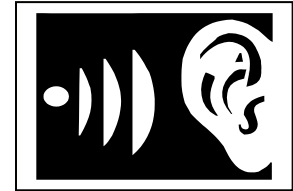




AN ART CONTEST FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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.

It is strongly suggested that the music be played for the students without knowledge of the title. This will prevent any preconceived notion of what the music is “really” about. The teacher should refrain from comment about the pieces so that the students can imagine a picture in their own mind and create their own interpretation!



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 2008-9 Color of Music art contest are:

The Dance of the Comedians (from *The Bartered Bride*) by Bedrich Smetana
In the Hall of the Mountain King (from *Peer Gynt*) by Edvard Grieg
The Appian Way (from *The Pines of Rome*) by Ottorino Respighi

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

After the artwork has been completed by the students and turned in, the teacher may want to give the title, composer and background of the musical selection(s). **This is especially true this year,** since the titles of the works are so suggestive of content for the artwork. We prefer that the music itself create the impressions which guide the children's artwork. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Smetana.j>



The Dance of the Comedians by Bedrich Smetana (1824-1884)

Bedrich Smetana was born in Bohemia, which was then part of Austrian empire and later became a part of Czechoslovakia. A child prodigy, he took music lessons from his father, a brewer who was also a fine violinist. Smetana studied music in Prague, and earned a living by teaching music and playing concerts and, in 1848, established a music school. His financial situation during these early years was precarious, and, tragically, three of his four daughters died between 1854 and 1856. When his third child died, he wrote his Piano Trio in G minor, which reflected his sadness and despair.

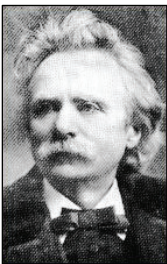
He was involved in the political uprisings of his native country, and after the revolution was crushed, he moved to Sweden where he prospered as a pianist, teacher and conductor. Inspired by his friend Franz Liszt, he wrote his first symphonic poems there. His wife's failing health brought him back to Bohemia, and she died on the way home. Back in Prague, he resumed his career writing operas and served as principal conductor of the Provision Theater. His first opera was enthusiastically received in 1866, and his second, *The Bartered Bride*, was well-received in his country and later won him worldwide fame. During this time he also wrote a cycle of symphonic poems, *Má vlast* ("My fatherland"), his best-known works. The cycle was inspired by his home country, reflecting its beauty and native folk songs, dances and legends. While he was writing the cycle, his health declined and, like Beethoven, he grew deaf, yet continued to compose. He was a prolific composer until his last days.

Smetana was Bohemia's first major nationalist composer, giving his people a musical identity. He remains extremely popular in his country today, and his works greatly influenced Antonin Dvorak and many other Czech composers who came after him.

The Dance of the Comedians

This work is from the last act of Smetana's famous opera, *The Bartered Bride*. Fast and furious, what type of mood is set by the beginning of the work? There are contrasting sections, beginning with whirling strings, interrupted with sudden halts and a trumpet seeming to be making an announcement of some sort. The work is sure to tell a tale to you and create colorful pictures in your mind. Tell your own story with your artwork!

In the Hall of the Mountain King (from *Peer Gynt*) by Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)



Edvard Grieg was born June 15, 1843 in Bergen, Norway. He grew up in a successful merchant family, and began taking piano lessons from his mother (considered the best teacher in Bergen) at the age of six. He enjoyed sitting at the piano for hours, making up his own tunes.

The famous violin virtuoso Ole Bull, a good friend of Grieg's parents, was married to his aunt. He visited the family in the summer of 1858 at the Griegs' estate, and this event became, according to Grieg, the most important single event in his life. Grieg played the piano for the violinist, and after Ole Bull had heard young Grieg playing some of his own compositions, he spoke to Grieg's parents. He convinced them to send Grieg to the Leipzig Conservatoire in Germany, considered to be the best and most modern conservatory in Europe at the time.

At the Conservatoire, Grieg studied piano, theory and composition, examining the traditional works of Mozart and Beethoven along with those of Romantic composers Mendelssohn, Schumann and Wagner. While he was there, he suffered an attack of pleurisy that left him with recurring respiratory troubles. He graduated from the conservatory in 1862 and returned to Norway.

Grieg's goal was to compose Norwegian music, but knew that he needed the inspiration of the European centers of music and a broader musical market than that of his home country. He went to Copenhagen, a Scandinavian city with a rich cultural life, to begin his career as a pianist. There he composed his only piano sonata, two violin sonatas and the first set of his *Lyric Pieces* for Piano, which used Norwegian themes. He also met his cousin and future wife, pianist and vocalist Nina Hagerup.

The Griegs returned to Norway, and there Grieg worked as a piano teacher and conductor. In 1868, he composed his highly successful Piano Concerto in A minor. This work, composed at the age of 25, established Grieg as a major composer of his time. However, the joy of the success as a composer was short-lived; his only daughter Alexandra died from meningitis on May 21, 1869 while the Griegs were visiting their family in Bergen.

In 1874, Edvard Grieg was chosen by Norwegian playwright and poet Henrik Ibsen to write the incidental music for the staging of his drama *Peer Gynt*. The play recounts the story of a peasant figure from Norwegian history. The two orchestral suites which were arranged from this music became extremely popular. The Norwegian government granted him a generous pension, which enabled him to devote most of his time to composition.

Grieg built a house at Troldhaugen, where he lived for the rest of his life. There he composed in the spring and early summer, and during the autumn and winter he went on lengthy concert tours. On his many journeys to Europe, he met and became a good friend of other composers such as Tchaikovsky, Brahms and Liszt. It is amazing that he was able to cope with the life on tour, with only one lung working. His death, in 1907 of heart disease, was mourned by all Norway.

In his music, Grieg found new ways to approach Norwegian folk music, re-creating the melodic and rhythmic flavor of his country's folk songs. The story of *Peer Gynt* recalls the adventures of a peasant figure of Norway, who abandons his wife to seek other pleasures and then returns to her forty years later, finding her still faithful to him.

In the Hall of the Mountain King

As you listen to "In the Hall of the Mountain King" from the *Peer Gynt Suite*, what do you visualize as you hear the slow tune played by the low bassoons? There contrasting sounds of the instruments are evident as the theme repeats and moves from instrument to instrument. Are the notes legato (connected) or staccato (short and separated)? The tune then moves toward a frenzy as illustrated with the steadily increasing tempo and volume, higher and higher pitch along with the added color of the full orchestra. Do you hear the blaring brass instruments, the crashing cymbals and the pounding timpani at the end? What sort of story does the piece seem to tell?



The Appian Way (from *The Pines of Rome*) by Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

Ottorino Respighi was born in Bologna, Italy to a family of trained musicians. At the age of 12 he began his formal musical education at the age of 12. . A performer and composer, he played the violin, viola and piano. He studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov in St. Petersburg and with Max Bruch in Berlin. In 1913 he settled down in Rome, earning a living composing and teaching music. He became the Director of the Santa Cecilia Conservatory. He later resigned from this position in order to compose and perform full-time. Although he wrote many operas, songs, concertos and a few string quartets, he is

best-known for his three Roman tone poems: *The Fountains of Rome*, *The Pines of Rome*, and *Roman Festivals*.

The Appian Way

The Pines of Rome is a symphonic poem, its orchestration colorful and containing some novelties, including the recording of bird calls in the third movement.

In this final movement, "The Appian Way", what sort of scene do you envision? The work begins very quietly, with a ceaseless muffled rhythm which continues throughout. Listen to the bass clarinet and low brass as a melody develops. The upper strings add another layer to the musical texture. The English Horn's long solo adds a melody, later accompanied by the bassoon and clarinets. The low brass and trumpets sound, changing the mood. The low brass call out, building to a climax. What story does this colorful "musical poem" create in your mind?

Additional Activities:

- ◇ 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:

bal a nce

- ◇ 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”

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

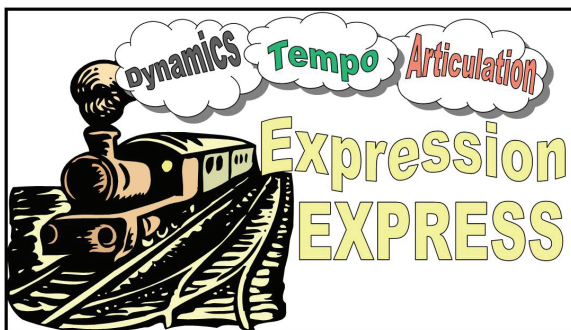
Peter and the Wolf, book and CD, by Carin and Joan DeWhirst

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

Great Composers Coloring Book includes biographical sketches of famous composers



All school entries will be exhibited at this year’s school concerts



**Friday, March 13, 2008
9:30 and 11:30
Carl Perkins Civic Center
Tickets: \$5 per student**

Chaperones are admitted free of charge