



GREAT FALLS
Symphony



presents

Spring

Youth
Matinee



featuring

The Great Falls Youth Orchestra

GFYO Chamber Ensembles

and

Young Artist James Sanchez, piano



THE CONCERT EXPERIENCE

The Great Falls Symphony Association is so gratified to have you in attendance at our Youth Matinee concert. We believe that attending live performances is not only educational, but also exciting, engaging and enjoyable for audience members of any age. This packet is designed to guide teachers and students through the concert experience. In addition to learning about the orchestra, the conductor and some of the conventions that are unique to the concert hall, this packet gives background information about the music. Students will get much more out of the concert if they first learn about the music. Program notes are provided in the "About the Music" section as well as some web addresses for online listening.

Many of the pieces on the concert are available for listening online, through iTunes or on YouTube. Pre-concert listening is an excellent way to get more out of the concert experience. After hearing recordings of the pieces, students will be better able to recognize the music and look forward to their favorite parts. Learning more about the composers and their lives deepens the listening experience as well. Sometimes its hard to imagine that composers were just regular human beings, living during a different time, but living an everyday life just like us. The music they wrote was intended to make connections between people, which is why it is still played and enjoyed today.

LIVE PERFORMANCE

It is important that students understand the special nature of live performance. In our age of recorded music, live performance is a unique experience and should be celebrated and enjoyed! Please share the following with your students about this opportunity:

Although we call it "playing" music, as you will see the musicians work very hard to produce the wonderful sounds you hear. Please afford your utmost courtesy to both the musicians on stage and the other listeners around you so that everyone will get the most out of the performance.

Attending a concert in this beautiful space, sharing the experience with friends, and not only listening but also seeing the creation of music are all parts of the live music experience. Live music offers visual aspects of a performance that are lost with a recording, like seeing the musicians move their bodies to create the music. Recordings are useful for many things, but they can never duplicate the experience of coming to a concert and seeing music performed live.

Not only is a live music performance exciting for the audience, it is also very rewarding for the musicians on stage. They love sharing their music with you, and they find that music is an important part of their lives. We hope that you will consider making music a part of your life by attending concerts, learning to play an instrument or singing. And perhaps some day you will be on this stage performing with one of the Great Falls Symphony's ensembles.

Support for this performance
is provided by:

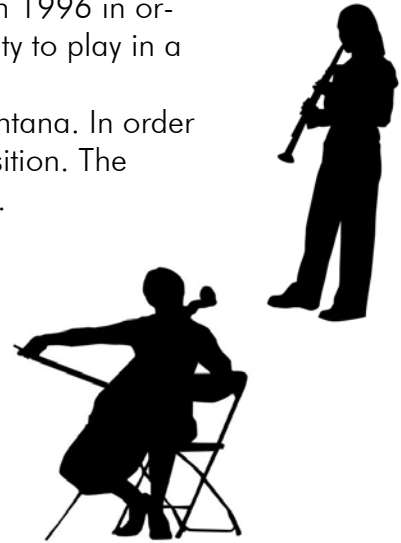




ABOUT THE YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Great Falls Youth Orchestra was founded in 1996 in order to give talented young musicians the opportunity to play in a full symphony orchestra. The Youth Orchestra is comprised of students from throughout central Montana. In order to play in the orchestra, students audition for a position. The members of the orchestra are high school students.

The Youth Orchestra is a great chance for students to meet other student musicians. There are members from the Great Falls Public Schools, Belt, Choteau, Conrad, Carter, Fort Benton, Sunburst, Lewistown, homeschools, and private schools. The orchestra rehearses every Sunday and performs two Youth Matinees and two public concerts each year.



NEW THIS YEAR!



CHAMBER MUSIC AND THE GFYO CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

What is chamber music? Why is it called that? And where's the conductor? **Chamber music** is a type of music played by a small group of instruments, usually with just one person playing each part and no conductor.

Here are some common types of chamber ensembles:

- string quartet (two violins, one viola, one cello)
- wind quintet (flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, French horn)
- brass quintet (two trumpets, one French horn, one trombone, one tuba)

Where's the conductor? One thing that is unique about chamber music is that there is no conductor! The musicians make artistic decisions about how fast or slow, how loud or fast to play the music. Instead of following a conductor, they stay together by using their body language to communicate with each other and give each other cues.

Why the funny name? The name chamber music comes from a time very long ago when music was played in palaces for kings and queens. The rooms in a palace or castle were called "chambers" and "chamber music" indicated that the music was for a small ensemble that could fit in a relatively small room.

Who are the students playing chamber music? The three groups that you will see on stage, the GFYO String Quartet, GFYO Wind Quintet and GFYO Brass Quintet, are made up of students who also play in the Youth Orchestra. They *auditioned* (tried out) in order to join these ensembles. They must practice very hard and attend extra rehearsals to be able to play this fun music with their friends.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER

The words to our national anthem were originally written as a poem by Francis Scott Key. In 1814 during the War of 1812 he spent a night on a ship overlooking the area near Baltimore. There was heavy fighting and bombardment of Fort McHenry, a fort designed to defend Baltimore. Mr. Key spent the night worried about the fighting and the fate of Baltimore. In the morning he was so relieved to see the American flag still flying over Fort McHenry that he wrote a poem about the occasion. His poem became the text for our national anthem.

The tune to *The Star Spangled Banner* is an old British melody written by John Stafford Smith during the mid-1760s, but it became a popular American patriotic song. It is known for being very difficult to sing because of its range of one and a half octaves. In 1931 the United States Congress passed a resolution naming *The Star Spangled Banner* as our national anthem. Prior to 1931 several different songs served as patriotic tunes for the United States, including *My Country 'Tis of Thee* whose tune comes from the British national anthem, *God Save the Queen*.

When the orchestra plays this piece, **PLEASE STAND AND SING WITH THEM.**
Here are the words:

O say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed by the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say does that star spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

AN OUTDOOR OVERTURE by Aaron Copland

Do you know the tune "Tis a gift to be simple, tis a gift to be free...?" If so, you might have heard the orchestral version of this piece called *Simple Gifts* from *Appalachian Spring*, a ballet whose music was written by the American composer Aaron Copland. To hear Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, go to this link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96Zc9enoGCg&feature=related>

Copland had an incredible way of writing music that captured the wide open spaces in America. As you hear his music, does it sound like "inside music" or "outside music"? When you hear it what do you think of? How does it make you feel?

The Copland piece you will hear on the concert is called "An Outdoor Overture." It was written in 1938 especially for students at the High School of Music and Art in New York City. He knew how talented these young musicians were, and wrote a piece that is now played by youth orchestras and professional orchestras throughout the United States.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

LORD OF THE RINGS by Johan de Meij

In the past the Youth Orchestra has performed movie music from the film *The Lord of the Rings*. But the piece you will hear performed at the concert is a symphony written before the movie was ever made! Written in the late 1980s, this piece is based on the Lord of the Rings books. It has five sections (also called *movements*). Each movement is based on an important aspect of the books:

1. Gandalf
2. Lothlorien
3. Gollum
4. Journey in the Dark
5. Hobbits

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2 (finale) by Frederic Chopin

A *concerto* (pronounced kon-chair-tow) is a type of musical duet, featuring a soloist (in this case a pianist) and an orchestra. The soloist and the orchestra share the spotlight throughout the piece. Sometimes only one or the other plays, sometimes they play together. Usually a concerto is a way to feature a very talented musician as a soloist. Young Artist James Sanchez will be featured in this performance. Please look for his biography on page 7. He's a very talented young musician!

Frederic Chopin was an incredible pianist and musician who lived during the early-1800s. He was born in Poland, but lived much of his life in France. Most of the compositions that he wrote feature the piano as a solo instrument. Many are based on traditional Polish folk dances, like the *mazurka*.

As you listen to Chopin's *Piano Concerto No. 2*, try to follow when the orchestra is featured, and when the piano soloist is featured. You can hear a recording of the third movement of this piece at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EVbijCwKss> Remember, only the third (last) movement of the concerto will be performed on the concert.

CARMEN SUITE NO. 1 by Georges Bizet

Georges Bizet was a French composer who lived during the middle of the 1800s, from 1838-1875. He wrote wonderful music for orchestras, along with many operas. His most famous opera is *Carmen*, a story about a beautiful and feisty Gypsy woman who falls in love with a soldier in the army. The opera was not popular when it first premiered, but the music has become incredibly successful and recognizable to many people. You might recognize the music in this suite!

A *suite* (pronounced like "sweet") is a collection of music taken from a larger piece of music. As you can guess, an entire opera is very long and includes lots of music! But the *Carmen* suite is a collection of the favorite music from the opera, arranged specially for a symphony orchestra.

The suite is in five different sections, called *movements*. One of the funny traditions during classical music concerts is that people normally don't clap between movements. They wait until the entire piece is over, and the conductor's arms go back down to his sides. See if you can tell when all five movements are completed. To hear the fifth (final) movement of the suite, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DNGMoMNLRY&feature=fvw>

AT THE CONCERT

Tuning Up the Orchestra

As you enter the auditorium, you will see musicians enter the stage and begin to tune their instruments. Some of them will play or practice on their instruments to warm up before concert time just as an athlete does before a game. When all of the musicians are in place and it is nearly time for the concert to begin, the **concertmaster** will enter and come to her/his chair which is the first chair of the first row to the left of the conductor. He or she will signal for the oboe player to sound an "A" and all of the musicians will tune their instruments to this sound. The audience should be **very quiet** when the orchestra members are tuning their instruments since each musician needs to listen to the sound of his or her instrument in order to tune. You will want to watch since you will see some of the orchestra members making adjustments to their instruments so that they will be in tune. You will also want to watch which instruments tune first.

The Conductor Enters

When all of the instruments of the orchestra are in tune, the concertmaster will sit down and the conductor will enter the stage from the left. It is customary to applaud when he enters to welcome him.

Watch and listen when the orchestra plays. You will see that some of the instruments play very fast passages while others play long slow ones. You will see that some instruments listen while others are playing. Watch and listen while the orchestra is playing so that you will not miss anything.

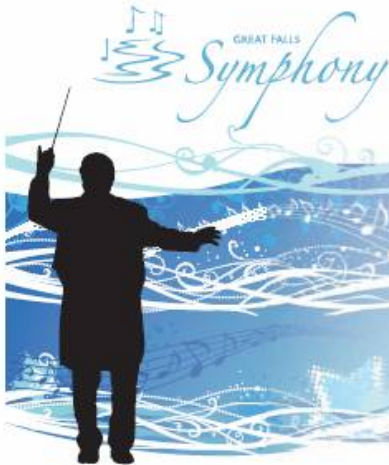
After the music is over, applaud again. This is your opportunity to express to the orchestra that you appreciate their efforts for you. Sometimes the music will come to a complete stop before the piece is finished, but if you will notice closely, the conductor's hands are still in the air. When the piece is finished, the conductor will put his baton on the stand, put his hands down or he will drop his hands to his side and turn to face you. That is when you are invited to applaud.

About the Conductor

A conductor is a very important part of an orchestra. In addition to conducting the concert, some of his jobs are:

- selecting the music for the concerts
- studying the music so well that he has almost every part memorized.
(Some conductors DO conduct a concert from memory.)
- guiding the players through the music using movements that all musicians understand. These movements indicate how loud or soft, gentle or harsh, and fast or slow the music is to be.
- "cuing" – pointing to a certain section or player to remind them that it is time to play.
- deciding what the composer is trying to say, or *interpreting* the composer's music.

The conductor is like the director of a play or the coach of a team. Since he has limited rehearsals and time with the orchestra, he must work hard to make sure the orchestra is prepared for each concert and that the composer's ideas about the music are conveyed to the audience.



MEET THE CONDUCTOR GORDON J. JOHNSON

Gordon J. Johnson is the Music Director and Conductor of the Great Falls Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Johnson is a native of Minnesota. He attended Northwestern University in Illinois and the University of Oregon. While in college he studied conducting and played horn in different ensembles.

Mr. Johnson started conducting when he was twenty years old. He was awarded a fellowship to conduct the famous St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Since then, he has conducted many orchestras in America and throughout the world.

In 1983 he was selected to be one of twenty young conductors from around the world to participate in the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute. While participating in the conducting master classes, he worked under Leonard Bernstein and other conductors.

In addition to the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Mr. Johnson has conducted the Charlotte, NC Symphony; the Cheyenne Symphony; the Spokane Symphony; the Kumamoto, Japan Symphony, and L'Orchestra Nationale de Musique in Toulon, France; the Guam Symphony, the Winslow Symphony in England and the Mesa, AZ Symphony. He also serves as the conductor of the Great Falls Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Johnson's wife, Ruth, directs the orchestra at Great Falls High School and they have two sons, Max and Alex.

FEATURED YOUNG ARTIST: JAMES SANCHEZ, PIANO

Currently a high school senior, James Sanchez has studied privately on the piano and cello for fourteen and seven years, respectively. He has performed two piano recitals (and will hold another in the spring of 2010) as well as having participated in state level music competitions. James plays the cello in his high school orchestra, the Great Falls Youth Orchestra and String Quartet, and the Great Falls Symphony. Additionally, he has participated in several music festivals in Montana on both instruments at local and state levels, as well as regional festivals, including Musicfest Northwest and MENC All-Northwest Orchestra Festival.

In his spare time, he likes to compose and arrange music, having studied music theory and composition informally with his private music instructors



WHO SITS WHERE?



LEARN MORE ABOUT MUSIC!

The following web sites are great fun for kids! They have games that kids can use to learn more about music: compose music online, play "Time Machine" and learn about famous composers in history, get a tour of music notation and much more.

Check out:
www.playmusic.org
www.sfskids.org
www.dsokids.org
www.artsalive.ca

AFTER THE CONCERT

When you return to your school, you may do several things to review what you learned and saw at the concert. You may discuss such things as...

- What is the job of the conductor?
- How do the musicians know when to begin playing?
- Why do you think the strings sit at the front of the stage and brass and percussion instruments sit at the back?
- Which instruments on the stage played very high sounds? Which played very low sounds? How could you tell without hearing them which would play high or low?
- What music was your favorite? Which composer wrote that music and what do you know about his/her life?

Write a letter to Mr. Johnson telling him what parts of the program you liked best. Do you have questions about the music, musicians, composers, or other aspects of the concert? If so, send a letter to:

Education and Outreach Coordinator
Great Falls Symphony
P.O. Box 1078, Great Falls, MT 59403

Be sure to thank your teacher(s) for the help that they have provided so that you could better understand what you heard and saw at the concert.

Also thank your administrators for providing the buses and the time away from school so that you could enjoy this experience.