreviated when he became deaf. As an adult his secretary and friends set up rotations to clean his apartment and to take care of his dirty laundry. He was once detained and charged with vagrancy. He wrote music whenever and wherever the inspiration came to him. He had very messy handwriting. He never married, but got into a protracted and expensive custody battle over his nephew. He died at the age of 57. During his funeral so many Viennese crowded the streets to pay their last respects that the funeral procession became gridlocked, hardly able to move through the streets.

U.S. and California History in Beethoven's Lifetime

- Russians built Fort Ross
- California became part of "New Spain"
- The United States is born. The dream of freedom and democracy swept Europe. The French King Louis XVI and Queen, Marie Antoinette, were removed and beheaded.
- The United States makes the Louisiana Purchase. Lewis and Clark Expedition
- Spain cedes Florida to the U.S.
- The Star Spangled Banner is written
- First Italian opera comes to New York
- Mexico gains its independence from Spain
- Napoleon invades Russia and fails; he is later crushed by England, Austria, Prussia and Russia.

Five Recommended CD's

1. Beethoven's Greatest Hits includes parts of various symphonies and Minuet in G, Fur Elise, Moonlight Sonata (part), The Turkish March, etc. by Sony Classical. This inexpensive CD is an excellent source for demonstrating the range of Beethoven's compositions and their diversity.
2. Beethoven's Pastoral (No.6) Symphony. The Columbia Orchestra provides a very fine recording.
3. Moonlight Sonata, Pathetique Sonata, etc. by Arthur Rubenstein
4. The 5th Piano Concerto by Leon Fleisher, with Szell conducting the Cleveland Orchestra
5. Beethoven's 9th Symphony with Mackerras conducting the Royal Liverpool Orchestra or Karajan conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra



Many Strings

Musical Focus: Ludwig Van Beethoven (cont.)

Film

Beethoven Lives Upstairs: An award winning children's film. There are also quite a few other films not designed for children that an educator may find helpful, the most recent being Copying Beethoven.

My Experiences

Children love Beethoven! His Pastoral Symphony with its thunder and lightening are easily understood and enjoyed. Children especially enjoy the Moonlight Sonata on the Greatest Hits CD was enjoyed for its very peaceful and unhurried performance. "Für Elise" and "The Turkish March" were equally popular. They develop empathy for his life with an alcoholic father and seemed to have complete respect for his perseverance in his commitment to music in spite of his hearing loss. They celebrated his stubbornness, messy handwriting, commitment to "powerful" music, and his revolutionary-type personality.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: The Planets

Composer: Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Biographical and Historical Information

Holst was one of Great Britain's most prolific and remarkable composers. His interests ranged from composing music for military bands to orchestrating English folk music and writing Hindu religious hymns for the Rig Veda (Hindu text.) He was born in 1874. He appeared to have had a very difficult childhood due to severe asthma and other family issues. He was so sickly as a child that he was often unable to walk up the stairs to his room without assistance or breaks. Not surprisingly, he grew up very much a loner and acquired religious and mystic sensitivities. He studied Hinduism extensively and eventually translated the Rig Veda from Sanskrit into English. He also set the texts to music. Later, he studied Greek in order to set the early Christian texts to music. The choral work "Hymn to Jesus" was the result of this focus. Holst's Hindu/Indian interests led him to study astrology and from this fascination "The Planets" evolved. Gilman summarizes, "He was a gifted artist, a gifted teacher; a man of flexible and capacious imagination, a wit, a poet, a mystic. He was on familiar terms with the cosmos." (Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, [The Concert Companion](#))

The Planets

Holst's "The Planets" is a marvelously diverse piece of descriptive orchestral music. The work evolved from Holst's religious and mystical involvement with Hindu literature and cosmology, as well as Greek literature. The suite is composed of seven movements or parts that describe the composer's astrological interpretations of the planets. The work was composed for a very large orchestra. In addition to the usual string sections, it was structured to include a choir and a variety of percussion, woodwind, and brass instruments. The force of this large orchestration becomes clear in the first piece, "Mars, the Bringer of War." This dark, marching, violent musical portrait is matched in the end by a beautiful and mystical interpretation of Neptune, which concludes peacefully with a six-part chorus. The order of the music below is the order of his composition.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: The Planets (cont.)

I. Mars, The Bringer of War

This movement begins with a faint distant march that quickly builds into a powerful description of martial tension, human conflict, and destruction. This is a very powerful section that students should have no difficulty experiencing or interpreting. Note that Mars as a planet has a reddish color, which was seen in ancient times as the color of war or fire. This music can be used to illustrate the personality of the Greek god Ares (renamed Mars by the Romans.) Ares was tall and handsome, but vain and cruel. He cared not for right or wrong, but for the battle.

II. Venus, The Bringer of Peace

The violence of the first piece is quickly replaced with a musical painting of peace. No contrast could be greater. This section brings to my mind a naturalistic setting, complete with a flowing stream, meadow, and forest. Note that Venus, while in truth a very inhospitable planet, has a bluish color in the evening sky. This section could also be used to illustrate the beauty of the Greek goddess Aphrodite (or as the Romans preferred, Venus.) She was the goddess of love that mysteriously emerged out of the sea.

III. Mercury, The Winged Messenger

This section takes off like the wind, which is appropriate since Mercury races around the sun at 108,000 miles per hour. (A Mercurial year is only 88 Earth days long.) The music easily brings to mind the quickness and agility of sparrows in flight. Similarly, the Roman god Mercury was perceived as a fast messenger.

IV. Jupiter, The Bringer of Jollity

This movement begins with a lively expansive fanfare that quickly evolves into a mature, majestic portrait of our solar system's largest planet. Jupiter is eleven times the size of Earth. Jupiter's year is equal to twelve Earth years. The Roman god Jupiter was the mighty Greek god Zeus. He was recognized by both cultures as a god of Thunder-the mightiest of all the Olympian gods. Zeus maintained his leadership over the Universe through a number of battles, vaporizing his challengers with lightening bolts. Holst seems to be emphasizing the expansive, powerful, and joyous components of this cosmological entity.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: The Planets (cont.)

V. Saturn, The Bringer of Old Age

This was Holst's favorite movement. It has an air of refinement and aloof eloquence. The movement builds slowly, giving the sense of a slow but awesome emergence of the distant planet on, perhaps, the horizon of one of its many moons. (Saturn, at last count, had 62 moons.) Holst, however, was more concerned with his astrological interpretation of Saturn as the "bringer of old age."

VI. Uranus, The Magician

With this movement, useful references to the Greek and Roman pantheons cease. Holst's Uranus may be more like an old magician with "Aunt Clara's" a la Bewitched, competence and style or like the sorcerer or the apprentice in Disney's interpretation of "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" in Fantasia. Critics observed that the melody was tossed about all over the place, with every section of the orchestra having a say.

VII. Neptune, The Mystic

As the Roman god Neptune (the Greek god Poseidon) guarded the depths, Holst's Neptune guards the outer regions of the solar system. This planet is approximately three billion miles from the Sun. The music is very subtle, eerie, and mysterious. The celeste, flute, and harps play a major role in the musical image of a lonely wise man. The movement concludes with a double chorus that fades into infinity.

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music-Appreciation: The students can match the planet with the music. Encouraging or guiding them in taking notes describing the music and arrangements will shorten their learning curve. They can also speculate regarding the composer's intentions and his success in the compositions.
2. Music-Writing: Descriptive paragraphs represent an opportunity to integrate language arts with the music. Also, multi-paragraph essays comparing and contrasting various planets.
3. Music-Science: This music could easily enhance any study of our Solar System
4. Music-Art: Artistic responses to the music would also augment student appreciation of the music.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: The Moldau

Composer: Bedrich Smetana (1824 – 1884)

The Moldau

“The Moldau” is the second movement of a beautiful six-part symphonic work entitled “Ma Vlast” or “My Fatherland.” The movement represents a musical painting of the river Moldau. This river begins in the dark Bohemian forest, flows through the beautiful city of Prague, joins the Elbe, flows through Germany and empties into the North Sea.

Smetana prefaced the musical score with the following descriptive notes:

“The Moldau” represents an exceptional expression of patriotic or nationalistic music. The musical poem reflects the pride, oppression, and hope of the Bohemian people.”

“Two springs pour forth in the shade of the Bohemian Forest, one warm and gushing, the other cold and peaceful. Their waves, gaily flowing over rocky beds, join and glisten in the rays of the morning sun. The forest brook, hastening on, becomes the river Vltava (Moldau.) Coursing through Bohemia’s valleys, it grows into a mighty stream. Through thick woods it flows, as the gay sounds of the hunt and the notes of the hunter’s horn are heard ever nearer. It flows through grass-grown pastures and lowlands where a wedding feast is being celebrated with song and dance. At night wood and water nymphs revel in its sparkling waves. Reflected on its surface are fortresses and castles—witnesses of bygone days of knightly splendor and the vanished glory of fighting times. At the St. John Rapids the stream races ahead, winding through the cataracts, heaving on a path with its foaming waves through the rocky chasm into the broad river bed—finally. Flowing on in majestic peace toward Prague—finally. Flowing on in majestic peace toward Prague and welcomed by time-honored Vysehrad (castle.) Then it vanishes far beyond the poet’s gaze.” (Preface to the original score, Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, The Concert Companion p. 672)



Many Strings

Musical Selection: The Moldau (cont.)

Musical Sequence

1. Mountain springs—Dark Bohemian Forest: The piece begins with the flutes and harp bringing to mind raindrops and the emergence of two rippling springs. The first spring is painted with the strings; the second by the clarinets.
2. The Mountain Stream: The “Moldau” first emerges. Strings lead the entire orchestra into musically depicting a powerful mountain spring in a beautiful forest setting.
3. Hunter’s Theme: Signaled with the horns and trumpets.
4. Wedding Theme/Polka Celebration: A wonderful, first pulsating, then dancing, rhythm represents a wedding celebration on the river’s banks. The entire orchestra is employed.
5. Moonlight: On a broader, calmer valley river. Muted strings, woodwinds, and harps gently paint this image.
6. Majestic Moldau: The Moldau theme is repeated by the orchestra.
7. Rapids: Turbulent, powerful and unruly. The Moldau is now a mighty river rushing toward Prague.
8. Prague and the Mature River: The Moldau proudly flows through the city and fades into the distance, and, eventually, the North Sea.

Historical Introduction

“The Moldau” represents an exceptional expression of patriotic or nationalistic music. The musical poem reflects the pride, oppression, and hope of the Bohemian people.

Before World War 1 Bohemia, presently the Czech Republic, was ruled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. While under Austrian rule the Bohemians desperately attempted to preserve their culture. Bohemia had emerged in the 900’s as a semi-independent kingdom with the Holy Roman Empire. In the 1300’s, with Charles IV, a Bohemian Roman Emperor, Prague became one of Europe’s leading cities.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: 1812 Overture

Historical Introduction (cont.)

However, during the 1400's Bohemia lost its independence and became dominated by a series of Catholic Austrian rulers. Protestant Bohemians, filled with the spirit of the Reformation, rebelled in 1618. This rebellion evolved into the Thirty Years War throughout Europe. Despite their pride and bravery, the Bohemian resistance was crushed by the Hapsburg armies in 1619. The Bohemians were forced to accept German culture and language. However, the Bohemian desire for autonomy was not successfully suppressed. In the 1870's Bohemians interest in freedom intensified. During this time they embraced Smetana's Ma Vlast, which contained "The Moldau," as a patriotic symphonic national anthem. This, in fact, was the composer's intention. He wanted his masterpiece to remind both his countrymen and outsiders of Bohemia's special beauty, culture, and destiny.

Biographical Information

Bedrich Smetana, and his pupil Dvorak (New World Symphony) were zealous Bohemian patriots. Both composers were forced, at times, to seek asylum in foreign countries. Smetana moved to Sweden where he composed, conducted, and promoted an appreciation for the new "radical" music of Liszt and Wagner. When Smetana returned to his homeland in 1861 he was determined to demonstrate to the world the unique beauty of Bohemian culture. He taught himself Bohemian, which had been banned by the Austrian rulers, and integrated local folk tunes into his compositions. Audiences throughout Europe were enchanted by his "The Bartered Bride" with its polkas and melodic choruses. He also composed political opera which were so popular that special trains had to be scheduled to accommodate the crowds.

Smetana began to work on "Ma Vlast in 1874. It took him four years to complete the symphony. Like Beethoven before him he became totally deaf. He finished the symphony unable to actually hear it. At the opening performance the excitement and exuberance of the audience was uncontrollable. After each part the audience stood, waved their hats, clapped, and shouted their approval and Smetana's name. After the final notes the crowd erupted into total jubilation and a political demonstration. Smetana, deaf and in poor mental (depression) and physical health, was likewise overwhelmed. Smetana died in Prague in 1884, a national hero. ([Wikipedia](#), re. Bedrich Smetana)



Many Strings

Musical Selection: The Moldau (cont.)

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: The students can listen to and describe the eight sections of “The Moldau.”
2. Music-History: Analyze the role of Bohemia in The Thirty Years War and its emergence as an independent republic as the Soviet Union contracted into Russia. Discuss the effect of music on revolutionary efforts.
3. Music-Geography: Chart the river and its course to the Red Sea.
4. Music-Art: Artistically respond to the musical slide show that is “The Moldau.”



Many Strings

Musical Selection: 1812 Overture

Composer: Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

This popular and emotional nationalistic composition begins with a very sad theme: the Russian hymn “God Preserve Thy People.” The sadness here reflects the Russian’s collective sense of hopelessness when Europe’s most powerful ruler, Napoleon, invaded their relatively helpless nation. The hymn represents a prayer for salvation.

As Napoleon advanced, the Russians burned their fields, cottages, and towns, thereby depriving the 650,000 strong French army of a local source of supplies. As the advance continued, the French supply lines grew longer and more vulnerable to quick Cossack-Russian attacks. The French army was too large to effectively respond to these unpredictable lightning strikes. Napoleon’s army was on the path to a slow death. At one point Napoleon refused to ride in his carriage, preferring to walk with his weary men.

The great general had miscalculated how far Moscow was from the French frontier and how long the invasion would take. As the Russian winter closed in he desperately needed a decisive military victory. At Borodino (outside Moscow) he had his chance, but the Russians stood their ground and inflicted heavy casualties. Technically, Napoleon emerged as the victor, but it was a hollow victory.

The battle at Borodino is the setting for the Overture of 1812. The “French” victory was actually the critical turning point for the Russians in repelling Napoleon; it was actually their victory. In the music this battle and its evasion is signaled with the popular French National Anthem, “Marseillaise” and musically, the defiant Russians answer with cannon fire and traditional Russian folk tunes. As Napoleon entered Moscow the city was ablaze. The church bells announce the impending Russian victory. Cannon fire (again) and the Tsarist National Anthem emerges as the dominant theme. The Russians re-enter their capital city with the triumphant concluding theme “God Save the Tsar.”

The Russian winter had made the occupation, and the now necessary retreat, extremely difficult. Abandoned French weapons and artillery were used by the Russians to inflict additional casualties on their former owners. Napoleon lost approximately 400,000 men. The Russians had defeated the most powerful army in Europe. The concluding moments of this fabulous patriotic composition are among the most exciting and emotional orchestral pieces ever composed.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: 1812 Overture (cont.)

Biographical Information

Tchaikovsky was the first nationalistic Russian composer to gain wide recognition and appreciation in Europe and the United States. In 1891 he conducted the 1812 Overture at the dedication of Carnegie Hall in New York.

Tchaikovsky did not begin his serious musical career until he was twenty-three. His father encouraged him to become a civil servant and was not supportive of a musical profession. He studied under the demanding tutelage of Nicholas Rubinstein at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. As his career progressed Nadejda von Meck, a wealthy widow who was impressed with him, provided Tchaikovsky with an allowance for thirteen years under the stipulation that he never attempt to meet her. While they never met, they exchanged a 1,000 plus letters, and were very close. Certainly this relationship was a stabilizing factor in Tchaikovsky's life. When her financial situation deteriorated, she ended her support.

Throughout Tchaikovsky's life he suffered from severe depression and feelings of rejection and failure. His marriage was a failure and a continuing source of stress. His emotional distress is especially evident in his "Symphony Pathetique." He died 9 days after that symphony was premiered. He was only 53 years old. The medical diagnosis was cholera; however, some historians/musicologists believe that it was, in fact, a suicide, due to his fear of exposure about personal matters. If this is the case he may have intended the Pathetique to be his final musical statement. Regarding the ever popular 1812 Overture, he was in fact quite critical of it as being too noisy!

Tchaikovsky's opinion notwithstanding, the 1812 Overture has been adopted in the United States as a wonderful Fourth of July patriotic orchestral pops composition. His Overture was actually composed to celebrate the Russian defeat of Napoleon and celebrate the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. Still, the composition has become solidly woven into America's July 4th celebrations. It might be argued that the French-Russian conflict so weakened the French that Great Britain found an opportunistic moment to put an end to Napoleon once and for all. With this opportunity, Great Britain did not want to be continuously distracted by an ongoing war with the United States.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: 1812 Overture (cont.)

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: The students will be able to recognize the sad tone of the initial theme, the French attack, and the battle's turning point with cannon fire, folk song melodies, and the celebratory tone of the concluding theme with its cannon fire, bells, and anthem.

2. Music-European History: This music would enrich any study of Europe in the 1800's. An analysis of Napoleon's defeat also has a number of important strategic lessons, including the difficulty of not having "home field" advantage, the utility of "bending but not breaking" in the Russian strategy, and the importance of correctly anticipating your opponent's dedication to victory as contrasted with the aggressor's desire for a "quick" win.

3. Music-Geography: Napoleon's defeat in Russia, and his later defeats in Europe, with the final battle in Belgium.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Scheherazade

**Composer: Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov [or Korsakoff]
(1844-1908)**

This is an exceptionally beautiful composition in four parts. Rimsky-Korsakov was a brilliant composer who could weave musical themes together with a great deal of emotional tone color. His compositions often reflected Russian folk tunes, or in this case, oriental melodies.

The story of Scheherazade begins with a Sultan who has concluded that women can not be trusted to be faithful. Scheherazade, who is the daughter of the Sultan's assistant, a vizier, marries the Sultan and manages to survive for 1,001 nights by telling him stories in the evening. At just the right moment, she complains that it is too late to continue or that she is too tired to finish the story and that she will finish the story the next night. The next evening she indeed finishes the story from the night before, and begins a new story. After 1,001 such Arabian nights the Sultan falls in love with Sultana Scheherazade and she and the Sultan live happily ever after. Scheherazade is the storyteller in One Thousand and One Arabian Nights (A collection of Middle Eastern and South Asian stories and folktales first translated into English in 1706)

Rimsky-Korsakov shared "The program...Scheherazade consisted of separate, unconnected episodes and pictures from The Arabian Nights: the fantastic narrative of the Prince Kalandar, the Prince and the Princess, the Baghdad festival, and the ship dashing against the rock....In composing Scheherazade I meant these hints to direct but slightly the hearer's fancy...Why Scheherazade?... Because the name and subtitle One Thousand and One Nights connotes to everybody's mind the East and fairy-tale wonders..." Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, The Concert Companion, 563-564.)

Scheherazade: Four Movements

1. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship (a sailor with many adventures)
2. Tale of the Kalendar Prince
3. Prince and Princess
4. Baghdad Festival - The Sea and the Ship



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Scheherazade (cont.)

Scheherazade: Four Movements (cont.)

The first section is notable for introducing the Sultan in very stark and dark colors. Then a very light section, that seems to assure everyone that we have, for our fancy, an oriental fairy-tale...subjectively I can almost hear the words “once upon a time” ...and then Scheherazade’s beautiful theme, which is introduced by a solo, gorgeous violin, and then it seems to me, subjectively, that we have an ocean theme with waves building and breaking. Note that in the 4th section Scheherazade’s theme suggests that she has acquired a hoarse voice, perhaps from telling so many stories.

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: Scheherazade can simply be played and enjoyed. Noting the last paragraph, my students found it very easy to identify the various motifs and describe the character in response to the music.

2. Music- Literature: One Thousand and One Nights (“Aladdin’s Wonderful Lamp,” “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves,” “The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor,” etc.) are available in a variety of editions suited to the age group of the student. Also, a variety of film interpretations of these stories have been made with varying degrees of success.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Billy the Kid

Composer: Aaron Copland (U.S. 1900-1990)

Billy the Kid Suite

The music in Billy the Kid is vivid, energetic, and beautiful. It is easily understood and captures the imagination with ease. It contains fragments of popular cowboy songs, including “Git Along Little Doggies,” “The Old Chisholm Trail,” “Old Paint,” and “Oh Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie.” Later in life Copland had some regrets about using Billy the Kid, an outlaw and criminal, for his subject. Certainly “Billy’s” life reflected the violence and conflict that was an inseparable part of the settlement of the “wild” West.

This music is very descriptive and engaging and will promote an appreciation for American classical music and Aaron Copland’s genius. Billy the Kid is one of Copland’s most popular compositions, along with Fanfare for the Common Man and A Lincoln Portrait. After the success of Billy the Kid, Copland composed Rodeo and Appalachian Spring, for which he received a Pulitzer Prize.

Regarding A Lincoln Portrait: The text/narrative is available from many sources and represents an outstanding opportunity to celebrate Abraham Lincoln and the principles that he held as fundamental to our nation.

Regarding “Simple Gifts,” the Shaker hymn which is included in Copland’s Appalachian Spring the words for this song, while not included, are quite beautiful and can be appreciated for their poetic character.

Billy the Kid: Section by Section

1-2. “Introduction: The Open Prairie.” I can easily conceive of this section as musically painting a portrait of the rising sun over the western desert.

3. “Street Scene.” Lots of action. I can easily imagine horses going up and down the streets, dogs dodging them, etc.

4. “Card Game at Night.” Quietly done.

5. “Gun Battle.” Billy is represented by the higher pitched snare drum. The sheriff and posse are represented by the kettle drums. The latter prevails. This suite was originally composed as a ballet; it is easy to imagine the moves musically painted in this section.

6. “Celebration.” Justice prevails. Billy is captured, undoubtedly bringing in a renewed sense of safety.

7. “Prairie Theme.” This music brings to mind a beautiful sunset.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Billy the Kid (cont.)

Background: Aaron Copland

Aaron Copland is one of America's greatest classical composers. His music brilliantly incorporated American folk music and Western themes. His compositions were a hit in Europe and the United States.

Copland was born in New York City. His parents were Russian Jewish immigrants. Hard working, they never went to musical concerts or encouraged him in that direction. Nonetheless, by age sixteen, after a brief self-initiated introduction to the piano, he decided to become a composer. He practiced long and hard, much to the irritation of his neighbors. He traveled to France for advanced studies and returned to New York with his "Symphony for Organ and Orchestra."

He went on to become a very prolific composer. His "Music for the Theater" is jazzy, "El Solon Mexico" reflects an appreciation for Mexican folk songs, and his "Rodeo" features a young girl who wants to participate in the "boys" rough world and also be appreciated at the dances. "Appalachian Spring" is especially notable for its prominent inclusion of the American Shaker hymn "The Gift to Be Simple" or simply "Simple Gifts." Copland won an Academy Award for his film music in "The Heiress."

Background: Billy the Kid

"Billy the Kid's" real name was Henry McCarty. He was born in 1859 in New York City. During his childhood the family, hoping for land and fortune, migrated to Silver City, New Mexico. Life for the McCartys was difficult and poor. His mother was shot and killed. "Billy" became a fugitive from justice by his 12th birthday. During the Lincoln County cattle wars he assumed the alias William Booney. He was employed by a rancher as a rustler and gun fighter in the rancher's efforts to take control of large tracts of New Mexico grazing land. Sheriff Pat Garrett, during his first year in office, made it his goal to bring "Billy" to justice. He assembled a posse in 1880 and captured "the Kid." After he was convicted, however, Billy escaped and headed to Mexico. Garrett and his posse surrounded him outside Fort Sumner, New Mexico, and "Billy" was killed.

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: Students, with a little practice, should be able to identify the different sections of the suite and discuss the instrumentation and mood.
2. Music-Art: Introduce watercolors as an artistic medium and create visual impressions of "The Open Prairie" or "Street in a Frontier Town."



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Billy the Kid (cont.)

Lesson Opportunities (cont.)

3. Music-Geography: Locate Russia, Europe, New Mexico, Mexico, etc. as locations in Copland's and "Billy's" life.

4. Music-Math: Introduce probability, logic, and addition. With a deck of cards introduce the game "11" (developed by Mike Denon). The game is like "21", but to 11. Delete from the deck of cards all cards over 5. The ace is either a 1 or a 6. The students would keep track of what cards have been played and predict the likelihood of future cards.

5. Music-Language Arts: Students can write paragraphs comparing and contrasting different sections and explain their preferences. Some attention can be focused on such musical components as tempo, melody, harmony, rhythm, and mood.



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Mount St. Helens Symphony

Composer: Alan Hovhaness (U.S., 1911-2000)

Hovhaness wrote "Mountains are symbols, like pyramids, of man's attempt to know God...Mountains are symbolic meeting places between the mundane and the spiritual world." (CD program notes, Telarc CD 80604)

Alan Hovhaness was born in Massachusetts in 1911 to an Armenian father and Scottish mother. Both parents were very concerned that their particular heritage would be continued through their son. This multicultural conflict may have influenced Hovhaness in his international multicultural musical and compositional interests. It also may have influenced his love of nature. As a boy, he could escape the tension that he experienced from these agendas by walking in the mountains. He began to compose at the age of seven. His early music reflected his preference for Armenian medieval liturgical music. As an adult he also cultivated an interest in Indian, Japanese, and Chinese music. His music blends the mystical music of the West with the Oriental traditions and his personal love of nature. He wrote over 67 symphonies, and many piano pieces, fugues, and choral pieces. Their titles reveal his mindset: "And God Created Whales," "All Men Are Brothers," "Mysterious Mountain," "Celestial Fantasy," and others.

The "Mount Saint Helens Symphony" was a major classical hit when it was released. Its sweeping melodies and dynamic use of percussion were ideally suited to the digital recording techniques that were replacing analog recording technologies previously used.

Mount Saint Helens Symphony: Three Movements

I. The first movement ...is in the form of a Prelude and Fugue, suggesting the grandeur of the mountain before its eruption on May 18, 1980. The opening theme with the horns is followed by lyrical extensions and elaborations in long melodic lines, leading the grand fugue "in praise of Mount St. Helens." (A. Hovhaness CD program notes, Delos DE 3171, 1993)

II. "Spirit Lake...attempts to capture the beauty of the lake before its violent destruction. Gently vibrating, liquid-sounding bells...waves of water, lead the expressive melodies for English horn and other winds. A lyrical duet for flute dissolves into vibrating bells. The watery sound expresses the memory of Spirit Lake, forever lost." (A. Hovhaness, CD program notes, Delos DE 3171, 1993)



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Mount St. Helens Symphony (cont.)

Mount Saint Helens Symphony: Three Movements (cont.)

III. "Volcano...is the morning of May 18, 1980. A dawn-like hymn is heard in the horns over mysterious, murmuring, plucked basses...followed by a rising passage for solo flute. This is interrupted by a violent explosion in the drums. Eruption music...is heard in the brass- the power of molten forces beneath the mountain. Chaos is sounded by stormy strings and violent trombone glissandi, then a strict, blazing triple canon of 20 voices of winds, brass, and strings, followed by percussion. After the music of violence and destruction, the dawn hymn of praise...to the youthful pose and grandeur of the Cascades, the volcanic energy renewing the vitality of our beautiful planet, the living earth- the life giving power that builds power, that builds mountains, rising majestically, piercing the clouds of heaven." (A. Hovhaness, CD program notes, Delos DE 3171, 1993)

Mount Saint Helens – The Event

After 123 years, Mount Saint Helens re-awakened in the spring of 1980. Magma pushed up into the volcano, causing earthquakes and small ash emissions that lasted for 6 weeks. A 300-foot bulge formed on the north side of the mountain.

The May 18 eruption was triggered by a magnitude 5.1 earthquake. The swollen north flank slid into the Spirit Lake basin and down the North Fork Toutle River Valley, forming the largest landslide in recorded history. A lateral blast produced a 650 degree F. rock-laden current of ash and hot gas traveling at hundreds of miles per hour. This blast toppled 230 square miles of forest north of Mount St. Helens. A vertical column of ash erupted from the newly formed crater to a height of 15 miles. The ash was spread eastward by prevailing winds, encircling the Earth in just two weeks.

Lahars, dense mixtures of rocks and ash, mixed with the water and flowed down the volcano. Pyroclastic flows of fiery, broken rocks, 700 degrees F., gas and ash came down the slopes at 60 miles per hour. One man, Harry Truman, refused to leave his beautiful lodge on the shores of Spirit Lake. He assured the Forest Service that he and his cats would seek shelter in a cave near his lodge, if necessary. The explosion was cataclysmic. Campers and sightseers 20 miles away from the volcano perished in the explosion. Truman and his cats were buried under hundreds of feet of mud and ash.

When the ash cleared, Mount Saint Helens was 1,300 feet shorter. Spirit Lake was much larger and the lush green forest around it had been transformed into a blown down grey landscape. It was obvious that the powerful natural forces responsible for the Pacific Northwest's famed beauty were not just ancient history, but an ongoing natural process. (USDA Forest Service)



Many Strings

Musical Selection: Mount St. Helens Symphony (cont.)

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation

Objective: The students will be able to identify the three movements of the symphony.

Materials: The recording (CD or iTunes)

Lesson: Play each section and encourage descriptions of each related to mood, tempo, instrumentation, etc.

2. Music-Science-Geology

Strategy: Use the music as an opportunity to explore the geology of volcanoes, earthquakes, plate tectonics, and Earth science.

3. Music-Geography

Objective: The students will locate the volcano. They will map how to get there from their area. They will also explore the Cascades Mountain Range.

4. Music-Art

Objective: The students will express their experience of the Symphony through art.

Materials: Clay, water colors, paper, crayons, etc. and photos of the volcano. Consider using crayon resist.

5. Music-Language Arts

Objective: Write persuasive paragraphs to convince Harry Truman to vacate his lodge.

An alternative would be to write descriptive paragraphs comparing and contrasting the three movements of the symphony.



Many Strings

**Musical Selections: 1) Mysterious Mountain
2) And God Created Great Whales**

Composer: Alan Hovhaness (U.S. 1911-2000)

Alan Hovhaness said “Mountains are symbols, like pyramids, of man’s attempt to know God...mountains are symbolic meeting places between the mundane and the spiritual world.” (CD program notes, Telarc CD 80604)

Alan Hovhaness was born in Massachusetts in 1911. His father was Armenian. His mother was Scottish. Both parents were very concerned that their particular heritage would be continued through their son. This multicultural conflict may have influenced Hovhaness in his international multicultural musical and compositional interests. It also may have influenced his love of nature. As a boy, he could escape the tension that he experienced from these agendas by walking in the mountains. He began to compose at the age of seven. His early music reflected his preference for Armenian medieval liturgical music. As an adult he also cultivated an interest in Indian, Japanese, and Chinese music. Much of his music blends the mystical music of the West with the Oriental traditions and his personal love of nature. This is reflected in the first selection, *Mysterious Mountain*. In the second selection, *And God Created Great Whales*, he uses the actual songs of whales in the symphony. (CD program notes by Marvin Rosen, KOCH 3-7208-2HI)

Selection: *Mysterious Mountain* Symphony – Program Notes

This is the composer’s second symphony. The music was commissioned by Leopold Stokowski for his debut with the Houston Symphony in 1955. It was recorded by Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony in 1956. It is organized in three sections that are highly emotional and imaginative, but not programmatic. Marsh commented in 1956 “*Mysterious Mountain* is powerfully evocative music that invites the mind to pursue imagery and fantasy. For me this is the mountain of the blue moon that soars above the Shangri-La of *Lost Horizon*, the place where the world cannot intrude and beauty and reason prevail.” (CD program notes, RCA 5733-2C)

Musical Outline

1. Andante: 5:58
2. Double Fugue: 5:31
3. Andante Espressivo: 5:19



Many Strings

Selection: Mysterious Mountain Symphony (cont.)

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation:

a. Objective: The students will listen to a movement quietly at the beginning of school or after an outside activity or period.

Lesson Suggestion: This is ideal quiet time, relaxation-type music.

Students can listen to a movement of this symphony quietly at their desks. This increases their listening skills and gives them a chance to set their imaginations free to wander in response to the music.

b. Objective: Students respond to the music and share their impressions of what lies behind the music.

Lesson Suggestion: Play the music and facilitate a discussion regarding "How does it move?...What do the mountains look like?...Where are they?...What three words describe the first movement?..." etc.

2. Music and Art

a. Objective: The students will express their experience of the symphony through art.

Lesson Suggestion: Clay, crayon, watercolor, artistic response to the symphony.

3. Music and Math

Lesson Suggestion: Provide a trail map or locate a map on the Internet and challenge the students to find the most direct route to the peak, etc.

Selection: And God Created Great Whales - Program Notes

"From the din, a pentatonic melody emerges, preparing the way for four recorded songs of the great humpback whale...The result is a haunting portentous depiction of earth as it emerges from its primordial chaos." (Stannard)

Hovhaness commented "Free rhythmless vibrational passages, each string player playing independently, suggest waves in the vast ocean. Undersea mountains rise and fall in horns, trombones and tuba. Music of the whales also rises and falls like mountain ranges. Song of a whale emerges like a giant mythical sea bird. Man does not exist, has not yet been born..." (CD liner notes)



Many Strings

Selection: And God Created Great Whales - Program Notes (cont.)

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: Have the students identify each of the whale songs that are integrated into the symphony. For example, in the third song, ask: who is singing to or with whom?
2. Music and Art: Watercolor impression from the whales' point of view.
3. Music and Math: Chart the migratory journey of the humpback whales on their way from the Arctic to Baja California.



Many Strings

Musical Focus: John Williams (1932-)

John Williams is America's best known and most successful film composer. He has received Academy Awards for "Fiddler on the Roof" (musical score), "Jaws" (Best Original Score), "Star Wars" (musical score), and "ET, The Extraterrestrial" (musical score). In addition, he composed the music for "Valley of the Dolls," "Good-bye Mr. Chips," "Cinderella Liberty," "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "The Empire Strikes Back," "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "Home Alone," "Jurassic Park," the "Harry Potter" films, "The Towering Inferno," and "Midway." He has won five Academy Awards, and 21 Grammy Awards, making for a most successful career.

Williams was born in New York in 1932. He attended UCLA and the Julliard School of Music. He entered the music-movie industry in 1950. In 1980 he succeeded Arthur Fiedler as conductor of the Boston Pops. He is well known to anyone who has watched the Olympics for his "Olympic Fanfare and Theme," composed for the Los Angeles games, "The Olympic Spirit," composed for NBC's coverage of the 1988 games, and "Summon the Heroes," composed for the Atlanta 1996 games in Atlanta.

Three Recommended CDs

1. Summon the Heroes: John Williams with the Boston Pops performing his Olympic themes, and similar music.
2. Williams on Williams: The Classic Spielberg Scores: Williams again with the Boston Pops performing his recognizable themes from ET, Jurassic Park, Hook, Jaws, and more
3. John Williams: 40 Years of Film Music: For all of his fantastic music

Lesson Opportunities

1. Music Appreciation: With just a little exposure and perhaps some collaborative discussions regard the instrumentation and arrangements, the students can easily enjoy success in identifying this music.
2. Music-Language Arts: The music is extremely expressive, which makes it a rich source for composing descriptive paragraphs and comparative essays. On the Summon the Heroes CD the triumphant spirit of Rozza's "Parade of the Charioteers" could be compared to the more somber mood of Bernstein's "Olympic Hymn" or Vangelis's "Conquest of Paradise."



Many Strings

Musical Focus: John Williams (1832-)

Lesson Opportunities (cont.)

3. Music-Art: Every Olympic Conference/games has its unique artistic approach to the five rings, the medals, etc. The students could design their own suggestions for these applied artistic expressions.

4. Music-Geography/Math/Engineering: During the Winter games, students could locate the principle participating nations on a world map. An integration with math could be easily accomplished by graphing the medal count. An engineering integration could be acquired by noting the designs of the bobsleds, luge, snowboards, etc. and challenging the students to design their own hardware. The music is a perfect “soundtrack” for these activities.



Many Strings

Musical Topic: Jazz

Composers: **Duke Ellington (1899-1974)**
 Dave Brubeck (1920-)
 Louis Armstrong (1900-1971)
 Miles Davis (1926-1991)

Historical Introduction

Jazz is America's most distinctive and world renowned musical contribution. The origins of jazz are intimately tied to American history and especially Black history: jazz reflects their suffering and resiliency.

The emphasis in jazz is on rhythm, with syncopated accents and percussion reflecting the African culture of the Black slaves. The feature of improvisation (the spontaneous creative individualistic interpretations of initial melodic lines) reflects the spontaneity of the plantation work songs and Black spirituals. With the conclusion of the Civil War and President Lincoln's abolition of slavery, the Black communities gravitated to the cities. In New Orleans the Blacks encountered a rich musical environment with Creole, French, and Spanish influences. Various groups of Blacks would band together, gather on busy street corners, and, in competitive fashion, "chat" to each other musically. A complex and sophisticated evolution began, and jazz was born.

The American term "jazz" is derived from the French "jasser – to gossip." As these early groups played in parades, funerals, and on street corners a unique tradition emerged. New Orleans can be considered the birthplace of instrumental jazz. In the 1890's ragtime was popularized by Scott Joplin. As these groups started touring in the 1900's jazz became popular in Chicago, New York, and Kansas City. The vocal "blues" began to emerge at this time as well. Love lost and poverty were common "blues" themes.

*I can't make a nickel,
I'm flat as can be;
Some people say money is talking,
But it won't say a word to me..."*
"Hard Time Blues"



Many Strings

Musical Topic: Jazz (cont.)

Historical Introduction (cont.)

After World War I jazz bands became increasingly popular. Louis Armstrong introduced “scat” and Duke Ellington popularized “jungle” sounds by using a mute. Benny

Goodman’s swing band also belonged to this dynamic post-World War I, pre World War II period. (Note: See also Tommy Dorsey, Count Basie, Glen Miller, and King Oliver.)

In the 1950’s progressive “cool” jazz evolved. In contrast to the earlier developments this “jazz” was meant to be listened to, rather than danced to. Dave Brubeck and Thelonius Monk participated in these developments. Jazz continued to develop and in the last part of the 20th Century “high tech” jazz using synthesizers (Spyro Gyra, Pat Metheny, etc.), easy listening romantic jazz with saxophones (Kenny G, etc.) added to the rich musical variety known as American jazz.

Lesson Opportunities

1. Listening Opportunities - Jazz

1. Louis Armstrong: “Beale Street Blues
2. Duke Ellington Orchestra: “Cotton Tail”
3. Count Basie Orchestra: “Jumpin at the Woodside”
4. Benny Goodman: “Sing, Sing, Sing”
5. Sarah Vaughn: “Send in the Clowns”
6. Ella Fitzgerald: “Let’s Begin”
7. Miles Davis: “So What”
8. Dave Brubeck Quartet: “Take Five”
9. Ken Burns The Best of Jazz and the CDs developed for his PBS Special on Jazz.
10. The Ella Fitzgerald Songbooks.

2. Music – History/ Geography - Explore the historical and geographic contexts of jazz styles such as Ragtime (and the piano), New Orleans, Dixieland, Swing, Bee-Bop, Cool, Latin, Soul (and its use of the Hammond organ), etc.



Many Strings

Teacher Resources: Sources & References

Sources include CD liner notes of the identified composers, San Diego Symphony program notes, and the following references:

1. Amrhein, Florian. Creator of the WAP site [Wapedia](#)
2. [Discovering Native American Music](#) (film at SDCOE), Barr Films, 1971.
3. Chevron Oil Corporation, [Chronological Chart of Music and Social Studies](#)
4. Cronyn, George W. [The Path of the Rainbow](#), Boni and Liveright, 1918.
5. Galway, James. [Music in Time](#), Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 1983.
6. Krull, Kathleen. [Lives of the Musicians](#), Harcourt Brace & Company, 1993.
7. Lloyd, Noman. [The Golden Encyclopedia of Music](#), Golden Press, 1968.
8. Margolin, Malcolm. [The Way We Lived](#), Heyday Books, 1981.
9. Mitchell, Susan, Rodriquez, Henry, & Dixon, Patti. [The Legacy of the Luiseno](#), San Diego County Office of Education, not dated.
10. Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, [The Concert Companion](#), McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1947.
11. Helen Roberts, [Form in Primitive Music, An Analytical and Comparative Study of the Melodic Form of Some Ancient Southern California Indian Songs](#), W.W. Norton & Company, 1933.
12. Harold C. Schonberg, [The Lives of the Great Composers](#), W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1997.



Many Strings

Teacher Resources: Sources & References (cont.)

Additional Readings

1. Augre, Gillon, Hollier-Larousse, Moreau et Cie. The Larouse Encyclopa of Music, Chartwell Books, 1977.
2. Grey, Anne. The Popular Guide to Classical Music, Carol Publishing Group, 1993.
3. Sadie, Stanley [Editor.] The Norton /Grove Concise Encyclopedia of Music, W.W. Norton & Company, 1991.
4. World Book Encyclopedia, World Book, Inc.