



NASHVILLE SYMPHONY
YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE
GRADES 5-8



Nashville
Symphony

MUSIC **EDUCATION** CITY



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LETTER FROM THE CONDUCTOR



Welcome to the Nashville Symphony's Young People's Concert: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle! I am excited to explore with you these "sustainable" concepts applied to the world of music. As we discover works from Stravinsky, Rachmaninoff, John Cage and more, we'll ask questions like: How do composers and musicians "reduce" the elements of a symphony? Can you hear the theme of one composition "recycled" in another piece? It will be thrilling to experience this unique program performed by a full orchestra of exceptional musicians.

You are holding a study guide, put together by the Education staff at the Nashville Symphony, to help you prepare your students for the performance. The lessons provide an in-depth study of the concepts and music that will be explored in the concert. In addition, all of the activities align with specific Common Core and National Arts standards. I encourage you to use this guide in your classroom before and/or after the concert.

In the back of this packet you will find a survey for the students and yourself, which we encourage you to fill out and send to us. It is our wish to provide the best resources and the best concert experience possible—we welcome your feedback and suggestions!

We look forward to seeing you at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center to hear Nashville's own beloved orchestra!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Corcoran".

Kelly Corcoran

STANDARD EQUIVALENCIES

Lesson #1: Recycle, Part 1-What Is Music?

**Core Curriculum Standard:
English Language Arts**

5-8.RI.7

Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

**National Arts Standard:
Music**

2.0

Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

9.0

Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Lesson #2: Recycle, Part 2- “Dies Irae” Recycled

**Core Curriculum Standard:
English Language Arts**

5-8.RL.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments

5-8.W.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

**National Arts Standard:
Music**

6.0

Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

9.0

Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

STANDARD EQUIVALENCIES

Lesson #3: Reduce-Chamber Music: The Orchestra Reduced

**Core Curriculum Standard:
English Language Arts**

5-8.RL.4

Integrate Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyzing the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

**National Arts Standard:
Music**

6.0

Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

8.0

Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.

Lesson #4: Reuse-The Transcription: Renewing Older Material

**Core Curriculum Standard:
English Language Arts**

5-8.RL.9

Compare and contrast works in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. Analyze how a modern work draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from previous periods or styles, including describing how the material is rendered new.

**National Arts Standard:
Music**

2.0

Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

4.0

Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.

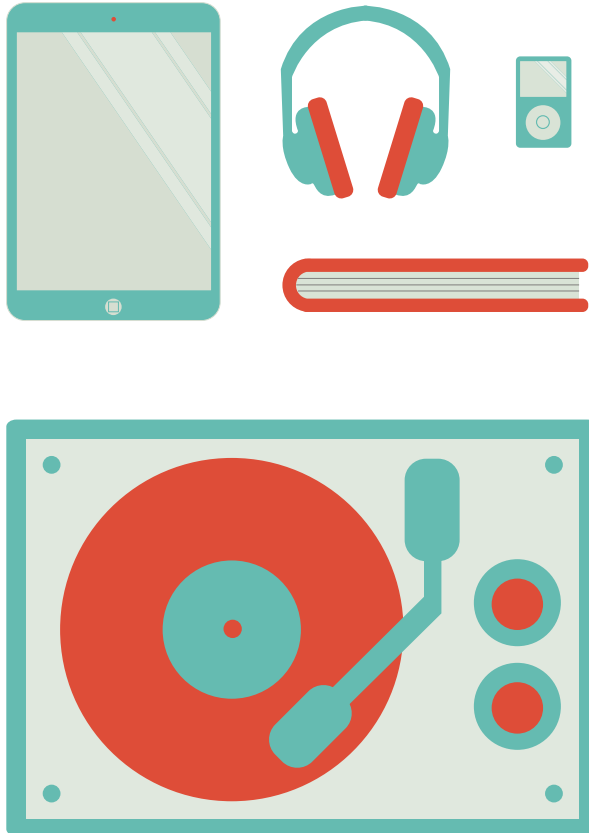
6.0

Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

7.0

Evaluating music and music performances

MUSIC RESOURCES



The Nashville Symphony is pleased to partner with NAXOS. NAXOS has provided exclusive access to their online NAXOS Music Library for teachers using the Young People's Concert Curriculum Guides. Instructions on how to play the music included in all of the lesson plans will be emailed to you when you register for the concert.

Lesson 2 Activity 1

Dies Irae

Symphonie Fantastique,
mvt 5

Lesson 3 Activities 1-3

"Royal March"

Lesson 3 Assessment

The Rite of Spring,
Introduction

Lesson 4 Activity 1

Fugue in G minor
(arr. L. Stokowski)

Lesson 4 Assessment

Fugue in G minor,
BWV 578

OTHER MEDIA

Lesson 1 Activity 1

John Cage 4'33"

<http://vimeo.com/48143735>

STOMP

<http://www.pluginsight.com/Video/Player?eqs=Xxi2TI0QSK8wxgXsRID5rw%3D%3D>

Lesson 1 Activity 2

landfill harmonic

<http://vimeo.com/52711779>

OPTIONAL MEDIA: Lesson 2 Activity 1

Michael Jackson

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Uj3zitETs4>

Rihanna

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yd8jh9QYfEs>

CONCERT PROGRAM



Variations on America

Charles Ives (Arr. Schuman)

“Royal March” from L’Histoire du Soldat

Igor Stravinsky

4’33”

John Cage

Little Gigue in G, K. 574 for Solo Piano

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

“Gigue” from Suite No. 4: Mozartiana

Pytor Ilych Tchaikovsky

Little Fugue in G Minor

Johann Sebastian Bach (Arr. Stokowski)

Symphony No. 2 (2nd Movement)

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Finale of Symphonie Fantastique

Hector Berlioz

LESSON PLAN #1: RECYCLE, PART I—WHAT IS MUSIC?

Overview of Lesson #1

Activity 1: What Is Music? (40 minutes)

Activity 2: Recycled Instruments (40 minutes)

Lesson Plan #1 Assessment (10 minutes)



Time needed

1 hour 30 minutes



Materials

Three video clips (page 7)

Materials brought from home to make instruments

Scissors, glue, and decorating material to make instruments



Standards

Common Core Curriculum: 5-8.RI.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

Music Curriculum: 2.0 Playing Instruments, 9.0 Historical and Cultural Relationships



Objective

Students will develop a literal understanding of how recycling applies to music by learning about the composer John Cage, who asked the question: “What is music?”; exploring experimental percussion groups like STOMP; and making instruments

ACTIVITY I: WHAT IS MUSIC?



Time needed

40 minutes



Objectives

To develop a broader understanding of what music is

To understand the difference between organized and unorganized sounds

To explore how unorganized sounds and non-traditional instruments make music



Materials

John Cage video clip

STOMP performance video clip

1. Begin by asking the students to close their eyes and silently concentrate on the sounds of the classroom for 30 seconds. What sorts of sounds do they hear? Do they hear a pencil roll off of a desk and fall to the floor? The hum of a computer monitor? Or the shuffling of feet? After 30 seconds, ask the students to open their eyes and describe what they heard. Record their responses on the board, and do not erase them.

2. Ask the students “What is music?” Based on their definitions, ask them if they think the sounds they just heard are music. If they don’t believe these are musical sounds, ask them what sounds they do perceive to be musical (i.e., someone singing a song on the radio, beatboxing, a drum solo in a rock song).

3. Explain that music is often defined as organized sound. Organized sound is sound that reflects a sense of pitch, rhythm, or harmony. A song heard on the radio is organized sound. A computer monitor, however, although it makes a sound, is not organized sound, because it cannot produce pitches or rhythms.

4. Some people believe unorganized sound is music. John Cage, a contemporary composer of the 20th century, was one of the first people to question the definition of music. Cage thought music encompassed all sounds. According to him, even silence is music!

5. Tell the students that they are about to watch a short video which talks about John Cage’s most famous work, 4’33” (“Four Minutes and Thirty-Three Seconds”). Before they watch the video, give them a bit of background information on 4’33.” See page 23 of the resource section.

6. Play the John Cage, 4’33” video.

7. When the video ends, divide students into groups of 3-4. Ask them to discuss whether or not they think 4’33” is a piece of music. Why or why not? There is no wrong answer.

8. Explain that John Cage’s radical ideas inspired others to think differently about music and silence. People began to think that if anything could be music, then any ordinary object could make music.

9. Ask the students if they have heard of or seen STOMP or The Blue Man Group. For those students who have, ask them what types of “instruments” these groups use to make music. Point out that these are percussion groups who make music with pipes, garbage cans, and brooms. In the next video clip, the group STOMP plays large drums made from street signs, hub caps, and pots and pans.

10. Play the video of STOMP.

11. Referring back to the list of musical and non-musical sounds made at the beginning of this activity, ask the students if they still believe the sounds listed under the non-musical category are not music. After learning about John Cage and STOMP, have their opinions about what is and isn’t music changed?

Homework assignment: Have the students find three ordinary objects (e.g., paper towels, water bottles, books) from home and bring them in to class for the next activity. They should not bring anything with sharp corners or edges, anything breakable, or anything that is potentially harmful to themselves or other students (e.g. glass or toxic cleaning liquids).

ACTIVITY 2: RECYCLED INSTRUMENTS



Time needed

40 minutes



Materials

Landfill Harmonic video

Materials brought from home to make instruments

Scissors, glue, and decorating materials to make instruments



Objectives

To see how a community makes instruments using its limited resources

To make and perform on recycled instruments



Preparation

Have students place the objects brought from home into a pile in the center of the room.

1. Begin by pointing out that even traditional instruments, like violins and guitars, are recyclable. Some people may not have the resources to make these instruments, so they use recycled materials. Tell the students that they are about to watch a video about a community in Paraguay, South America that makes instruments out of trash.
2. Play the *Landfill Harmonic* trailer.
3. Ask the students to grab two or three objects from the pile (They do not necessarily have to use the items they brought). Now, students will individually make their own recycled instruments using the objects they selected.
4. Allow 25-30 minutes for making and decorating instruments. Rubber bands stretched over a surface (such as an empty tissue box) are great for this activity if students get stuck.
5. Have the students present their instruments to the class. Ask them to demonstrate how to make a sound on their instruments and how to alter the pitch (if applicable). What type of music would their instruments play (e.g., percussive music, orchestral music, pop music)? Finally, what is their instrument called, and to which instrument family does it belong?

Lesson #1 Assessment

Have the students play the rhythm of "I've Been Working on the Railroad" (or any song with steady, simple rhythms) together as a class on their recycled instruments.

LESSON PLAN #2: RECYCLE, PART 2—“DIES IRAE” RECYCLED

Overview of Lesson #2

Activity 1: “Dies Irae” Recycled (35 minutes)

Activity 2: Recycling the Text (40 minutes)

Lesson Plan #2 Assessment (15 minutes)



Time needed

1 hour 30 minutes



Materials

Two listening excerpts (page 6)
Two optional video clips (page 7)
“Dies Irae” English text (page 30)
Symphonie Fantastique program notes (pages 31-32)
Pencils and paper



Standards

Common Core Curriculum: 5-8.RL.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. 5-8.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Music Curriculum: 6.0 Listening and Analyzing, 9.0 Historical and Cultural Relationships



Objective

Students will develop a more abstract understanding of how recycling applies to music. They will examine how composers alter the form and meaning of an original melody in order to communicate completely different themes or concepts in their own compositions. They will also learn how language fits into the theme of recycling by analyzing musical texts.

ACTIVITY I: “DIES IRAE” RECYCLED



Time needed

35 minutes



Materials

Michael Jackson video clip (optional)
Rihanna video clip (optional)
“Dies Irae” listening excerpt
Berlioz listening excerpt



Objectives

To understand how composers alter pre-existing melodies and adapt them to their own compositions
To aurally identify these adapted melodies outside of their original contexts

1. Write the definition of the word “recycle” on the board. To “recycle” means to alter or adapt something for new use without changing its essential form or nature.
2. Ask students why they think recycling is important and what sorts of materials can be recycled. Also, ask them if they think music can be recycled. Why or why not?
3. Explain that, in addition to materials like cardboard or plastic, music may also be recycled. Composers “recycle” music by borrowing melodies from other composers or from previous periods. They put these melodies into their own compositions. Musical recycling often involves only a single melody or short excerpt rather than an entire work. In popular music today, it is referred to as “sampling” another artist’s work.
4. To give the students an idea of how melodies are recycled, present two popular songs with which they might be familiar. Two examples which could be used are Michael Jackson’s “Wanna Be Startin’ Somethin’” and Rihanna’s “Don’t Stop the Music.” Play the Michael Jackson excerpt (4:40-5:10), followed by the Rihanna excerpt (2:30-2:50), and ask the students to listen for the recycled melody in both songs.
5. Melodies are also recycled in classical music. For example, one melody which has been recycled many times is “Dies Irae.” “Dies Irae,” which means “Day of Wrath” in Latin, is a 13th century Christian hymn which describes Judgment Day. The first eight pitches of this hymn appear in many musical works. A very famous use of the “Dies Irae” hymn is in Hector Berlioz’s *Symphonie Fantastique*. Berlioz, a French, Romantic composer of the early 19th century, uses this hymn in the fifth movement of his *Symphonie Fantastique*.
6. In *Symphonie Fantastique*, Berlioz uses “Dies Irae” as a motif. Write the word “motif” on the board. A motif is a brief section of music (normally no longer than a few notes) which is constantly heard throughout a piece. “Dies Irae” is only eight notes long and occurs numerous times; therefore, it is considered to be a motif. (A copy of this motif can be found on page 29.)
7. Play the first few seconds of the “Dies Irae” listening excerpt. Replay it until the students have the first eight pitches memorized. Have the students slowly sing these pitches together as a class to ensure memorization.
8. Play the excerpt of the fifth movement of *Symphonie Fantastique*. Students should listen for the “Dies Irae” motif. Ask them to count how many times they hear it. (It occurs six times.) The rhythm of the motif will vary slightly each time it occurs.
9. When the excerpt ends, ask the students how many times they heard “Dies Irae.” Write the different numbers on the board. Also, ask students which instruments or instrument families played this motif and how it varied rhythmically.
10. Play the excerpt again. This time, keep a count on the board of how many times the motif is played.

ACTIVITY 2: RECYCLING THE TEXT



Time needed

40 minutes



Materials

“Dies Irae” English text
Symphonie Fantastique program notes
Pencils and paper



Objectives

To examine how composers enhance their music with language
To find central themes in musical texts by analyzing the composers’ word choices

1. Divide students into groups of 3-5.
2. Begin this activity with a short creative writing exercise. Play the *Symphonie Fantastique* excerpt. As they listen, students will respond to the following questions: What images or emotions does *Symphonie Fantastique* evoke for them? Basically, how does this piece make them feel, and what does it make them see? What story or scenario could they associate with this piece? Encourage them to be as specific and imaginative as possible.
3. Have the students share their stories with the other students in their groups.
4. Now, share with everyone what the piece is actually about:

Symphonie Fantastique tells the story of an artist who has an elaborate dream about the woman he loves. The dream begins with the first time the artist lays eyes on his love and culminates in a terrifying hallucination of her death in the final movement. Each of the five movements represents a new stage of the dream.

The most well-known movement of *Symphonie Fantastique* is movement five. This is the movement in which the “Dies Irae” theme appears; it is also the movement the students recently heard. It depicts a witch’s Sabbath, or a gathering of evil creatures. In his hallucination, the artist imagines himself killing the woman he loves, his own execution, and a gathering of monsters at his funeral.

5. Revisit the definition of the word “recycle.” Explain to the students that the key words of this definition are “adapt” and “new use.” When something is recycled, it is altered or adapted into a completely different object. For example, some people make pillowcases out of cotton t-shirts. Although the material, cotton, doesn’t change, the original object, the t-shirt, no longer functions as a t-shirt, because it has been altered. The same concept applies to “Dies Irae” and *Symphonie Fantastique*. Hector Berlioz, the composer, altered the original significance of the 13th century chant and adapted it to his symphony.
6. Distribute one copy of the “Dies Irae” text and one copy of the *Symphonie Fantastique* program notes to each group of students.
7. Explain that Berlioz wrote program notes to go along with *Symphonie Fantastique*. These notes narrate the story behind the piece. Students will examine the program notes as well the original “Dies Irae” text to see how Berlioz “recycles” the themes in “Dies Irae.”
8. Have students silently read only the first nine lines of “Dies Irae” (in English) and the paragraph labeled “Part Five: Dream of a witches’ sabbath” in the *Symphonie Fantastique* program notes. Then, ask them what they think these texts are trying to say. Do they communicate similar or different ideas? How does the mood of one text differ from the mood of the other?

9. Explain that “Dies Irae” talks about religion and destruction. Does Berlioz use any religious imagery in his program notes? Actually, he seems to be talking about something different. The main difference between the two texts is their different moods. The original “Dies Irae” has a very serious undertone, while *Symphonie Fantastique* does not. In his program notes, Berlioz wrote that he intended to make fun of the chant!

10. Now, students will work together in groups to come up with a central theme for each text. Give each group of students 5-10 minutes to decide on a theme for each text. Then, ask them to select at least three key words from each text that correspond with and support their chosen themes. Have them present their ideas to the class.

Lesson #2 Assessment

Ask the students if they know of any other classical pieces or popular, contemporary songs that contain recycled melodies.

Compare the creative stories the students wrote at the beginning of Activity 2 to the actual plot of *Symphonie Fantastique*. Did they imagine something similar to or completely different from what Berlioz described in his program notes? Did any of their stories include a dream; or did the music seem dream-like to anyone? Did the music seem angry or sad? Did any of their stories involve violence or monsters? Encourage them to share their stories with the class.

LESSON PLAN #3: REDUCE—CHAMBER MUSIC: THE ORCHESTRA REDUCED

Overview of Lesson #3

Activity 1: Listening Exercise (35 minutes)

Activity 2: Syncopation Game (optional) (10-15 minutes)

Activity 3: Music and Adjectives (25 minutes)

Lesson Plan #3 Assessment (15 minutes)



Time needed

1 hour 30 minutes



Materials

Two listening excerpts (page 6)
Orchestra Seating Diagram (page 33)
Pencils and paper



Standards

Common Core Curriculum: 5-8.RL.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyzing the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Music Curriculum: 6.0 Listening and Analyzing, 8.0 Interdisciplinary Connections



Objective

For this lesson, students will develop their listening abilities. They will be able to identify the timbres of orchestral instruments, as well as melody and accompaniment in musical selections. They will also understand rhythmic syncopation and learn to describe music using musical terms.

ACTIVITY I: LISTENING EXERCISE



Time needed

35 minutes



Objectives

To identify the specific timbres of instruments within the orchestra
To differentiate between melody and accompaniment



Materials

Listening excerpt of “Royal March,”
from *L’Histoire du Soldat*
Orchestra Seating Diagram
Pencils or other writing implements

1. Explain that composers “reduce” the size of the orchestra by writing music for smaller ensembles, such as trios or quartets. These ensembles are called “chamber ensembles,” and the music composed for them is called “chamber music.” With chamber ensembles, it is possible for two or more instruments who may not be seated near one another in a large orchestra to play together. Also, a reduced number of musicians makes it easier to hear each instrument’s individual part.
2. Distribute one copy of the Orchestra Seating Diagram to each student.
3. Mention that Stravinsky’s *L’Histoire du Soldat* was written for only seven instruments [violin, double bass, clarinet, bassoon, cornet (or trumpet), trombone, and percussion] and is an example of chamber music. Play an extract of “Royal March” and ask the students to listen carefully to which instruments they hear most prominently. Tell them to circle these instruments (or the instrument families in which they belong) in pencil on the Orchestra Seating Diagram as they listen.
4. When the excerpt ends, ask the students what they heard. Which instruments do they think the composer most wanted the audience to hear? Were there any that sounded less prominent than others? Explain that the instrument playing the most noticeable part plays the “melody,” and all other instruments not sharing this part have the “accompaniment.” The melody is always more prominent than the accompaniment.
5. After the students have shared what they’ve heard, write the words “melody” and “accompaniment” on the board. Make a list of all the instruments the students indicated, and have them decide if these instruments should go under either the “melody” or the “accompaniment” category.
6. Replay the beginning of the excerpt. Explain that dynamics, or the degree of loudness, can determine whether an instrument plays the melody or the accompaniment. In the beginning, the trombone and the cornet have the melody and play louder than the clarinet and the double bass, which have the accompaniment. Clarinet and double bass play at a softer dynamic so the melody may be heard in the cornet and the trombone.

ACTIVITY 2: SYNCOPATION GAME (OPTIONAL)



Time needed

10-15 minutes



Objectives

To understand the concept of syncopation



Materials

“Royal March” listening excerpt

1. Play the first 10 seconds of “Royal March” and have the students clap softly on each beat. Ask the students to pay close attention to the melody in the trombone. What did they notice about the trombone’s rhythm? Did it always align with their clapping? Explain that the accompaniment plays “on the beat,” while the trombone sometimes plays “off the beat.” When music is played “off the beat,” this is called “syncopation.”
2. Demonstrate syncopation by instructing students to clap steady quarter notes. As they clap, they should count “ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR” (and repeat) on each beat, each time their hands come together. Next, have them speak the word “and” in between each beat to achieve “ONE-and-TWO-and-THREE-and-FOUR-and.” Once they are comfortable with this, have them speak only on the off-beats (e.g., “clap-AND-clap-AND-clap-AND-clap-AND”). Use a metronome to keep a steady tempo.
3. Have the students speak their names in syncopated rhythm as they clap steady quarter notes. For example, if a student is named “Olivia,” she will clap steady quarter notes and speak the syllables of her name on the off-beats to achieve “clap-O-clap-LI-clap-VI-clap-A.” Have the students speak their syncopated name without clapping first to demonstrate how the activity is done.

ACTIVITY 3: MUSIC AND ADJECTIVES



Time needed

25 minutes



Objectives

To explore the relationship between music and language arts
To actively listen to and analyze music
To be able to describe music using musical terms



Materials

“Royal March” listening excerpt
Pencils and paper



Preparation

Divide the students into groups of 3-6

1. Remind the students that the piece they are exploring is called “Royal March.” Give each group two or three minutes to discuss the meaning of the word “royal” as well as what sorts of characteristics “royal” implies. Then, ask each group to present its thoughts to the entire class. Record the responses on the board.

2. Play “Royal March,” telling students to think about these characteristics as they listen.
3. Ask the students what about this music sounds “royal.” Tell them to consider rhythm and style of articulation. Introduce musical terms such as “legato,” “staccato,” “cantabile,” and “marcato,” and explain their meanings to aid the students. Consult the resource section (pages 34-35) for a list of vocabulary.
4. Explain to the students that now, each of their groups is a “chamber group” that will create the idea for its own composition. Students will work together to come up with a list of adjectives other than “royal.” Then, each group will select one adjective from the list and describe how a piece would be played in that style, using the musical terms discussed in class.

Lesson #3 Assessment

Play the first 30 seconds of the introduction to *The Rite of Spring*. Ask the students which one of the three instruments plays the melody, and which two instruments play the accompaniment. (The melody is played by the bassoon. Horn and clarinets play the accompaniment.) Are students able to correctly identify specific instruments by their sounds? If not, give hints, such as the instrument families to which they belong. Have students refer to the Orchestra Seating Diagram for help.

Ask students to describe the *Rite of Spring* excerpt using some of the vocabulary discussed in class.

LESSON PLAN #4: REUSE—THE TRANSCRIPTION: RENEWING OLDER MATERIAL

Overview of Lesson #4

Activity 1: Transcription and Texture (30 minutes)

Activity 2: The Reusing Game (30 minutes)

Lesson Plan #4 Assessment (10 minutes)



Time needed

1 hour 10 minutes



Materials

Two listening excerpts (page 6)

Pencils and paper

Paper labeled with instrument names

An object to hold small slips of paper (such as a hat or a paper bag)

Copies of “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad” (optional) (page 30)



Standards

Common Core Curriculum: 5-8.RL.9 Compare and contrast works in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. Analyze how a modern work draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from previous periods or styles, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Music Curriculum: 2.0 Playing Instruments, 4.0 Composing, 6.0 Listening and Analyzing, 7.0 Evaluating



Objective

Students will explore the purpose and process of transcription by learning about the concept of texture in musical works and by transcribing popular melodies.

ACTIVITY I: TRANSCRIPTION AND TEXTURE



Time needed

30 minutes



Materials

Stokowski listening excerpt

Pencils and paper



Objectives

To understand why composers transcribe music

To explore the concept of texture

To recognize how instrumentation, dynamics, and melody contribute to the texture of a musical work

1. Explain that composers revitalize older music by “transcribing” it, that is, by taking a piece of music and rewriting it for new instruments or ensembles. Unlike the process of “recycling” music, musical reusing involves an entire work rather than a single melody or short excerpt. Leopold Stokowski “reused” J.S. Bach’s “Little” Fugue in G minor. Bach composed the fugue for organ in the early 18th century, and Stokowski later transcribed it for orchestra.

2. Transcription allows composers to experiment with different textures. In music, “texture” is the general pattern of sound created by the elements of a musical work. The elements that affect texture are as follows:

- How many voices/instruments are heard
- Which instruments are heard
- The dynamic and tempo at which they play
- Style of articulation (e.g., legato vs. staccato)

Texture can be thick or thin, heavy or light. Texture thickens as more voices are added and becomes thinner or lighter as voices are taken away. Many composers, like Stokowski, transcribe solo pieces for orchestras or other large ensembles, because multiple voices achieve a much greater variety of textures than solo voices.

3. Divide students into three groups. Assign a category to each group: instrumentation, dynamics, and melody. Explain that you are going to play an excerpt of Stokowski’s arrangement of Bach’s “Little” Fugue in G minor, and that everyone must listen carefully to how the texture changes throughout the fugue. Each group will pay attention only to its assigned category. The “instrumentation” group should only discuss what instruments it heard. The “dynamics” group should only consider how dynamics changed from beginning to end. The “melody” group should only talk about the melodic aspects of the piece. Students will write down what they hear as they listen.

4. When the excerpt ends, give the students five minutes to discuss and compare what they noticed within their groups. Then, ask each group to present to the class how the texture changed throughout the fugue in relation to instrumentation, dynamics, and melody.

ACTIVITY 2: THE REUSING GAME (AN ACTIVITY FOR BAND AND ORCHESTRA STUDENTS)



Time needed

30 minutes



Materials

Paper labeled with instrument names
An object to hold small slips of paper
(such as a hat or a paper bag)
Copies of “I’ve Been Working
on the Railroad” (optional)



Objectives

To deepen an understanding of how music is “reused”
To transcribe and perform a well-known melody
To develop group interactive skills by working in pairs

1. Write the names of the instruments each student plays on slips of paper, place the slips into a hat, and draw two at a time.
2. Divide students into pairs based on the combination of instruments drawn from the hat. For example, if “oboe” and “trombone” are simultaneously drawn, a student who plays oboe will work with a student who plays trombone.
3. Students will “reuse” the song “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad” by working in pairs to transcribe it for the instruments they play. They will create a simple accompaniment to go along with the original melody. They should feel free to experiment with tempo, style, and rhythm. If the students read and write music, provide copies of the sheet music found on page 36.
4. If the students do not play instruments, try a slightly different approach. Instead of transcribing “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad” for instruments, students will adapt it to different musical styles. For example, divide students into pairs, and assign each pair a musical style (e.g., “military march,” “folk song,” “jazz,” “ballad”). They will sing their “transcribed” melodies in the styles assigned to them.
5. Have students perform their transcribed melodies in front of the class!

Lesson #4 Assessment

Play the excerpt of Bach’s original “Little” Fugue. Ask students to evaluate both versions of the fugue. How is one version similar to or different from the other? What are some strengths and weaknesses of each version? Which one did the students like best and why?

Ask students how they would “reuse” the “Little” Fugue. If they were composers, and they had to rewrite this piece for a different ensemble or instrument, which ones would they choose and why?

TEACHER RESOURCES: ARTICLE ON JOHN CAGE



SEARCHING FOR SILENCE

John Cage's art of noise.

BY ALEX ROSS

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On August 29, 1952, David Tudor walked onto the stage of the Maverick Concert Hall, near Woodstock, New York, sat down at the piano, and, for four and a half minutes, made no sound. He was performing "4'33"," a conceptual work by John Cage. It has been called the "silent piece," but its purpose is to make people listen. "There's no such thing as silence," Cage said, recalling the première. "You could hear the wind stirring outside during the first movement. During the second, raindrops began pattering the roof, and during the third people themselves made all kinds of interesting sounds as they talked or walked out." Indeed, some listeners didn't care for the experiment, although they saved their loudest protests for the question-and-answer session afterward. Someone reportedly hollered, "Good people of Woodstock, let's drive these people out of town!" Even Cage's mother had her doubts. At a subsequent performance, she asked the composer Earle Brown, "Now, Earle, don't you think that John has gone too far this time?"

This past July, the pianist Pedja Muzijevic included "4'33" " in a recital at Maverick, which is in a patch of woods a couple of miles outside Woodstock. I went up for the day, wanting to experience the piece in its native habitat. The hall, made primarily of oak and pine, is rough-hewn and barnlike. On pleasant summer evenings, the doors are left open, so that patrons can listen from benches outside. Muzijevic, mindful of the natural setting, chose not to use a mechanical timepiece; instead, he counted off the seconds in his head. Technology intruded all the same, in the form of a

car stereo from somewhere nearby. A solitary bird in the trees struggled to compete with the thumping bass. After a couple of minutes, the stereo receded. There was no wind and no rain. The audience stayed perfectly still. For about a minute, we sat in deep, full silence. Muzijevic broke the spell savagely, with a blast of Wagner: Liszt's transcription of the Liebestod from "Tristan und Isolde." Someone might as well have started up a chain saw. I might not have been the only listener who wished that the music of the forest had gone on a little longer.

Cage's mute manifesto has inspired reams of commentary. The composer and scholar Kyle Gann recently published "No Such Thing as Silence: John Cage's '4' 33' " (Yale; \$24), which doubles as an incisive, stylish primer on Cage's career. Gann defines "4'33" " as "an act of framing, of enclosing environmental and unintended sounds in a moment of attention in order to open the mind to the fact that all sounds are music." That last thought ruled Cage's life: he wanted to discard inherited structures, open doors to the exterior world, "let sounds be just sounds." Gann writes, "It begged for a new approach to listening, perhaps even a new understanding of music itself, a blurring of the conventional boundaries between art and life."

On a simpler level, Cage had an itch to try new things. What would happen if you sat at a piano and did nothing? If you chose among an array of musical possibilities by flipping a coin and consulting the I Ching? If you made music from junk-yard percussion, squads of radios, the scratching of pens, an amplified

cactus? If you wrote music for dance—Merce Cunningham was Cage's longtime partner—in which dance and music went their separate ways? If you took at face value Erik Satie's conceit that his piano piece "Vexations" could be played eight hundred and forty times in succession? Cage had an innocent, almost Boy Scout-like spirit of adventure. As he put it, "Art is a sort of experimental station in which one tries out living."

Many people, of course, won't hear of it. Nearly six decades after the work came into the world, "4'33" is still dismissed as "absolutely ridiculous," "stupid," "a gimmick," and the "emperor's new clothes"—to quote some sample putdowns that Gann extracted from an online comment board. Such judgments are especially common within classical music, where Cage, who died in 1992, remains an object of widespread scorn. In the visual arts, though, he long ago achieved monumental stature. He is considered a co-inventor of "happenings" and performance art; the Fluxus movement essentially arose from classes that Cage taught at the New School, in the late nineteen-fifties. (One exercise consisted of listening to a pin drop.) Cage emulated visual artists in turn, his chief idol being the master conceptualist Marcel Duchamp. The difference is that scorn for avant-garde art has almost entirely vanished. A Times editorial writer made an "emperor's new clothes" jab at Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase" when it showed at the Armory, in 1913. Jackson Pollock, too, was once widely mocked. Now the art market bows before them.

The simplest explanation for the resistance to avant-garde music is that human ears have a catlike vulnerability to unfamiliar sounds, and that when people feel trapped, as in a concert hall, they panic. In museums and galleries, we are free to move around, and turn away from what bewilders us. It's no surprise, then, that Cage has always gone over better in non-traditional spaces. Last year, macba, in Barcelona, mounted a remarkable exhibition entitled "The Anarchy of Silence," which traced Cage's career and his myriad connections to other arts. (The show is now playing at schunck, in the Netherlands.) The day I was there, the crowd was notably youthful: high schoolers and college students dashed through galleries devoted to Cage's concepts and contraptions, their faces wavering between disbelief and delight. Like it or not, Cage will be with us a long time.

Morton Feldman, another avant-garde musician with an eye for the wider artistic landscape, once said, "John Cage was the first composer in the history of music who raised the question by implication that maybe music could be an art form rather than a music form." Feldman meant that, since the Middle Ages, even the most adventurous composers had labored within a craftsmanlike tradition. Cage held that an artist can work as freely with sound as with paint: he changed what it meant to be a composer, and every kid manipulating music on a laptop is in his debt. Not everything he did was laudable, or even tolerable. Even his strongest admirers may admit to sometimes feeling as Jeanne Reynal did when, in 1950, Cage recited his "Lecture on Nothing" at the Artists' Club: "John, I dearly love you, but I can't bear another minute." Yet the work remains inescapable, mesmerizing, and—as I've found over months of listening, mainly to Mode Records' comprehensive Cage edition—often unexpectedly touching. It encompasses

some of the most violent sounds of the twentieth century, as well as some of the most gently beguiling. It confronts us with the elemental question of what music is, and confounds all easy answers.

Cage's high-school yearbook said of him, "Noted for: being radical." His radicalism was lifelong and unrelenting: he took the path of most resistance. As much as any artist, he enjoyed receiving applause and recognition, but he had no need for wider public or institutional approval. The one time that I saw him up close, he was delivering the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures, at Harvard. Eminences of the faculty had gathered in Memorial Hall, possibly laboring under the illusion that in such august company Cage would finally drop his games and explain himself. Unease rippled through the room as Cage began reciting a string of mesostics—acrostics in which the organizing word runs down the middle instead of the side:

Much of our
of borEdom
Toward talks in
it misled Him
diplOmatic skill to
place to place but Does it look
at present Most
fivE Iranian fishermen
cuTbacks would not

It went on like that, for six lectures, the verbal material generated randomly from Thoreau, Wittgenstein, and the Times, among other sources. Later, when Cage was asked what he thought of being a Harvard professor, he commented that it was "not much different from not being a Harvard professor."

Carolyn Brown, a founding member of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, offers a winning portrait of Cage in "Chance and Circumstance," her 2007 memoir. "He was open, frank, ready to reveal all his most optimistic utopian schemes and dreams, willing to be a friend to any who sought him out," Brown writes. In the early days of the Cunningham company, Cage served, variously, as tour manager, publicist, fund-raiser, and bus driver; Brown recalls him behind the wheel, chattering away on innumerable subjects while taking detours in search of odd sights and out-of-the-way restaurants. He had a sunny disposition and a stubborn soul, and was prone to flashes of anger. When he learned, in 1953, that he had to give up a beloved home—his tenement on Monroe Street, on the Lower East Side—he was crestfallen, and Brown made matters worse by reminding him of the Zen Buddhist principle of non-attachment. "Don't you ever parrot my words back at me!" Cage roared. His indefatigable optimism carried him through periods of frustration. Gann writes, "He was a handbook on how to be a non-bitter composer in a democracy." The dance critic Jill Johnston called him a "cheerful existentialist."

The life of Cage is meticulously told in a new biography by Kenneth Silverman, "Begin Again" (Knopf; \$40). Cage was born in Los Angeles in 1912. His father, a brilliant, intermittently successful inventor, devised one of the earliest functioning

submarines; his mother covered the women's-club circuit for the Los Angeles Times. The art of publicity was hardly unknown in the Cage household, and the son inherited the ability to get his name in the papers, even when he was delivering an unpopular message. In 1928, he won the Southern California Oratorical Contest with a speech titled "Other People Think," which he delivered at the Hollywood Bowl:

One of the greatest blessings that the United States could receive in the near future would be to have her industries halted, her business discontinued, her people speechless, a great pause in her world of affairs created. . . . We should be hushed and silent, and we should have the opportunity to learn what other people think.

Cage's passion for silence, it seems, had political roots. He was a lonely, precocious child, mocked by classmates as a sissy. "People would lie and wait for me and beat me up," he said, in a rare comment on his personal life, shortly before his death. In 1935, when he was twenty-two, he married a young artist named Xenia Kashevaroff, but it soon became clear that he was more strongly attracted to men. His most sonically assaultive works might be understood, at least in part, as a sissy's revenge.

Cage dabbled in art and architecture before settling on music. He studied with Henry Cowell, the godfather of American experimental music, and then took lessons with none other than Arnold Schoenberg, the supreme modernist, first at U.S.C. and then at U.C.L.A. Although Cage was not a disciple, rejecting most of the Germanic canon that Schoenberg held dear (Mozart and Grieg were the only classics he admitted to loving), he fulfilled Schoenberg's tenet that music should exercise a critical function, disturbing rather than comforting the listener. Cage was to the second half of the century what Schoenberg was to the first half: the angel of destruction, the agent of change. Some commentators later tried to dissociate Schoenberg from his most notorious student, claiming that the two had had little contact. But scraps of evidence suggest otherwise. When, in 1937, Schoenberg invited friends to his home for a run-through of his Fourth Quartet—the guest list included Otto Klemperer and the pianist Edward Steuermann—Cage seems to have been the only American pupil in attendance.

Schoenberg told Cage to immerse himself in harmony. Cage proceeded to ignore harmony for the next fifty years. He first made his name as a composer for percussion, following the example of Cowell and Edgard Varèse. He transformed the piano into a percussion instrument—the "prepared piano"—by inserting objects into its strings. He brought phonographs and radios into the concert hall. He famously declared, "I believe that the use of noise to make music will continue and increase until we reach a music produced through the aid of electrical instruments which will make available for musical purposes any and all sounds that can be heard." Yet most of his early music—from the mid-thirties to the end of the forties—speaks in a surprisingly subdued voice. "Music for Marcel Duchamp," a prepared-piano work from 1947, never rises above mezzo-piano, offering exotic tendrils of melody, stop-and-start ostinatos, and, at the end, eighth-note patterns that drift upward into some vaguely Asian ether. "When the war came

along, I decided to use only quiet sounds," Cage later said. "There seemed to be no truth, no good, in anything big in society. But quiet sounds were like loneliness, or love, or friendship."

Beneath the plinking of junk-yard percussion and the chiming of the prepared piano was an unsettling new idea about the relation of music to time. Cage wanted sounds to follow one another in a free, artless sequence, without harmonic glue. Works would be structured simply in terms of durations between events. Later in the forties, he laid out "gamuts"—gridlike arrays of preset sounds—trying to go from one to the next without consciously shaping the outcome. He read widely in South Asian and East Asian thought, his readings guided by the young Indian musician Gita Sarabhai and, later, by the Zen scholar Daisetz Suzuki. Sarabhai supplied him with a pivotal formulation of music's purpose: "to sober and quiet the mind, thus rendering it susceptible to divine influences." Cage also looked to Meister Eckhart and Thomas Aquinas, finding another motto in Aquinas's declaration that "art imitates nature in its manner of operation."

Audiences were initially unaware that a musical upheaval was taking place. More often than not, they found Cage's early work inoffensive, even charming. When he gave an all-percussion concert at moma in 1943, a year after he moved to New York, he received a wave of positive, if bemused, publicity. By the late forties, he had acquired a reputation as a serious new musical voice. After the première of his prepared-piano cycle "Sonatas and Interludes," in 1949, the Times declared the work "haunting and lovely," and its composer "one of this country's finest." Cage might easily have found a calling as a purveyor of delicate exoticism. Instead, he radicalized himself further. On a trip to Paris in 1949, Cage encountered Pierre Boulez, whose handsomely brutal music made him feel quaint. In 1951, writing the closing movement of his Concerto for Prepared Piano, he finally let nature run its course, flipping coins and consulting the I Ching to determine which elements in his charts should come next. "Music of Changes," a forty-three-minute piece for solo piano, was written entirely in this manner, the labor-intensive process consuming most of a year.

As randomness took over, so did noise. "Imaginary Landscape No. 4" employs twelve radios, whose tuning, volume, and tone are governed by chance operations. "Imaginary Landscape No. 5" does much the same with forty-two phonograph records. "Williams Mix" is a collage of thousands of prerecorded tape fragments. "Water Music" asks a pianist not only to play his instrument but also to turn a radio on and off, shuffle cards, blow a duck whistle into a bowl of water, pour water from one receptacle into another, and slam the keyboard lid shut. "Black Mountain Piece," which is considered the first true sixties-style "happening," involves piano playing, poetry recitation, record-players, movie projectors, dancing, and, possibly, a barking dog. All this occurred in the eighteen or so months leading up to "4'33"," the still point in the sonic storm.

Did Cage love noise? Or did he merely make peace with it? Like many creative spirits, he was sensitive to intrusions of sound; years later, when he was living in the West Village, next door

to John Lennon and Yoko Ono, he asked Lennon to stop using wall-mounted speakers. But he trained himself to find noise interesting rather than distracting. Once, in a radio discussion with Cage, Feldman complained about being subjected to the buzzing of radios at the beach. Never one to miss a good setup, Cage responded that in such a situation he'd say, "Well, they're just playing my piece." He also disliked Muzak, and in 1948 spoke of trying to sell a silent work to the Muzak company. Gann points out that in May, 1952, three months before "4'33"; the Supreme Court took up a Muzak-related case, ruling against complainants who hoped to have piped-in music banned from public transport. There was no escaping the prosperous racket of postwar America. In a way, "4'33" is a tombstone for silence. Silverman, in "Begin Again," rightly emphasizes Cage's later obsession with Thoreau, who said, "Silence is the universal refuge."

Zen attitudes notwithstanding, Cage had a conservative, controlling side. It is a mistake to think of him as the guru of Anything Goes. He sometimes lost patience with performers who took his chance and conceptual pieces as invitations to do whatever they pleased. Even his most earnest devotees sometimes disappointed him. Carolyn Brown recounts how puzzled she was when, after she had laboriously followed Cage's instructions for one work, he reprimanded her for executing it "improperly." If the idea is to free oneself from conscious will, Brown wondered, how can the composer issue decrees of right and wrong?

Even a piece as open-ended as "4'33" is, ultimately, an assertion of will. The philosopher Lydia Goehr, in her book "The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works," notes that Cage is still playing by traditional rules: "It is because of his specifications that people gather together, usually in a concert hall, to listen to the sounds of the hall for the allotted time period." If "4'33" is supposed to explode the idea of a fixed repertory of formally constrained works, it has failed, by virtue of having become a modernist classic. You could argue that this was Cage's plan all along—his circuitous path to greatness. Richard Taruskin, in a cold-eyed 1993 essay reprinted in his collection "The Danger of Music," proposes that Cage, no less than Schoenberg, participated in the Germanic cult of musical genius. Indeed, Taruskin writes, Cage brought the aesthetic of Western art "to its purest, scariest peak." Perhaps Cage's entire career was a colossal annexation of unclaimed territory. If, as he said, there is nothing that is not music, there is nothing that is not Cage.

Though Cage no doubt had one eye fixed on posterity, he delighted less in the spread of his influence than in the fracturing of the tidy musical order in which he came of age. Gann makes a persuasive case that "4'33" effectively split open the musical scene of the mid-twentieth century. He writes, "Listening to or merely thinking about '4'33'" led composers to listen to phenomena that would have formerly been considered nonmusical—sustained tones, repeating patterns, other murmurs of the mechanical world. Cage cleared the way for minimalism, even if he showed little sympathy for that movement when it came along. He also spurred the emergence of ambient music, sound art, and other forms of relating sound to particular spaces. (If you stand on the north end of the pedestrian island in Times Square

between Forty-fifth and Forty-sixth Streets, you hear one such piece—Max Neuhaus's "Times Square," a processing of resonances emanating from the subway tunnels below.) John Adams, in his memoir "Hallelujah Junction," describes how a reading of Cage's 1961 book "Silence" encouraged him to drop out of East Coast academia, pack his belongings into a VW Bug, and drive to California. The easiest way to pay tribute to Cage is to imagine how much duller the world would have been without him.

When Gann talks about "4'33" in classes—he teaches composition and music theory at Bard College—a student invariably asks him, "You mean he got paid for that?" Kids, Cage was not in it for the money. The Maverick concert was a benefit; Cage earned nothing from the première of "4'33" and little from anything else he was writing at the time. He had no publisher until the nineteen-sixties. After losing his loft on Monroe Street—the Vladeck Houses stand there now—he moved north of the city, to Stony Point, where several artists had formed a rural collective. From the mid-fifties until the late sixties, he lived in a two-room cabin measuring ten by twenty feet, paying \$24.15 a month in rent. He wasn't far above the poverty level, and one year he received aid from the Musicians Emergency Fund. For years afterward, he counted every penny. I recently visited the collection of the John Cage Trust, at Bard, and had a look at his appointment books. Almost every page had a list like this one:

.63 stamps
1.29 turp.
.25 comb
1.17 fish
3.40 shampoo
2.36 groc
5.10 beer
6.00 Lucky

"I wanted to make poverty elegant," he once said.

By the end of the fifties, however, Cage's financial situation had improved, though not because of his music. After moving to Stony Point, he began collecting mushrooms during walks in the woods. Within a few years, he had mastered the mushroom literature and co-founded the New York Mycological Society. He supplied mushrooms to various elite restaurants, including the Four Seasons. In 1959, while working at the R.A.I. Studio of Musical Phonology, a pioneering electronic-music studio, in Milan, he was invited on a game show called "Lascia o Raddoppia?"—a "Twenty One"-style program in which contestants were asked questions on a subject of their choice. Each week, Cage answered, with deadly accuracy, increasingly obscure questions about mushrooms. On his final appearance, he was asked to list "the twenty-four kinds of white-spore mushrooms listed in Atkinson." (Silverman supplies a transcript of this historic moment.) Cage named them all, in alphabetical order, and won eight thousand dollars. He used part of the money to purchase a VW bus for the Cunningham company. The following year, he appeared on the popular American game show "I've Got a Secret": as he had done on "Lascia o Raddoppia?," he performed "Water Walk," a piece that employed, among other things, a rubber duck, a bathtub, and

an electric mixer. Cage charmed the audience from the outset; when the host, Garry Moore, said that some viewers might laugh at him, the composer replied, in his sweet, reedy voice, "I consider laughter preferable to tears." (YouTube has the clip.) Radios were included in the score, but they could not be turned on, supposedly because of a union dispute. Instead, Cage hit them and knocked them on the floor.

As Cage's celebrity grew, his works became more anarchic and festive. For "Theatre Piece," in 1960, Carolyn Brown put a tuba on her head, Cunningham slapped the strings of a piano with a dead fish, and David Tudor made tea. (This is when Brown was reprimanded for rendering her part "improperly.") His lectures became performances, even a kind of surrealist standup comedy. In the midst of Cunningham's dance piece "How to Pass, Kick, Fall, and Run," Cage sat at a table equipped with a microphone, a bottle of wine, and an ashtray, placidly reading aloud items such as this:

[A] monk was walking along when he came to a lady who was sitting by the path weeping. "What's the matter?" he said. She said, sobbing, "I have lost my only child." He hit her over the head and said, "There, that'll give you something to cry about."

Later in the decade, Cage incited mass musical mayhem in huge venues such as the Armory in New York and the Assembly Hall at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. At the Armory, for a piece titled "Variations VII," Cage and his collaborators manipulated two long tablefuls of devices and dialed up sonic feeds from locations around the city, including the kitchen of Lüchow's Restaurant, the Times printing presses, the aviary at the Zoo, a dog pound, a Con Ed plant, a Sanitation Department depot, and Terry Riley's turtle tank. In Urbana-Champaign, six or seven thousand people materialized to hear "HPSCHD," a five-hour multimedia onslaught involving harpsichords playing fragments of Mozart and other composers, fifty-one computer-generated tapes tuned to fifty-one different scales, and a mirror ball.

The carnival element persisted to the end. His five "Europeras" (1985-91) mash together centuries of operatic repertory. ("For two hundred years the Europeans have been sending us their operas," Cage explained. "Now I'm sending them back.") But in the music of Cage's last two decades you sense a paring down of elements and, often, a heightened expressivity, notwithstanding the composer's rejection of personal expression. The musicologist James Pritchett points out that even Cage's chanciest works have a personal stamp, because he took such care in selecting their components. The execution varies, yet the performances end up sounding more like each other than like any other piece by Cage or any other music in existence.

A case in point is "Ryoanji" (1983-1985), which takes its name from the famous Zen temple and rock garden in Kyoto. Five solo instruments play a series of slow-moving, ever-sliding musical lines, their shapes derived from tracings of stones. A solo percussionist or ensemble supplies an irregular, halting pulse. The composer is not in full control of what the musicians play, yet he

is the principal author of the spare, spacious, meditative music that emerges. (The Hat Art label released an especially haunting version in 1996; it's due for reissue, and can be pre-ordered at Downtown Music Gallery.) Consider also the 1979 electronic composition "Roaratorio," Cage's response to "Finnegans Wake." A verbal component, which the composer recorded in a vaguely Irish brogue, consists of words and phrases drawn from the novel and arranged in mesostics. Around him swirls a collage of voices, noises, and musical fragments, based on sounds and places mentioned in the novel. Chance comes into play, but Cage has carefully followed the structure of the text. In the final section, the composer-reciter breaks into song, his folkish chant encircled by impressions of Anna Livia Plurabelle's plaintive final monologue—cries of seagulls, rumbling waters, an intimation of "peace and silence." It is an uncanny evocation of Joyce's world.

In his last years, Cage returned to his point of departure—the pointillistic sensibility of the early percussion and prepared-piano works. He released a series of scores that have come to be called "number pieces," their titles taken from the number of performers required ("Four," "Seventy-four," and so on). Within a given time bracket, players play notated material at their own pace—usually a single note or a short phrase. The result is music of overlapping drones and airy silences. "After all these years, I'm finally writing beautiful music," Cage dryly commented.

Beautiful but dark. As he grew older, the cheerful existentialist had crises of doubt, intimations of apocalypse. Darkest of all was the installation "Lecture on the Weather," which was created for the Bicentennial. Twelve vocalists recite or sing quotations from Henry David Thoreau against a backdrop of flashing images and the sounds of wind, rain, and thunder. The proportions of the three sections are about the same as in "4'33," but nature makes a crueller sound than it did on that August night in 1952. Attached to the piece is a politically tinged preface that echoes, perhaps consciously, Cage's teen-age oration "Other People Think." It ends thus:

We would do well to give up the notion that we alone can keep the world in line, that only we can solve its problems. . . . Our political structures no longer fit the circumstances of our lives. Outside the bankrupt cities we live in Megalopolis which has no geographical limits. Wilderness is global park. I dedicate this work to the U.S.A. that it may become just another part of the world, no more, no less.

The last room of the "Anarchy of Silence" exhibition is taken up with a 2007 realization of "Lecture on the Weather," with John Ashbery, Jasper Johns, and Merce Cunningham among the reciters. I sat for a long time in the gallery, listening to the grim swirl of sound and observing the reactions of visitors. Some poked their heads into the room, shrugged, and moved on. Others seemed transfixed. One young couple sat for a while in the opposite corner, their hands clenched together, their heads bent toward the floor. They looked like the last people on earth.

In July, 1992, a mugger made his way into Cage's apartment, pretending to be a U.P.S. man. After threatening violence, he took

money from the composer's wallet. It was a weird premonition: on August 11th, Cage suffered a stroke, and died the following day. I moved to New York a few weeks later, and, as a fledgling music critic, attended various tributes to the late composer, the most memorable being a three-and-a-half-hour "Cagemusicircus," at Symphony Space. The afternoon began with Yoko Ono banging out cluster chords on the piano and ended with a quietly intense performance of Cage's early piece "Credo in Us," for piano, two percussionists, and a performer operating a radio or a phonograph. In the final minutes, the hall went dark and light fell on a spot in the middle of the stage. There the audience saw a desk, a lamp, a glass of water, and an empty chair with a gray coat draped over the back.

Cage's last home was in a top-floor loft at the corner of Eighteenth Street and Sixth Avenue, in a cast-iron building that housed the original B. Altman store. Cunningham remained in the apartment, and several years ago I was invited there to dinner. Cunningham was, as so many had reported, gentle, taciturn, elusive, and poetic in even his slightest gestures. The two men had their difficulties, but they were joined by a powerful physical and intellectual attraction. (Yet to be published is a birthday mesostic in which Cage pays tribute to Cunningham's cock and ass.) I listened avidly to Cunningham's stories of the avant-garde's pioneer days, but I found myself distracted by noises floating up from the street below. When the couple moved there, in 1979, Cage made his unconditional surrender to noise: certainly, on that corner, there was no such thing as silence. Yet, as I listened, the traffic, the honking, the beeping, the occasional irate curses and drunken shouts seemed somehow changed, enhanced, framed. I couldn't shake the impression that Cage was still composing the sound of the city.

That block of Chelsea is not as dangerous, or as interesting, as it used to be. When Cage and Cunningham arrived, the major store in the building was the Glassmasters Guild, which sold, among other things, stained-glass models of Sopwith Camel and Piper Cherokee airplanes. Now there is a Container Store. A Bed Bath

& Beyond and a T. J. Maxx loom across the street. At the end of January, the final glimmer of Cagean spirit left the block, when Laura Kuhn, the director of the John Cage Trust, removed the last of the couple's belongings from Apartment 5-B. At Christmastime, she invited me over again. Several artist friends dropped in as well. Christmas lights were strung up on the wall facing the kitchen. Cunningham had liked the lights, and had let them hang year-round. On July 26, 2009, at the age of ninety, he passed away beneath them.

Toward the end of his life, Cunningham wrote in his diary, "When one dies with this world in this meltdown, is one missing something grand that will happen?" He wondered whether people could learn to live less wastefully, whether traffic could die down, whether manufacturing could return to Kentucky towns, even whether "the Automat could return."

Cage and Cunningham's Manhattan is mostly gone. Real-estate greed and political indifference have nearly driven bohemian culture out of Manhattan; "uptown" begins in Battery Park. Cage's urban collages are almost elegies now; with the mechanization of the radio business, even the piece for twelve radios has probably lost its random charm. But lamentation is not a Cagean mood. If he were alive, he would undoubtedly find a way to pull strange music from the high-end mall that Manhattan has become. He might even have been content to stay in that homogenized patch of lower midtown, where, after a long search, he found his Walden.

"I couldn't be happier than I am in this apartment, with the sounds from Sixth Avenue constantly surprising me, never once repeating themselves," Cage said late in life, in an interview with the filmmaker Elliot Caplan. "You know the story of the African prince who went to London, and they played a whole program of music for him, orchestral music, and he said, 'Why do you always play the same piece over and over?'" Cage laughed, his eyes glittering, his head tilting toward the window. "They never do that on Sixth Avenue."

TEACHER RESOURCES: "DIES IRAE" ENGLISH TEXT

Dies Irae From A Requiem Mass

After a Dies Irae from a 'Grande Messe des Mortes'
(Grand Mass for the Dead)
Play with Em Drone

Plays about 100-110 bpm, moderate march speed
Play 'Split Brain' style, LH melody, RH low E drones

Em

Fine Em

D.C. al Fine

Can also be played in 6/8, as on the Alman album, in which case you would drop the split brain LH-melody / RH-drones style shown above. The Dies Irae is a pretty old hymn, but we have not attempted to date this particular melody beyond the early 1800's. For an orchestral treatment, listen to Hector Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*, particularly the last movement.

Traditional - Arrangement © 1995
Kitchen Musician
Uploading, Downloading, Copying, Performing, etc. Allowed
If you enjoy this arrangement, remember where you got it.
If not, enjoy it!

TEACHER RESOURCES: “DIES IRAE” MOTIF

“Dies Irae,” a Literal English Translation, by the Franciscan Archive

Day of wrath, day that
will dissolve the world into burning coals,
as David bore witness with the Sibyl.

How great a tremor is to be,
when the judge is to come
briskly shattering every (grave).

A trumpet sounding an astonishing sound
through the tombs of the region
drives all (men) before the throne.

TEACHER RESOURCES: *SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE* PROGRAM NOTES

Courtesy of the Hector Berlioz Website, translated by Michael Austin, Copyright 2001-2013, Michael Austin, <http://www.hberlioz.com/Scores/fantas.htm>.

NOTE

The composer's intention has been to develop various episodes in the life of an artist, in so far as they lend themselves to musical treatment. As the work cannot rely on the assistance of speech, the plan of the instrumental drama needs to be set out in advance. The following programme* must therefore be considered as the spoken text of an opera, which serves to introduce musical movements and to motivate their character and expression.

*This programme should be distributed to the audience at concerts where this symphony is included, as it is indispensable for a complete understanding of the dramatic plan of the work. [HB]

PART ONE

Daydreams, passions

The author imagines that a young musician, afflicted by the sickness of spirit which a famous writer has called the vagueness of passions (*le vague des passions*), sees for the first time a woman who unites all the charms of the ideal person his imagination was dreaming of, and falls desperately in love with her. By a strange anomaly, the beloved image never presents itself to the artist's mind without being associated with a musical idea, in which he recognises a certain quality of passion, but endowed with the nobility and shyness which he credits to the object of his love.

This melodic image and its model keep haunting him ceaselessly like a double *idée fixe*. This explains the constant recurrence in all the movements of the symphony of the melody which launches the first allegro. The transitions from this state of dreamy melancholy, interrupted by occasional upsurges of aimless joy, to delirious passion, with its outbursts of fury and jealousy, its returns of tenderness, its tears, its religious consolations – all this forms the subject of the first movement.



PART TWO

A ball

The artist finds himself in the most diverse situations in life, in the tumult of a festive party, in the peaceful contemplation of the beautiful sights of nature, yet everywhere, whether in town or in the countryside, the beloved image keeps haunting him and throws his spirit into confusion.



PART THREE

Scene in the countryside

One evening in the countryside he hears two shepherds in the distance dialoguing with their 'ranz des vaches'; this pastoral duet, the setting, the gentle rustling of the trees in the wind, some causes for hope that he has recently conceived, all conspire to restore to his heart an unaccustomed feeling of calm and to give to his thoughts a happier colouring. He broods on his loneliness, and hopes that soon he will no longer be on his own... But what if she betrayed him!... This mingled hope and fear, these ideas of happiness, disturbed by dark premonitions, form the subject of the adagio. At the end one of the shepherds resumes his 'ranz des vaches'; the other one no longer answers. Distant sound of thunder... solitude... silence...



PART FOUR

March to the scaffold

Convinced that his love is spurned, the artist poisons himself with opium. The dose of narcotic, while too weak to cause his death, plunges him into a heavy sleep accompanied by the strangest of visions. He dreams that he has killed his beloved, that he is condemned, led to the scaffold and is witnessing his own execution. The procession advances to the sound of a march that is sometimes sombre and wild, and sometimes brilliant and solemn, in which a dull sound of heavy footsteps follows without transition the loudest outbursts. At the end of the march, the first four bars of the *idée fixe* reappear like a final thought of love interrupted by the fatal blow.



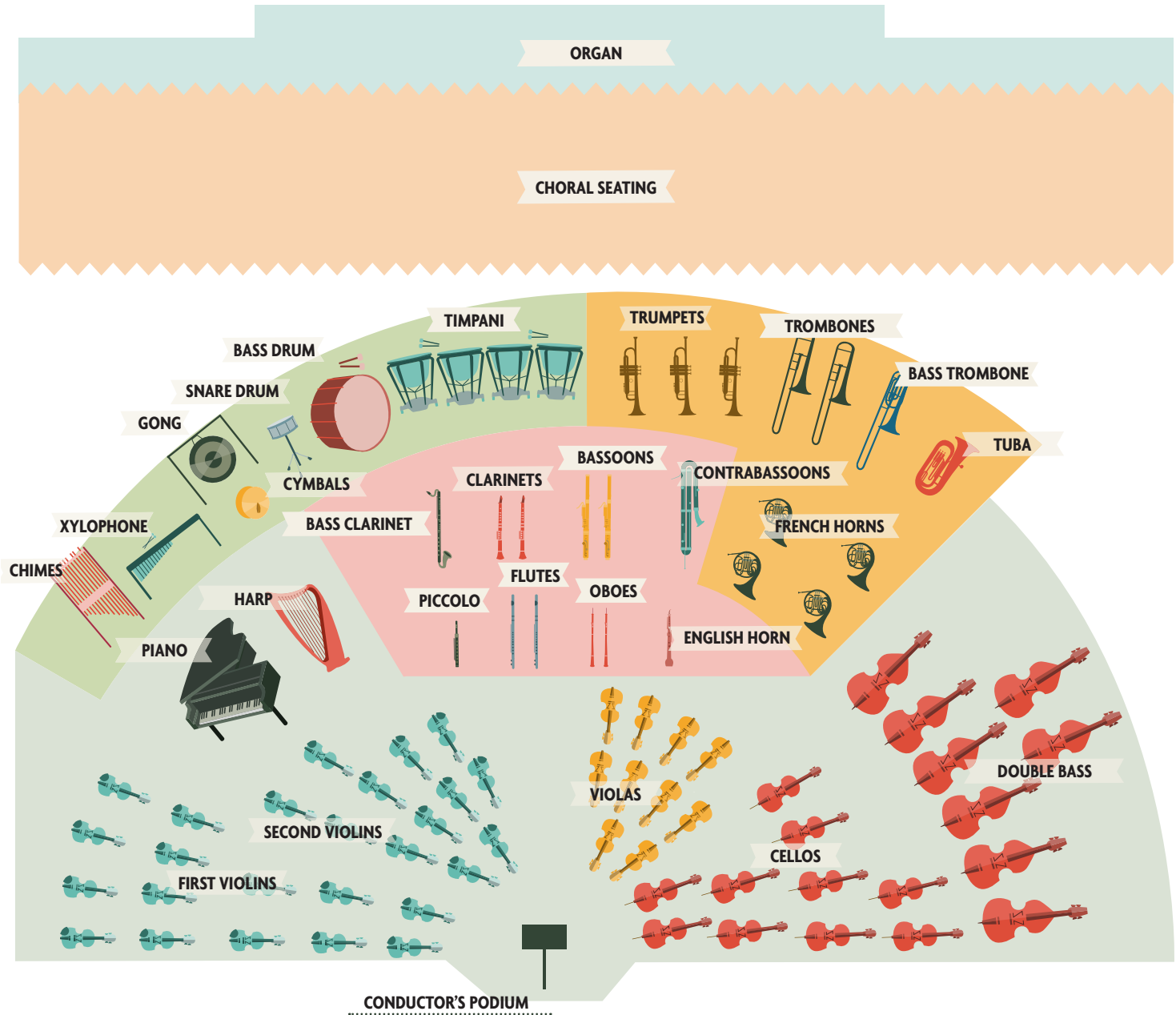
PART FIVE

Dream of a witches' sabbath

He sees himself at a witches' sabbath, in the midst of a hideous gathering of shades, sorcerers and monsters of every kind who have come together for his funeral. Strange sounds, groans, outbursts of laughter; distant shouts which seem to be answered by more shouts. The beloved melody appears once more, but has now lost its noble and shy character; it is now no more than a vulgar dance tune, trivial and grotesque: it is she who is coming to the sabbath... Roar of delight at her arrival... She joins the diabolical orgy... The funeral knell tolls, burlesque parody of the *Dies irae*,** the dance of the witches. The dance of the witches combined with the *Dies irae*.

**A hymn sung in funeral ceremonies in the Catholic Church. [HB]

TEACHER RESOURCES: ORCHESTRA SEATING DIAGRAM



- 
WOODWIND FAMILY
- 
BRASS FAMILY
- 
PERCUSSION FAMILY
- 
STRING FAMILY

TEACHER RESOURCES: MUSIC GLOSSARY

Accompaniment: The subordinate parts of any musical texture made up of strands of differing importance

Chamber Ensemble: A small collection of musicians who perform music written specifically for small ensembles

Chamber Music: music written for small instrumental ensemble, with usually one player per part

Dynamics: The changes in volume in music

Harmony: The simultaneous sounding, or combining of notes

Instrumentation: the particular instruments for which a piece of music is composed

Melody: The succession of notes that vary in pitch and have a varied and recognizable shape

Motif: The shortest self-existent melodic or rhythmic figure

Music: The art or science of combining sound; both organized and unorganized

Organized Sound: A collection of tones that possess a discernible sense of pitch, or rhythm, or harmony, or all three

Program Music: Instrumental music that tells a story

Program Notes: A text which accompanies a piece of music. The purpose of program notes may be to provide background information on a piece or its composer, to narrate the story associated with a piece, or to give a written presentation of what the audience should expect to hear.

Style: The distinctive or characteristic manner in which the elements of music are treated (e.g., the style of Copland, Baroque style, French style, fugal style).

Syncopation: A device that varies the position of the rhythmic stress on notes so as to avoid a regular rhythm

Texture: The quality created by the combination of different elements of a piece

Timbre: Characteristic tone color that distinguishes one instrument or voice from another.

Transcribe: To arrange a piece for a different voice, instrument, or ensemble than the work was originally composed for

Transcription: The result of transcribing a piece, the finished product.

TEACHER RESOURCES: MUSIC GLOSSARY

Terms to describe style and tempo:

Adagio: Slow, at ease

Allegro: Merry, quick, lively, bright

Andante: Moving along, flowing. Faster than Adagio but slower than Moderato

Cantabile: Singable, singingly

Legato: Smoothly, no breaks between the notes

Marcato: Marked, each note is emphasized

Moderato: Moderate tempo

Pesante: Heavy or heavily

Staccato: Detached, opposite of Legato

I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD MUSIC



I've been wor- kin' on the rail- road, All the live- long day. I've been wor- kin' on the



rail- road, Just to pass the time a- way. Don't you hear the whis- tle blo- wing,



Rise up so ear- ly in the morn? Don't you hear the cap- tain shou- ting: "Di- nah blow your



horn!"

PRE-CONCERT QUIZ

Before the concert, discuss concert “etiquette”—how to behave—with your class. When do you clap? What do you do with your cell phone? What is the camera policy at the Schermerhorn? You can also fill out this quiz before you leave for the concert:

Name: _____

Date: _____

School: _____

Have you ever been to a concert before?

- a. Yes
- b. No

How often do you listen to classical music?

- a. Almost never
- b. Once in a while
- c. At least once a week
- d. Every day

Do you play any musical instruments?

- a. Yes _____
- b. No

What do you think the Young People’s Concert will be like?

- a. Boring
- b. Okay
- c. Exciting
- d. Why? _____

What does “Dies Irae” mean?

- a. Day of dreams
- b. Ira Dines
- c. Day of Wrath

List some musical terms you have learned (for example: staccato)

- a.
- b.
- c.

POST-CONCERT QUIZ

Share your experience with the Symphony! You can mail your pre- and post-concert quizzes to The Education Department at **1 Symphony Place, Nashville, TN 37203**. You can even add a personal letter! We would love to hear from you.

Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____

Did you enjoy the concert?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Kind of

Do you want to come back for another concert?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Do you think you will listen to classical music more often?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Which instrument(s) did you like the most?
Are there any instruments you want to learn to play?

What was your favorite part of the concert?

What did you hear during John Cage's piece "4'33"?

Which song was played last?

- a. *Symphonie Fantastique* by Berlioz
- b. *Symphony No. 2* by Rachmaninoff
- c. *Little Fugue in G Minor* by Bach (Arr. Stokowski)
- d. *Little Gigue in G* by Mozart
- e. "4'33" by John Cage
- f. "Royal March" from *L'Histoire du Soldat* by Stravinsky
- g. Other: _____

NASHVILLE SYMPHONY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Blair Bodine

Director of Education and Community Engagement

Andy Campbell

Education and Community Engagement Program Manager

Kelley Bell

Education and Community Engagement Assistant

2013 Summer Interns

Ashley Eady

Maggie Knab

Brianne Rucker

Website: Nashvillesymphony.org/education

Email: Education@nashvillesymphony.org

Phone: 615.687.6398

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were researched and created by the 2013 Summer Interns.

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