

A SPIRIT FOR THE
HOLIDAYS





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Welcome to the BSO Midweeks!

On behalf of the Associate Conductor, Jonathan Rush, the members of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and the BSO Education Department, we are delighted to welcome you to our 2022-2023 Midweek Concert Series. With the BSO's Midweek Concert series as the longest running education initiative at the BSO (running since February 16, 1924), and the first regular educational concert series of any orchestra in the country, we are thrilled to have you join us here at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall.

This Midweek Concert Season, we present four concerts: *Calypso Fusion*, *A Spirit for the Holidays*, *Harlem Renaissance*, and *Beethoven Lives Upstairs*. Each concert incorporates an Arts-Integrated, STEAM-Activated approach to create a relevant, interactive, and interdisciplinary experience.

About This Guide

On the next pages you will find the Teachers' Guide for *A Spirit for the Holidays* written by a highly skilled group of Maryland educators with specialism in Music, Drama, Science, English/Language Arts, and Visual Arts, led by award-winning curriculum writer and editor, Richard McCready.

At the start of the guide is a "Snapshot" of your concert experience. This will give you a sense of what to expect in the concert, along with some thoughts about the various curricular connections, and music we suggest you listen to in the classroom before the performance.

Beyond the Snapshot pages you will find a variety of activities, called "Carols," to signify the various directions that you can explore in order to prepare for this concert. Each Carol may be used in any order you wish. We have also highlighted the various cross-curricular links that align with each Carol so that you may jump to areas that are of particular interest to you and your students. We hope that your students try at least one activity prior to coming to the concert so they can make the most of their live experience at the Meyerhoff.

Each activity is written to encourage students' natural sense of creativity and exploration. They will be able to read the activity pages or you can read the activities with them. Some of the activities are scientific, some are movement games, some employ and encourage art skills, and some involve storytelling and role-play. You best know your students, their capabilities, and their interests. You should encourage students to try the activities that you feel most appropriate for them and for your classroom. Encourage other teachers in your building to try some of the activities as well.



These guides are designed and intended as a mere starting point for exploration, with the essential piece being the work that is created by the student, for the student. Our ultimate goal is to facilitate a strong connection between the music performed by the BSO and the everyday lives of your students, so that they may continue to take music with them wherever they go.

Please feel free to share your students' work with us at the BSO—we love to see where the ideas from these activities might take your students and all the inspired, arts-integrated work they will produce in the classroom. If you wish to share any materials with us at the BSO, please send them to education@bsomusic.org.

We hope you enjoy this guide, your explorations that are yet to come, the concert experience, and sharing your creative work with us.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Brian Precht".

Brian Precht
Interim Director of Education & Community Engagement
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Katie Hunt".

Katie Hunt
Associate Director of Education & Community Engagement
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A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Mateo Mendez".

Mateo Mendez
Manager of Education & Community Engagement
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra



A Spirit for the Holidays: Concert Program

Below is the list of pieces that will be performed on the Midweek Concert presentations of *A Spirit for the Holidays*. Please take a moment to listen to these pieces in advance of the concert on Youtube, Spotify, or iTunes.

- ❖ RESPIGHI: Overture, Tarantella, and Mazurka from *La Boutique fantasque*
- ❖ LEROY ANDERSON: *Sleigh Ride*
- ❖ J.S. BACH: Fugue in G Minor, “Little”
- ❖ JOHANN STRAUSS JR.: *Pizzicato Polka*
- ❖ TCHAIKOVSKY: “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy” & “Trepak” from *The Nutcracker*
- ❖ PERCY FAITH: *Brazilian Sleigh Bells*
- ❖ LEROY ANDERSON: *A Christmas Festival*



A Spirit for the Holidays:

Snapshot for Teachers and Students

The Artists

Three mischievous holiday spirits have their own ideas of what a holiday concert should be. As two of the spirits squabble, the orchestra is caught in the middle. To the rescue comes the spirit of “Music” leading the audience in an unusual holiday sing-a-long that breaks the grinch-like “curse of noise” and returns a holiday spirit to the concert hall.

Today we are joined by some very special guests, the Magic Circle Mime Company! Regarded as one of today’s premier family attractions, their highly acclaimed performances unite the concert orchestra with visual theater, and are consistently praised for imaginative and innovative content. The Magic Circle Mime Company is the creative partnership of Maggie Petersen and Douglas MacIntyre. Both artists have backgrounds in theater and instrumental music, and have utilized that training to create their highly regarded programs.

The Program

Our story begins with Ottorino Respighi’s *La Boutique Fantasque*. Known as “The Magic Toyshop” in English, this piece is from a ballet in which dolls in a toy store come to life! They engage in many lively dances, much to the pleasure of the shop’s guests. While you may enjoy this exciting music, we may have *one* guest who disagrees...

Leroy Anderson’s *Sleigh Ride* is an iconic piece of Holiday music. But did you know that it wasn’t written during the Winter at all? That’s right! Anderson got the idea to write this piece during a heatwave in July. Several artists have covered Anderson’s classic tune, and it is always a favorite in the concert hall during the Holiday season.



Listen for this!

- Listen closely to the percussion section – can you hear the sleigh bells?
- How about the hooves of the horse or the crack of the whip?
- Move over to our brass section – can you hear the trumpet sound like a horse’s whinny?
- Do you feel like you’re taking a real sleigh ride with our Baltimore Symphony Orchestra? That’s because this piece is what we call **program music**, or a piece of music that’s supposed to tell a specific story or evoke an idea. Pay attention to the action on stage – there’s more than one story being told!



A Spirit for the Holidays:

Snapshot for Teachers and Students

The *Little Fugue in G Minor* is one of Bach's most famous and recognizable tunes. Originally written for the organ, this piece was *arranged* for orchestra by Leopold Stokowski, meaning that Stokowski took the original piece of music and adapted it for a larger ensemble. Our pesky guest has opened the door between the orchestra and the audience for this piece, allowing the music to be heard.



Listen for this!

- What do you notice about this piece?
- Do you hear a lot of repetition? That's because this piece of music is what we call a "fugue." In a **fugue**, the primary musical melody, known as the subject, is built upon by each wave of instruments that enter, repeating itself over and over again. See if you can keep track of how many times you hear the subject!

Next up, we get a special treat when our guest takes the podium! In Johann Strauss' Pizzicato Polka, our strings take center stage, showcasing their **pizzicato** technique of plucking on their strings! Pizzicato is when string instruments are plucked rather than bowed. This polka is ritzy and cheerful, and the perfect piece to calm down our guest.



a violinist plays pizzicato



A Spirit for the Holidays:

Snapshot for Teachers and Students

We maintain the spirit of tranquility with our next piece, the “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy” from *The Nutcracker*. One of the most iconic dances from *The Nutcracker*, this dance is known for its use of the instrument known as the *celesta*, an instrument that Tchaikovsky called “midway between a tiny piano and a glockenspiel (bells).” Tchaikovsky wanted to keep his purchase of a celesta for *The Nutcracker* a secret, as he did not want any composers to incorporate this instrument into their scores before he did!



The celesta is the featured solo instrument in this dance – listen to how peaceful and serene it sounds!

Rather abruptly, we segue from the “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy” to a much more raucous dance from *The Nutcracker*; the Russian Dance, “Trepak.” Based on a traditional Russian and Ukrainian folk dance, the “Trepak” is an exciting and spirited dance. This music spooks our guest and introduces us to yet *another* visitor! The exact opposite of our first guest, all this one wants to do is cause a ruckus and hear the orchestra play wild music!

Percy Faith’s *Brazilian Sleigh Bells* is a classic Holiday tune, mixing Holiday music with the Brazilian Samba style. How does this piece compare with the others you’ve heard so far? How is it similar, and how is it different? Our past couple songs have been dances. Does this music make you want to dance too? It’s certainly energetic – try moving to the music and see how it feels to dance to it! Isn’t it fun to let loose and let the music move you?

Our final piece on the program is yet another Holiday classic from Leroy Anderson, entitled *A Christmas Festival*. A compilation of several Christmas favorites, *A Christmas Festival* is sure to inspire Holiday spirit in all those who are listening! And for this performance, we’re going to need **your** help! Use your voices to sing along to these popular Holiday favorites and fill the hall with your voices! Sing loud and spread the Holiday cheer!



Carol One: Sounds of Winter: Movement & Rhythm Games



Whether you're riding in the car listening to the radio, walking into a grocery store or mall, the sounds of winter surround you. Naturally, many of us move, tap, dance, and shake along with our favorite tunes. These rhythmic movements bring us together and spread joy! In this activity, you will explore and create your own movements and rhythms to match the music that you hear and feel.



Activity Ideas

When a rhythm is repeated over and over in music, we call this an "ostinato." Think of the jingle of sleigh bells on a horse in a snowy sleigh ride. The horse can go slow, medium, or fast, but those same sounds are repeated for those horses to be heard both near and far.

1. Listen to *Sleigh Ride* and use your body to create your own unique rhythm for everyone else to follow. Repeat that rhythm 8 times and allow the person to your left to perform theirs.

2. Imagine that you are a horse galloping, leading the way in a snowy sleigh ride. As the music in *Sleigh Ride* changes, you change direction along with it.

How many times did you change direction?

Did you change speed?





3. Listen to *Brazilian Sleigh Bells* composed by Percy Faith and brainstorm movements that would match each sound.

What instruments can you hear?

Is one section louder or softer than the other?

Is one section faster or slower than the other?

Will you use big movements or small movements?

Once you have listened to the song, share your brainstorm with your peers and choose what movements you will assign to each part of the song. You will need to pick a leader to signal when the movement changes. This person will be the conductor, leading by example.



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Curriculum Connections



Fine Arts Standards

- ❖ **Creating**
 - 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
 - 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- ❖ **Performing**
 - 4: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- ❖ **Responding**
 - 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
 - 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- ❖ **Connecting**
 - 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Resources



- ❖ U.S. Navy Band - *Sleigh Ride*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29TyC_6tX_c



Carol Two: Design a Nutcracker



The holiday time is a time when harvested nuts get to be tasted, placed as a table garnish, or given as a treat for revelers. The nutcracker is a Bavarian tradition that you often see in stores around this holiday period (Bavaria is part of modern Germany). A nutcracker is a kitchen tool built as a toy, used to crush the hard shells of nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds, etc.). Often the toy is carved out of hardwoods and due to its functional size, it then decorated as a soldier. Its crusher is a lever arm in the back, intending the user to place a nut in the mouth of the nutcracker, whereupon you press the lever until the shell cracks, allowing the nut to spill outside.





Activity Ideas

1. Get some construction paper and create your design for your special nutcracker. Remember that it does not have to look exactly like a Bavarian version. You can make your very own JAZZ- inspired nutcracker. You do not have to use a soldier, you may choose any of the characters from the Nutcracker story and interpret your version for a nutcracker. Cardboard tubes can be turned into puppets that can be fun to make and even more fun to play with after.
2. Get some supplies together: Nutcracker pattern (<https://tinyurl.com/yc5o9r8m>) or your own design to wrap around a cardboard tube, crayons, markers or colored pencils, scissors, cardboard tube
3. Color your Nutcracker and then cut out.
4. Glue to cardboard tube. Fold arms on the dotted line before gluing.
5. Have fun creating your own playtime activity or gift.



Resources

Nutcracker Printable: <https://tinyurl.com/yc5o9r8m>



Curriculum Connections

Fine Arts Standards

❖ Creating

- 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
-

English Language Arts Practices

- ❖ E1: They demonstrate independence.



Carol Three: Pass the Move - Nutcracker Style!



Have you ever tried creating a whole dance? It is difficult! But, if you share the work, creating only one move for the whole dance, it becomes easier, AND it is a lot of fun!



Activity Ideas

Watch the video of Glitch Spencer and friends dancing to the Nutcracker. It's fun to see break dancers "pop and lock" to a classical piece of music!

<https://youtu.be/Jqu3OaUHtaU>

Next, listen to the Overture to Duke Ellington's Nutcracker Suite here.

<https://youtu.be/3MihqGJ4PkY>



Listen for the steady beat, and notice how long 4 counts will take. Now, working alone, create ONE move that you can do comfortably. Take those 4 counts to do it. Try this a couple of times. Next, find a partner and “pass the move”, blending your two moves together, giving you 8 counts of time. Keep adding to your groups until the entire class is involved, connecting their moves. Finally, try “passing the move” around the entire group. Take a second to offer positive comments to things you thought worked well, blended together well, or just looked like fun to create. If time permits, try having the first person keep repeating their move AS the next people add theirs to the piece. Repeat enough times that will allow the last person to complete their move a few times.



Resources

Overture to Ellington's Nutcracker

<https://youtu.be/3MihqGJ4PkY>

Pop and Lock Nutcracker with Cyrus “Glitch” Spencer and Friends

<https://youtu.be/Jqu3OaUHtaU>



Curriculum Connections

Fine Arts Standards

❖ Creating

- 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

Social Studies Practices

- ❖ SS5: Communicating and critiquing solutions.



Carol Four: Living Ice Sculptures



Building a snowman is just like being a sculptor: you're sculpting and shaping snow into a snowman. This movement activity lets you be a sculptor using people. And just like the snowman, they can melt away.



Activity Ideas

Choose someone who will play the role of the sculptor (leader) in the room. At first the leader can be the teacher or another adult, but it is also fun to have someone else be the leader once everyone knows how to play the game. When the leader says, "Fly, snow, fly!" everyone else in the room should dance quickly around the room like snowflakes floating through the air in a snowstorm. How lightly and quickly can you move around the space? How much of the floor can your feet touch?

When the leader says "Run and Freeze!" everyone should run into the center of the room and take a position where you are lightly touching any part of another person, but there is still space between you. Be very still and very quiet. You are a giant frozen blob of ice!

Now the leader will sculpt the ice into a statue. He or she will touch anyone that he wants to move out of the ice blob and say "Melt Away!" Instantly that person should melt **SLOWLY** to the ground and then pull themselves out of the ice blob and go to the edges of the room. What is left in the center of the room is the ice sculpture.

Whenever the leader is done making the ice sculpture, he says, "Circle!" Everyone should walk around the room in a big wide circle and look at the sculpture in the center from all angles. Think about what this sculpture looks like. Is there a story here? How does it make me feel? If this was a sculpture in a museum, what title would I give it?



Now the leader asks everyone to share their title ideas with the whole room while the people in the ice sculpture **STILL REMAIN FROZEN**. Then the leader says, “Melt Away!” again and the center sculpture **SLOWLY** melts together into a giant puddle in the middle of the room.

Shake it off and do it again! This time, have the leader call out a word—an emotion, color, place name, etc.—before saying “Run and Freeze!” Everyone then should try to freeze in a position that gives the same feeling of that word, and the leader tries to sculpt a giant statue that that might have that title. Have the giant finished statue transform or change whenever the leader calls out, “Transform to _____!” For instance, the leader could construct a “Sad” sculpture and then call out “Transform to Happy!”

The Water Cycle: Have the full class melt together into a giant puddle of water, and then have the water turn into gas by becoming hotter and hotter until it is boiling. Now let the water molecules dance around the air, come together to form clouds, and then rain back down to the ground.



Key Terms

- ❖ **Sculpture:** An artistic creation made in (usually) three dimensions, out of a substance such as clay, marble, wood, ice.
- ❖ **Sculptor:** An artist who creates sculpture.



Resources

- ❖ *Ice, Ice Maybe*, a Baltimore company that makes ice sculptures:
<http://www.iceicemaybe.com/3dimension/>



Curriculum Connections



Fine Arts Standards

- ❖ **Creating**
 - 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- ❖ **Performing**
 - 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- ❖ **Responding**
 - 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
 - 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- ❖ **Connecting**
 - 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

English Language Arts Practices

- ❖ E3: They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.



Carol Five: Winter Dance



Winter can be dark and dreary. It is so much more fun to dance and find the fun in Winter.



Activity Ideas

You will need scarves to do this activity.

Listen to the music. What kinds of sounds do you hear? Pretend you are a tree, how would you move in the wind? How about if your branches were covered with ice? Would it be really cold? Listen to the music and picture what the tree is like in the winter.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95-AjVE4NZ0>

So now you are the branches on the trees and it is cold and windy. Let's take our scarves and dance to the music!



Resources

Music for "Tarantella" from *La Boutique fantasque* by Ottorino Respighi:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95-AjVE4NZ0>

Curriculum Connections

Fine Arts Standards

- ❖ Performing
 - 4: Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.

English Language Arts Practices

- ❖ E1: They demonstrate independence.



Carol Six: Let's Take a Sleigh Ride



Wouldn't it be fun to take a sleigh ride on a sleigh with horses pulling your sleigh? We can become that wonderful sleigh. Let's go!



Activity Ideas

You will need some wrist bells, rhythm sticks, and shakers.

Sleigh Ride played by the US Army Band:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTMc-WAjL-I>

Do you hear the sleigh bells? Can you hear the horse trotting through the snow? What other sounds do you hear? Let's use our bells, shakers, rhythm sticks, etc. and dance to the music. Can we move together with the music? Remember to stop when the horses stop!



Resources

- ❖ Music for Sleigh Ride: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTMc-WAjL-I>



Curriculum Connections

Fine Arts Standards

- ❖ Creating
 - 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.



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