



As you prepare your students for the **Color of Music** project, keep in mind how very important it is that your students' pictures be drawn from their own imagination. This year, we encourage you to explore the concept and great variety of beat and rhythm in music. The beat is the pulse of the music and rhythm is the pattern within the pulse. We recommend playing the pieces as much as possible so that the students will be stimulated by the "feel" of the music and will identify with the works. After the pieces are played, you should discuss the selections musically, discussing musical attributes such as melody, rhythm, instruments, etc., according to your class's specific abilities.



Your students must work independently. Avoid overwhelming your students with personal suggestions; each child's imaginations should be allowed to show through in his or her work. Remember, the judges will be looking for creativity and imagination, not necessarily artistic ability. Judges can quickly spot interference by an older hand or mind.

From Gay McCarter, 2005 judge: "Often, the best way to express a musical art form into a visual one is through a fluid or liquid medium (i.e., paint or ink), which allows the young artist to literally feel the various subtle and not so subtle nuances of the music and express it physically on their chosen paper or support. Use of a dry medium can limit or interfere with the ability to interpret music in a visual art form."

The three selections for the 2011-12 Color of Music art contest all are taken from the repertoire of this year's Discovery Concert Beat It!

Pizzicato (from ballet *Sylvia*) by Leo Delibes *Carnival Overture* by Antonin Dvorak
March of the Soldier (from *The Soldier's Tale*) by Igor Stravinsky

Please feel free to use one or all of the selections, according to the abilities of your students and your time constraints.

Remember that the **music itself needs to create the impressions which guide the children's artwork.** Feel free to share the information provided on the next pages. It is intended to help your students to listen critically to the music, but your students must work independently and not be overwhelmed with personal suggestions.

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971): *March of the Soldier* (from *The Soldier's Tale*)

Many consider Igor Stravinsky the greatest composer of the 20th century. Born in Russia, he grew up in a musical environment: his father was an opera singer, and he began piano lessons at a young age. His interest in orchestral music was stirred after seeing Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty* at the age of eight. However, in spite of his talent and enthusiasm for music, his parents wanted him to pursue a legal career. He studied law at the University of St. Petersburg and embarked on a legal



career, but continued his musical studies, including composition lessons with Russian master Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov (composer of the famous *Flight of the Bumblebee*).

Success in his musical pursuits came early. In 1901, his early works were heard by the legendary director of the Russian Ballet, Serge Diaghilev, who immediately commissioned Stravinsky for new works for his ballet company. The first of these ballets was *The Firebird*. *The Firebird's* success led to two more works for the ballet company: *Petrouchka*, and *The Rite of Spring* which were both landmarks of twentieth-century music. *The Rite of Spring*, at its premiere, created a near riot, and the piece shook the music world to its very foundation. However, a year later the work, performed at a symphony concert, was received enthusiastically! Stravinsky had a long career, composing numerous masterpieces with styles which evolved continuously. He not only wrote music for ballets, but also composed symphonies, concertos, and operas. He was an intellectual, and liked to experiment with different combinations of sounds which, to many in his day, sounded extremely peculiar

With the outbreak of the war in 1914, Stravinsky moved with his wife and children to Switzerland. In 1918, he moved to France, where he lived until 1939, performing his music as a pianist and conductor throughout Europe. After World War II broke out in Europe, he settled in California, and in 1945 he became an American citizen. Concert tours throughout the world made him one of the most celebrated figures in twentieth century.

March of the Soldier (from *The Soldier's Tale*) is a theatrical work "to be read, played and danced" set to music by Stravinsky. It is a parable about a soldier who trades his fiddle to the devil for a book that predicts the economy. The music is rife with changes in beat and rhythm.

Antonin Dvorak (1841 – 1904): Carnival Overture

Antonin Dvorak started life very modestly as a butcher's son. When he was 16, he started to study music seriously, and paid for his lessons by playing in cafes. At that time, he knew nothing of the great composers who had gone on before; "Beethoven and Mozart were just names to me", he wrote. After about 10 years as an orchestral viola player he began to attract some notice with his compositions. The great composer Brahms recommended him to a music publisher. Dvorak was Czechoslovakia's music ambassador to the world.

The Czech composer wrote many pieces that are mainstays of the orchestra repertoire. An underlying spirit of vitality and cheerful optimism is almost always evident in his music, making it a joy to hear. The *Carnival Overture* was written in 1892. It is part of a "Nature, Life and Love" trilogy with the overture forming the second part of "Life". The three pieces were first performed in Prague on April 20, 1892 with Dvorak leading the orchestra. The overture bubbles with energy and exuberance, except for a poignant and haunting melody performed by English Horn and solo Violin. Like much of his music, it abounds with dance rhythms and folk-music influences from his native Bohemia, now known as the Czech Republic.

Dvorak wrote his own program note describing the story behind the music: "The wanderer reaches the city at nightfall, where a carnival of pleasures reigns supreme. On every side is heard the clangor of instruments, mingled with shouts of joy and the unrestrained hilarity of people giving vent to their feelings in the songs and the dances."

Leo Delibes (1836 – 1891): Pizzicato (from the ballet *Sylvia*)



Leo Delibes was a French composer who was a church organist until 1871. He was drawn to the theatre and began composing operettas. He is best known for his appealing classical ballets. The charming *Coppelia* debuted in 1870 and the tuneful and sophisticated *Sylvia* in 1876. The score is varied and rich and instead of receding into the background (behind the sets, costumes and choreography of the performance), it sets the action. The notable scores is significantly famous for the pizzicato section in the ballet's third act. It is a well know example of the pizzicato style. Pizzicato refers to a playing technique that involves the plucking of the strings of a stringed instrument with the fingers.

"Listened to the Leo Delibes' ballet *Sylvia*. In fact, I actually listened, because it is the first ballet, where the music constitutes not only the main but the only interest. What charm, what elegance, what richness of melody, rhythm, harmony." – *Pyotr Llycih Tchaikovsky*, December 7, 1877

Additional Activities:

- ◇ Have your students find other musical works which were inspired by visual art, and visual art works which were inspired by music!
- ◇ Divide your students into groups and assign various terms used in art and music to each group. Have them look through art books, picture files or online to find their favorite examples to illustrate the terms
- ◇ Your students may enjoy illustrating the terms to show their meanings: for example, the word **balance** may be illustrated in this way. How else could the word be illustrated to show its meaning?



The word **COLOR** could be illustrated by filling in the letters with various colors: “**hue**”, “**intensity**” and “**value**” could be drawn and colored to illustrate these characteristics of color. Other terms which would be fun to illustrate are **texture, rhythm, form, contrast,** and **line**. If your students are young, you could make your own illustrations to help them learn the terms.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE, www.TheJacksonSymphony.org, following the links from the Education pages, to download a unit “Understanding Relationships Between Art and Music”

**All top winning entries will be exhibited at
The Jackson Symphony’s 2012 Symphony Discovery Concerts**

Beat It!

Explore with The Jackson Symphony the concept and great variety of beat and rhythm in music!
Music ranging from the classics to our time will be performed!

Monday, February 27, 2012

9:30 and 11:30 AM

at the Carl Perkins Civic Center

Tickets: \$5 for students

Chaperones are admitted free of charge

For reservations call 731-427-6440

or contact us by email: jso@aeneas.net

**For more information about these concerts or other programs of The Jackson Symphony,
visit our webpage:**

www.TheJacksonSymphony.org

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Recommended Books:

Lives of the Musicians: Good Times, Bad Times, written and illustrated by Kathleen Krull.

Alligators and Music by Donald Elliott, illustrated by Clinton Arrowood

Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin by Lloyd Moss

The Story of the Incredible Orchestra by Bruce Koscielniak

Peter and the Wolf, book and CD, by Carin and Joan DeWhirst

Getting to Know the World's Greatest Composers Series by Mike Venezia

Great Composers Coloring Book includes biographical sketches of famous composers



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