



KNOXVILLE
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

SHEENA MCCALL YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

CARNIVAL!

2026 Teacher Guide



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MEET ARAM DEMIRJIAN

Aram Demirjian is the Music Director of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra (KSO). He has been conducting the KSO for 11 years! Aram has been praised for his "graceful, energetic direction" (Sarasota Herald Tribune) and dynamic programming for people of all ages.

He is a champion of American music and is passionate about emphasizing music by living composers and artists from underrepresented groups in his programming. In addition to his leadership in Knoxville, Aram is a frequent guest conductor with orchestras across the United States and has also appeared with ensembles internationally!

Aram holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music and Government from Harvard University, and a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from New England Conservatory. A native of Boston, Massachusetts, he currently resides in Knoxville with his wife, daughter, and their goldendoodle, Kermit.





MEET THE KSO

The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra (KSO) was founded in **1935** by **Bertha Walburn Clark**. The KSO's first concert was on November 24, 1935 at Church Street Methodist Church in Knoxville!

Over the years, many talented conductors and musicians have led the KSO to grow and become one of the finest regional orchestras in the United States. Today, the KSO continues to perform a wide variety of music and share it with audiences throughout the community.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE KSO](#)

[MEET OUR MUSICIANS](#)



KSO in 1935



KSO today!

MEET GO! CONTEMPORARY DANCE WORKS



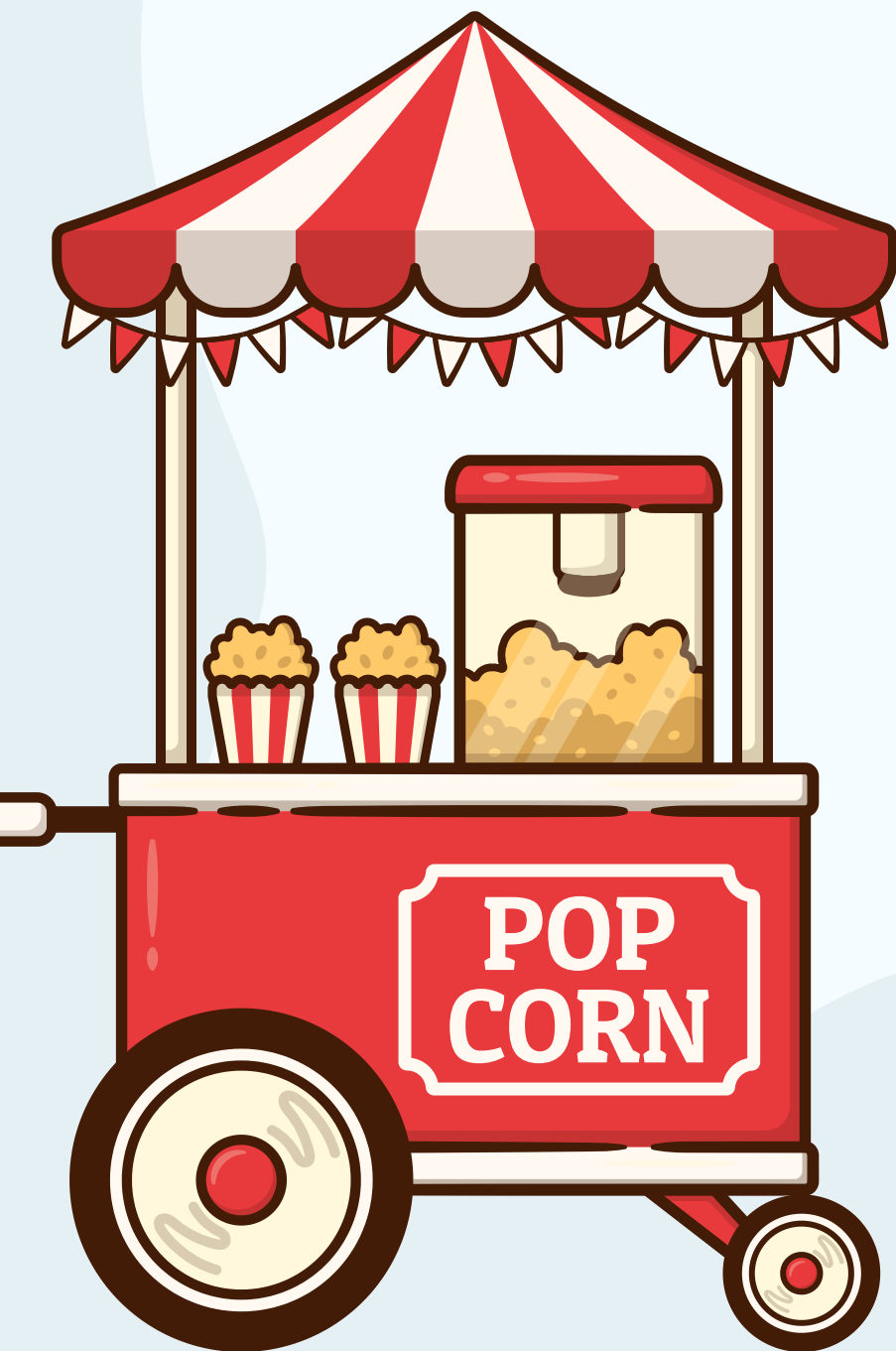
GO! Contemporary is a dance company in Knoxville that has been bringing dance to the community since 2003. Their mission is to share the joy of dance and inspire kids to express themselves creatively through movement.

GO! blends many different styles of dance, including ballet, modern dance, and aerial movement, to create exciting shows. They are known for storytelling through bold, adventurous dances filled with surprises, cool costumes, and creative ideas that make people think, imagine, and have fun.

GO! performs at schools, festivals, senior centers, and special events, and often partners with local organizations like the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra for performances all around East Tennessee.

WHAT IS A COMPOSER?

A composer is an individual who writes music. This person can write music for groups as large as a symphony or for a single instrument. Often times in orchestral works, composers use music to tell a story. Composers can write pieces of music based on many different things, such as dreams, places, people, events, or poems.



PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

(pronounced: PYEH-ter
ill-YITCH chy-KOV-skee)

SWAN LAKE: ACT III INTRODUCTION

Lived: May 7, 1840 – November 6, 1893

From: Votkinsk, Russia

Tchaikovsky was a Russian composer and conductor. He began playing piano when he was just 5 years old. His family moved to the St. Petersburg when he was 8 years old. Although he was a very good musician, his parents made him study law in school.

In 1862, he left his legal job and joined the St. Petersburg Conservatory where he studied music - including flute, organ, piano, and composition. After graduating, he moved to Moscow to teach at the conservatory there.

Tchaikovsky traveled all over Europe for performances of his music. He was the first Russian composer to achieve worldwide fame. In 1891, he was invited to New York City to conduct a concert for the opening of Carnegie Hall.

When he returned to Moscow, he wrote *The Nutcracker* and his sixth and final symphony, the "*Pathétique*."



SWAN LAKE: ACT III INTRODUCTION



Composer: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Composed: 1876

First Performance: March 4, 1877, in Moscow

Genre (Style): Ballet / Dance Music

Period: Romantic

ABOUT THE PIECE:

Swan Lake was Tchaikovsky's first ballet. When it premiered it was not very popular. However, it later became one of the most famous ballets in the world!

LISTEN TO MORE TCHAIKOVSKY:



1812 Festival Overture



The Nutcracker



Romeo and Juliet,
Fantasy Overture

JULIUS FUČÍK

(pronounced: FEW-chick)

ENTRANCE OF THE GLADIATORS

Lived: July 18, 1872 – September 25, 1916

From: Prague, Austria-Hungary (now Czech Republic)

Julius Fučík was a Czech composer and conductor. He studied violin and bassoon at the Prague Conservatory, and took composition lessons from Dvorák. He is known for writing over 400 marches, polkas, and waltzes.

In 1891, Fučík joined the Austro-Hungarian Regiment as a military musician on bassoon, and then went on to join several different groups as a musician and a conductor. In 1897, he rejoined the army as the bandmaster (conductor or leader).

Two of his most famous pieces are the "Florentiner Marsch" and the "Entrance of the Gladiators," often recognized under the title "Thunder and Blazes." In America, "Thunder and Blazes" is often associated with circus performances and clowns.



ENTRANCE OF THE GLADIATORS



Composer: Julius Fučík

Composed: 1897

First Performance: 1899 in Prague, Czech Republic

Genre (Style): March

Period: Romantic

ABOUT THE PIECE:

The piece was originally called Grande Marche Chromatique—French for “Grand Chromatic March.” The title was later changed to Entrance of the Gladiators.

**LISTEN TO MORE
JULIUS FUČÍK:**



Florentiner Marsch



Der alte Brummbär



Danube Legends



JUVENTINO ROSAS

SOBRE LOS OLAS

Lived: January 25, 1868 – July 9, 1894

From: Santa Cruz de Galeana, Mexico

Juventino Rosas was a Mexican composer and violinist. He grew up in a poor family and began his musical career as a street musician in Mexico City, playing violin with dance bands. Rosas and his family were a part of the Otomí people, who are one of many indigenous groups in Mexico.

In the late 1880s, Rosas joined a military band and continued performing and composing music. In 1893, he joined an orchestra that toured the United States and performed at the World Columbian Exposition World's Fair in Chicago, Illinois.

Rosas is one of the most famous waltz composers in Mexico. His best-known work is "Sobre las Olas" which means *Over the Waves*. It was first published in Mexico in 1888 and became popular around the world. Today it is considered one of the most recognizable waltzes by a Mexican composer.



SOBRE LOS OLAS



Composer: Juventino Rosas

Composed: 1888

First Performance: 1888 in Mexico City, Mexico

Genre (Style): Waltz

Period: Romantic

ABOUT THE PIECE:

Sobre las Olas means "Over the Waves" and was written by Rosas when he was only 21 years old!

LISTEN TO MORE ROSAS:



Carmen



Ensueño Seductor



Flores de Mexico



JOHANN STRAUSS II

TRITSCH-TRATSCH-POLKA

Lived: October 25, 1825 – June 3, 1899

From: Vienna, Austria

Johann Strauss II was a famous Austrian composer and conductor. His father, who was also a composer, wanted him to be a banker, but Johann had other plans! With his mother's help, he secretly learned to play the violin. He wrote his first piece of music when he was just six years old, and when he was 19, he formed his own orchestra.

Strauss's music is often characterized as light, lively, and fun. During his lifetime, he composed over 500 waltzes, polkas, and other types of dance music. He is the reason the waltz became famous around the world, earning him the nickname "the Waltz King."



TRITSCH-TRATSCH POLKA



Composer: Johann Strauss II

Composed: 1858

First Performance: November 24, 1858 in Vienna

Genre (Style): Polka / Dance Music

Period: Romantic

ABOUT THE PIECE:

This polka is a lively dance representing a popular pastime in Viennese society: gossiping! “Tritsch-tratsch” translates to “chit-chat.” The quick notes and flourishes of the strings and woodwinds sound like laughter, snickering, and hushed giggling.

LISTEN TO MORE STRAUSS:



The Blue Danube



Pizzicato Polka



Emperor Waltz

CHARLES GOUNOD

(pronounced: GOO-noh)

MARCH OF A MARIONETTE

Lived: June 17, 1818 – October 18, 1893

From: Paris, France

Charles Gounod was a French composer and musician. He received his earliest musical training from his mother, who was a pianist. Later, Gounod studied at the Paris Conservatory and won the prestigious Prix de Rome, which allowed him to spend several years studying music in Italy.

Gounod became best known for his operas, especially *Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette*. He also wrote music for orchestra, piano, and choir. One of his most famous pieces is *The March of a Marionette*, a playful piece that became even more famous when it was used as the theme music for a television show.



MARCH OF A MARIONETTE



Composer: Charles Gounod

Composed: 1872

First Performance: 1872 in Paris, France

Genre (Style): March/ Character Piece

Period: Romantic

ABOUT THE PIECE:

This piece tells the story of a marionette puppet who has died, and the music imagines his fellow puppets marching in his funeral procession.

LISTEN TO MORE GOUNOD:



Faust



Romeo et Juliette



Ave Maria

DMITRY KABALEVSKY

(pronounced: duh-MEE-tree kah-buh-LEF-skee)

THE COMEDIANS: PANTOMIME

Lived: December 30, 1904 – February 14, 1987

From: St. Petersburg, Russia

Dmitry Kabalevsky was a Russian composer, pianist, and teacher. He grew up in St. Petersburg and began studying piano when he was a child. Many years later, he became an accomplished pianist and played as a theater pianist for silent films.

Despite his father's push to study math, he pursued music at the Moscow Conservatory in 1918. Later, he launched a music education program in Soviet schools, sharing his love for music with children through piano pieces, choral music, and songs inspired by Russian translations of Mother Goose rhymes. He also composed operas, cantatas, vocal songs, concertos, and symphonies.



THE COMEDIANS: PANTOMIME



Composer: Dmitry Kabalevsky

Composed: 1938

First Performance: 1939 in Moscow, Soviet Union

Genre (Style): Pantomime

Period: 20th century/ Modern

ABOUT THE PIECE:

The Comedians was written for a play about a group of circus performers. A pantomime is a story told through movement and acting instead of words, so imagine what the character might be doing while you listen.

**LISTEN TO MORE
KABALEVSKY:**



Piano Concerto No.3



The Comedians: Galop



Colas Breugnon Overture



CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS

(pronounced sanh-sanhs)

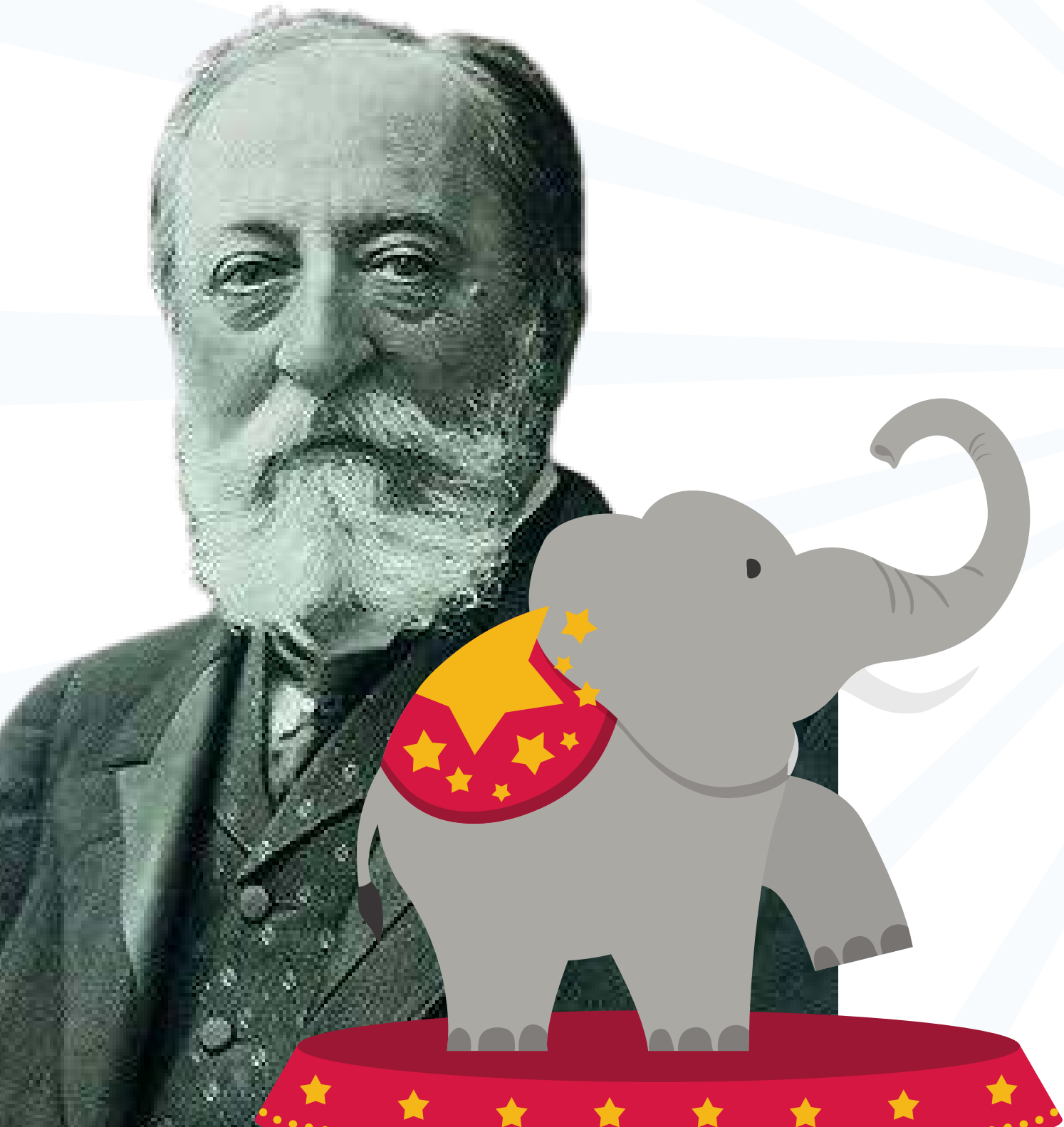
CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

Lived: October 9, 1835 – December 16, 1921

From: Paris, France

Camille Saint-Saëns was a French composer, organist, and pianist. He was a child prodigy in more ways than one: by age three, he could read and write and had begun piano lessons; at age five, he began composing, and at age ten he had his performing debut. At age 13, he entered the Paris Conservatory, where he studied organ and composition.

Saint-Saëns helped establish the National Society of Music, promoting French works from newer generations of composers. He then went on extensive tours around the world, performing his piano concerti and conducting his symphonic works. After his tours, he wrote *The Carnival of the Animals*, and *Symphony No. 3*, which was dedicated to Franz Liszt.



CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS



Composer: Camille Saint-Saëns

Composed: 1886

First Performance: February 9, 1886 in Paris, France

Genre (Style): Suite

Period: Romantic

ABOUT THE PIECE:

Saint-Saëns wrote the piece as a musical joke to his friends, and even snuck in musical jokes by borrowing tunes from other composers and popular songs of the time. The Swan was the only movement he allowed to be published while he was alive.

LISTEN TO MORE SAINT-SAËNS:



Danse Macabre



Symphony No. 3 (Organ)



Cello Concerto No. 1



CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

1. Introduction and Royal March of the Lion

2. Hens and Roosters

3. Wild Donkeys (Swift Animals)

4. Tortoises

5. The Elephant

6. Kangaroos

7. Aquarium

8. Characters with Long Ears

9. The Cuckoo in the Depths of the Woods

10. Aviary

11. Pianists

12. Fossils

13. The Swan

14. Finale



DIGITAL RESOURCES

Scan the QR codes or click below to access additional materials to help prepare your students for their trip to see the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra!

KSO Home Page

Audio File Playlist

Teacher Resources



[Click Here](#)



[Click Here](#)



[Click Here](#)

LESSON ONE: LISTENING MAP



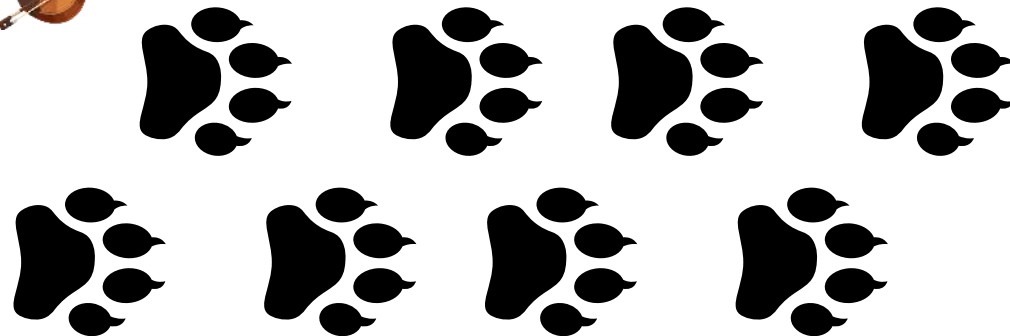
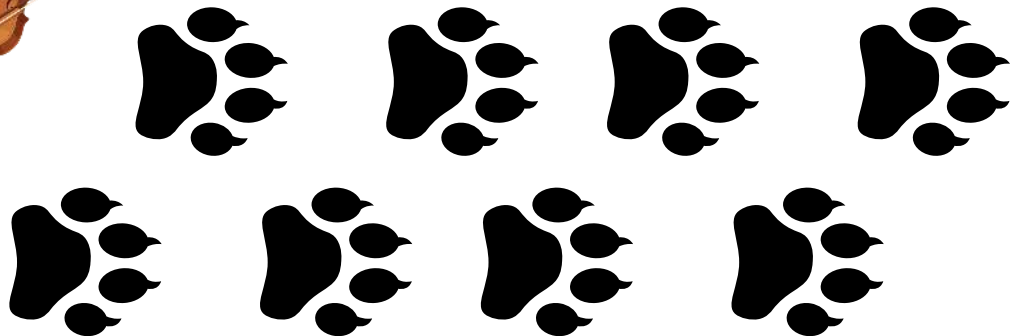
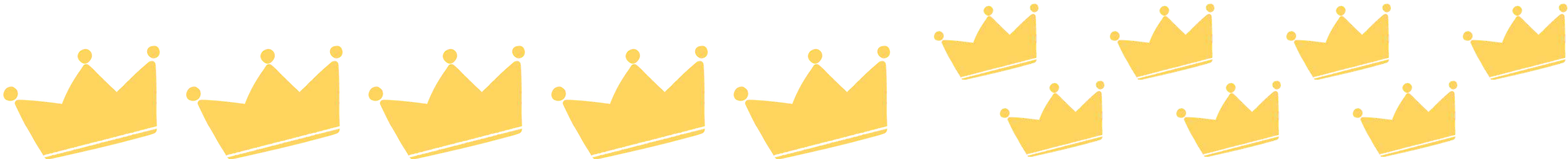
Listen to Camille Saint-Saëns *Carnival of the Animals: Mvt 1: Introductions and Royal March of the Lion* and follow along using the listening map provided.

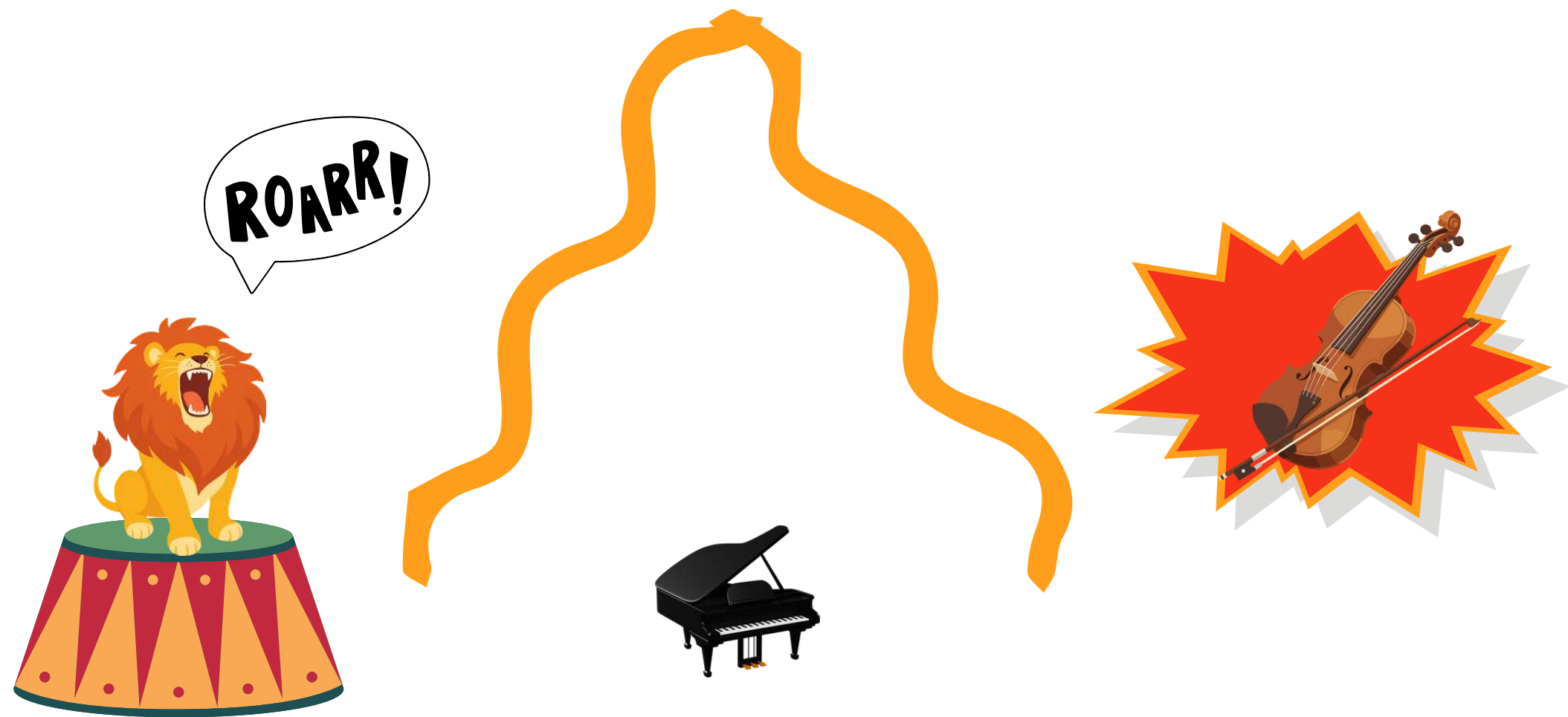
Choose another movement of *Carnival of the Animals* and create your own Listening Map as a class.



INTRODUCTIONS AND ROYAL MARCH OF THE LION

INTRO



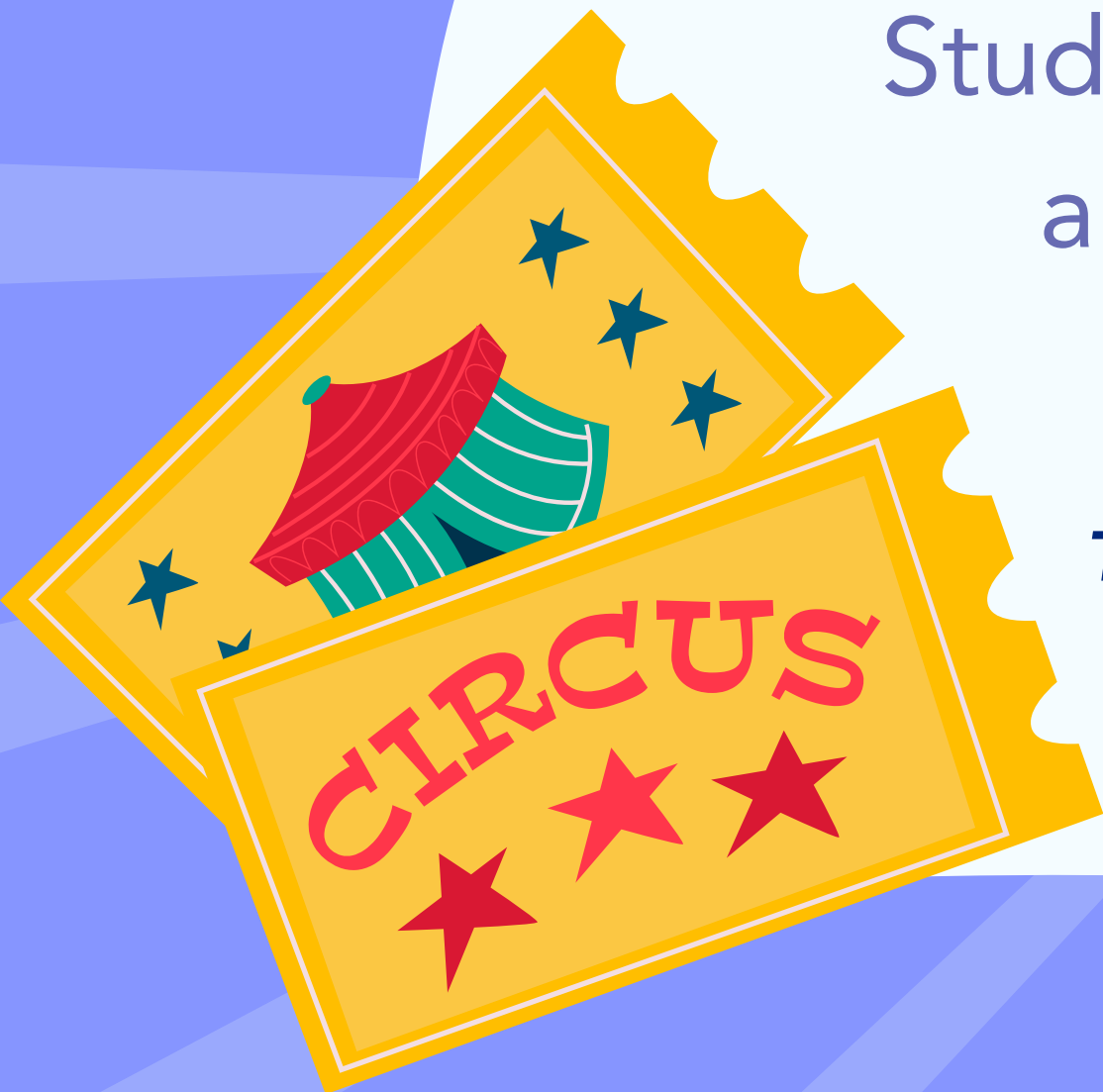


CREATE YOUR OWN LISTENING MAP

LESSON TWO

Students use carnival tickets to create, notate, and perform their own rhythm patterns.

Ticket packs/worksheets are available at the end of the Teacher Guide and in the digital resources folder.



Give each of your students a pack of tickets and a “Carnival Stage” worksheet. A page of blank tickets is provided so that students can write out the notes/one beat rhythm patterns you are learning in class.

ACTIVITY 1: Creating

1. Have students arrange their tickets on the stage worksheet to create a 4-beat rhythm.
2. Students can clap, tap, or play their rhythm for a partner or the class!

ACTIVITY 2: Listening

1. Clap a 4-beat rhythm.
2. Students should listen and arrange their tickets to show the rhythm they heard.
3. Choose a student to notate the rhythm up on the board



BEAT 1

BEAT 2

BEAT 3

BEAT 4



LESSON THREE

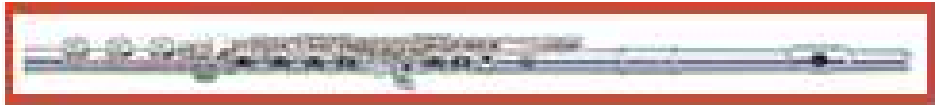
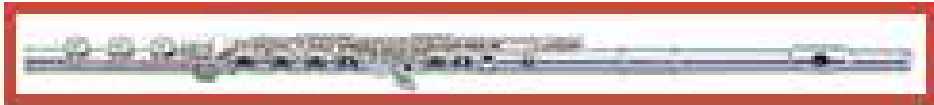
Cut and paste the
instruments of the
orchestra and place them
on the map.

The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra

This chart shows how you might see the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra arranged on stage when you come to the Young People's Concert. The players are seated in a semicircle facing the conductor.

Today's symphony orchestra varies in size from one place to another but usually has about 85 players. The string section, about 60 musicians, is the largest section in the orchestra. The woodwind section usually has 12 or more players, and the brass section typically has 10. Finally, the percussion section varies greatly, depending on the number of percussion parts used in a musical work.

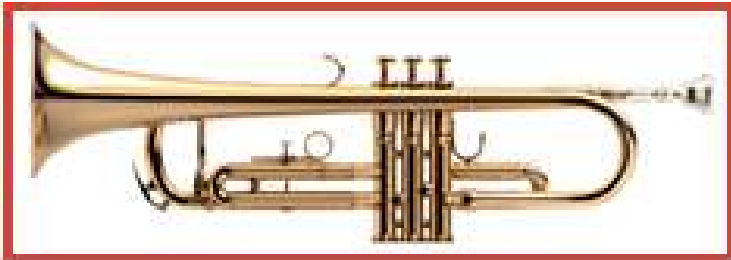
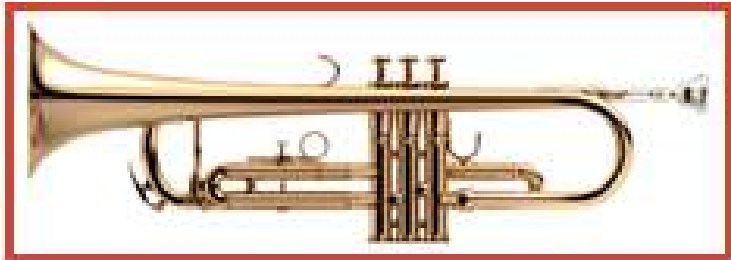
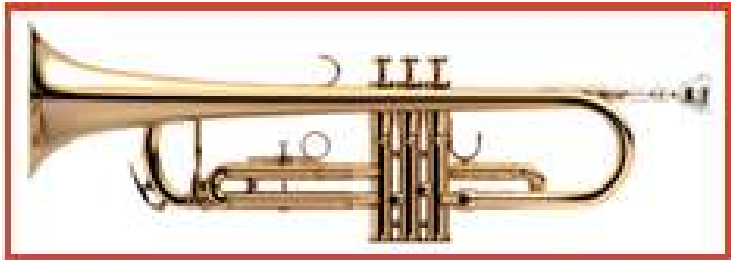




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Percussion

Woodwinds

Brass

Strings

Strings

Strings



STANDARDS

The Sheena McCall Young People's Concert aligns with the Tennessee Academic Standards for Fine Arts Education.

Click the link or scan the QR Code to access a full list of standards covered in this Teacher Guide and Concert.



CLICK HERE

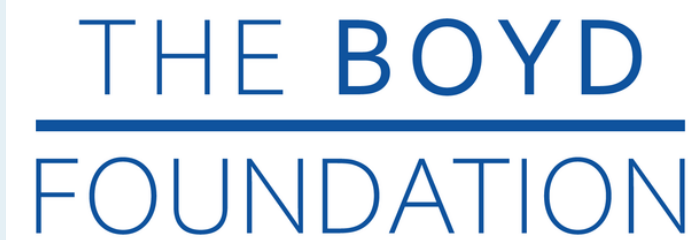


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**KNOXVILLE
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**

Aram Demirjian, Music Director

Presents

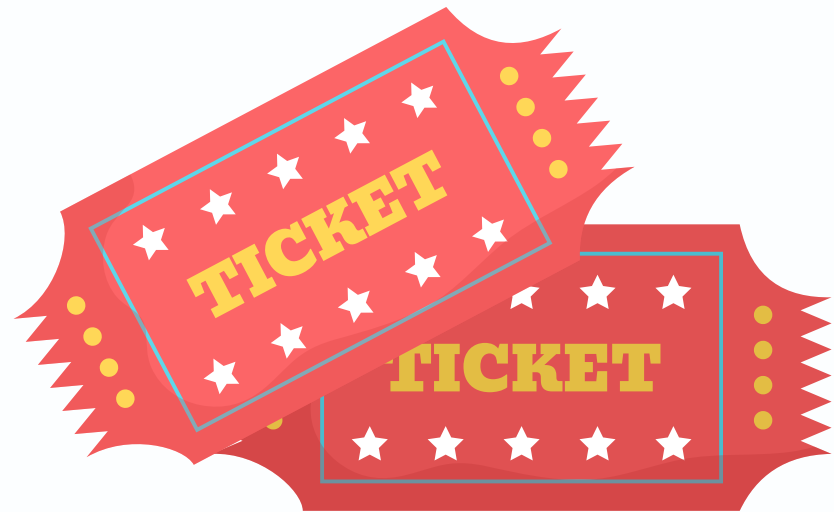


Knoxville, TN

Knoxville Civic Auditorium

Oct. 28, 2026 @ 9:30 am

Oct. 29, 2026 @ 9:30 & 11:00 am



*Step right up for a musical extravaganza!
The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra
invites students to experience
Camille Saint-Saëns' Carnival of the Animals.*

CARNIVAL!

Aram Demirjian, Conductor

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Swan Lake: Act III Intriduction

Julius Fučík

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March of a Marionette

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The Comedians: Pantomime

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Carnvial of the Animals

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KNOXVILLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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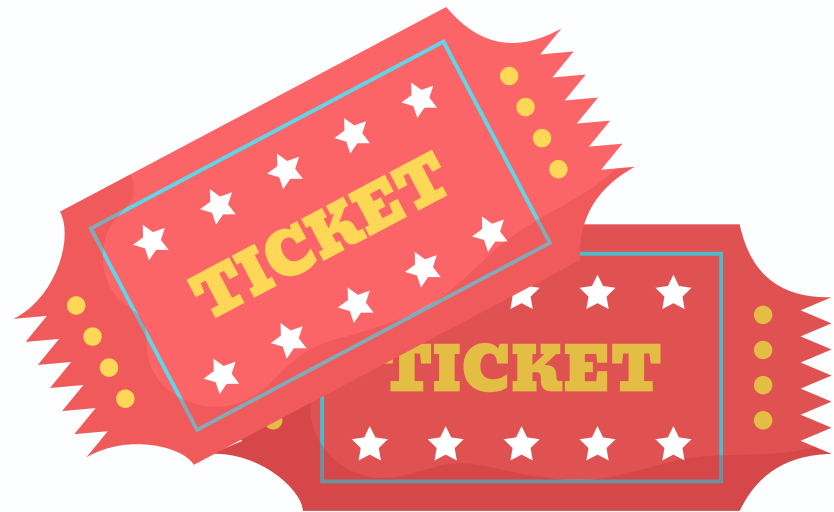
Presents



Greenville, TN

Niswonger Performing Arts Center

Nov. 4, 2026 @ 9:30 & 11:00 am



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CARNIVAL!

*Printable programs
and
classroom worksheets*

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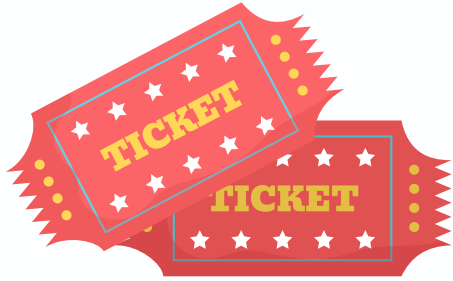


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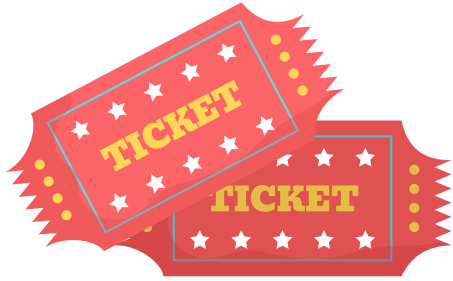
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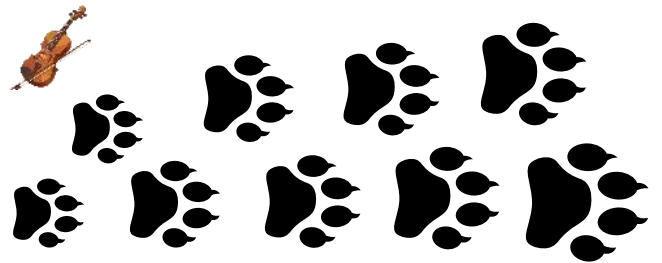
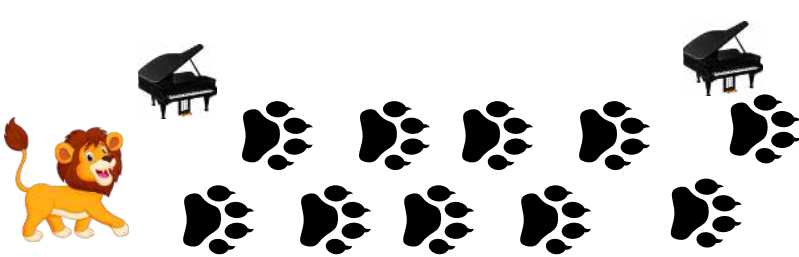
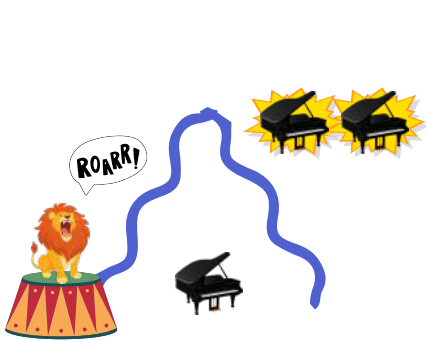
The Comedians: Pantomime

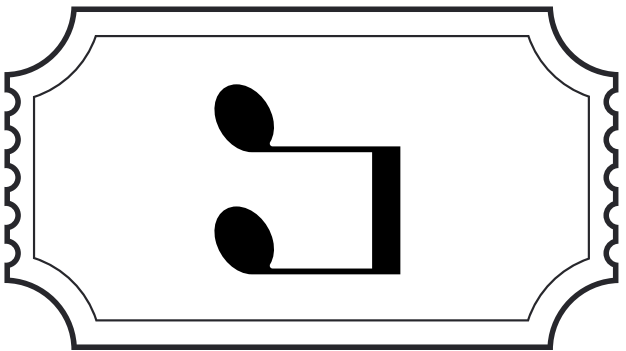
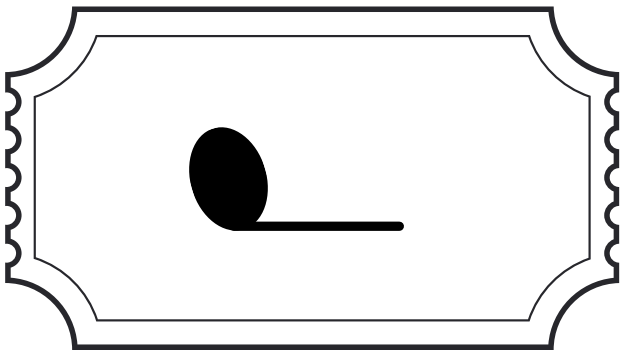
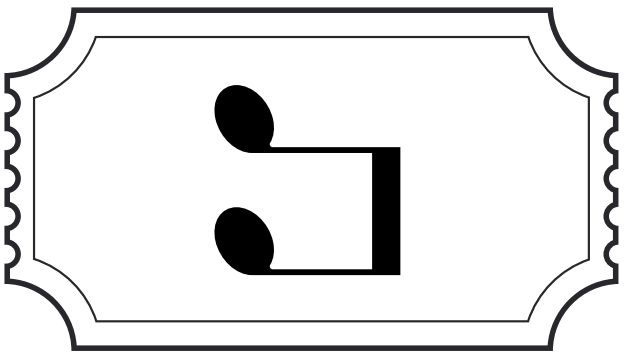
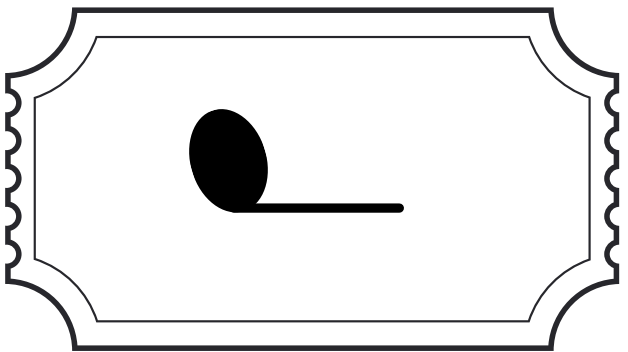
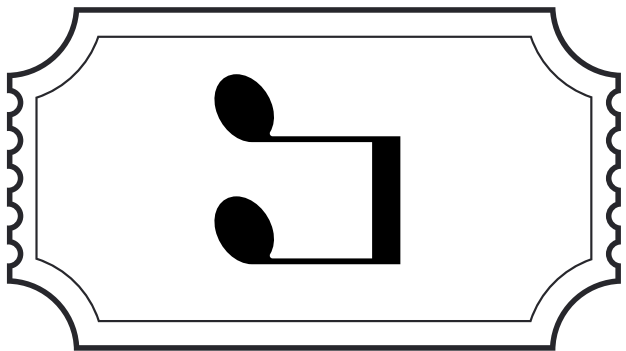
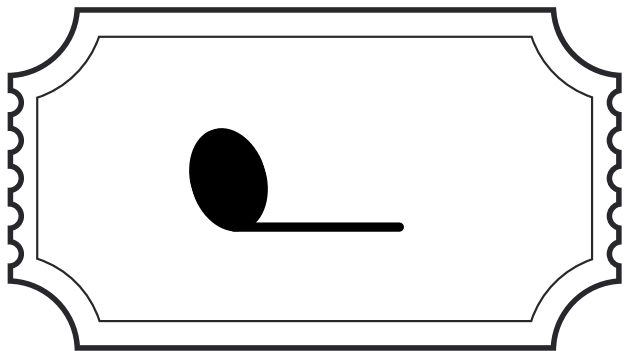
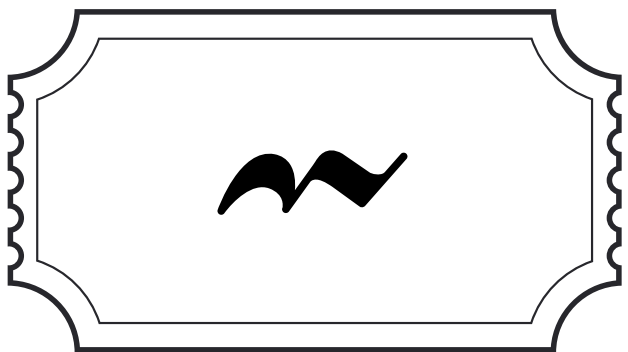
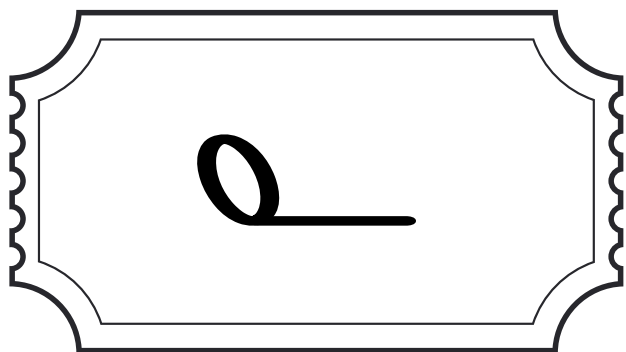
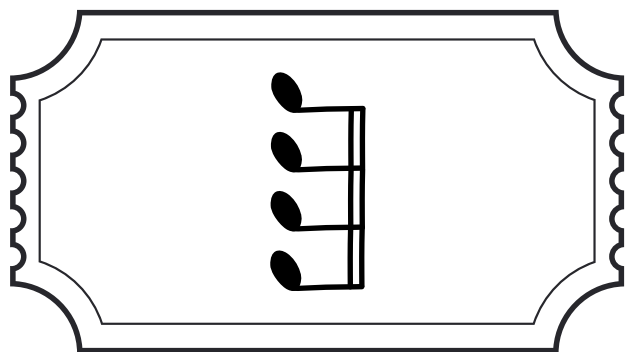
Camille Saint-Saëns

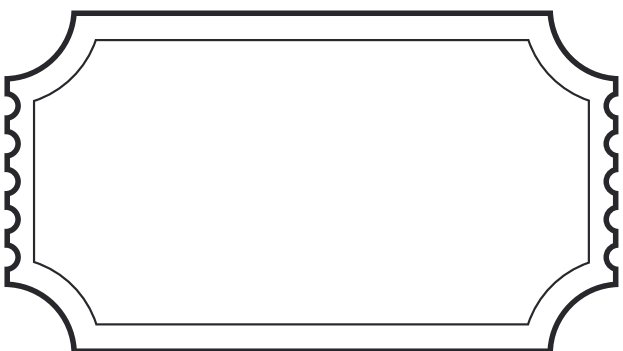
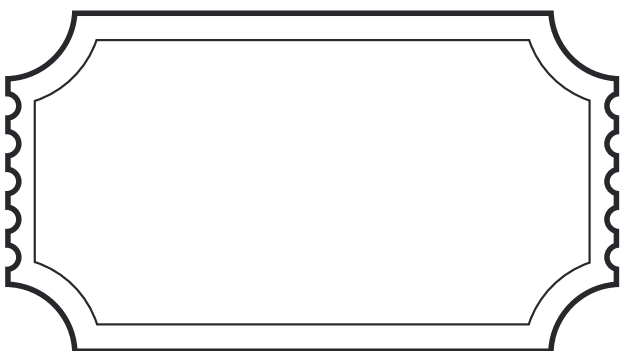
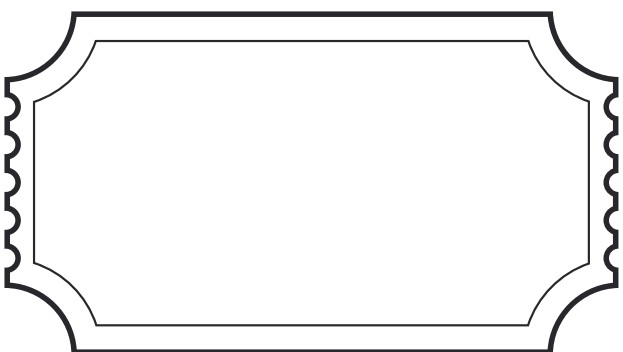
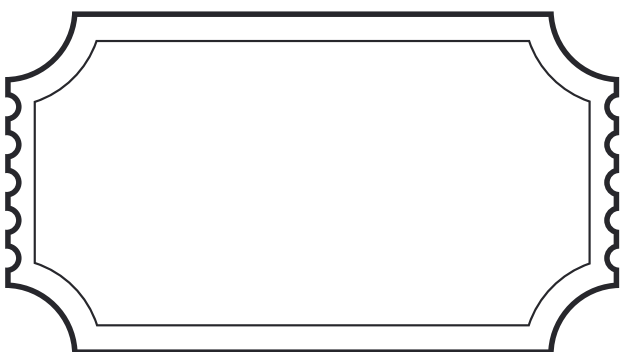
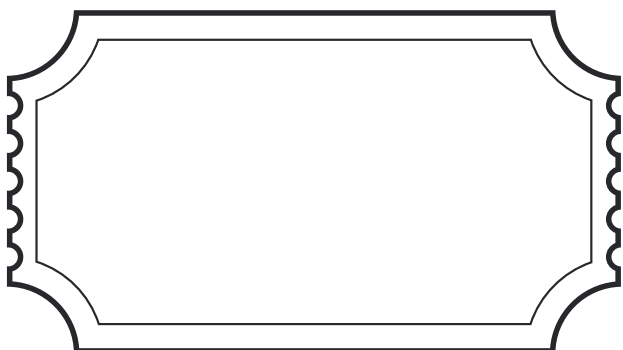
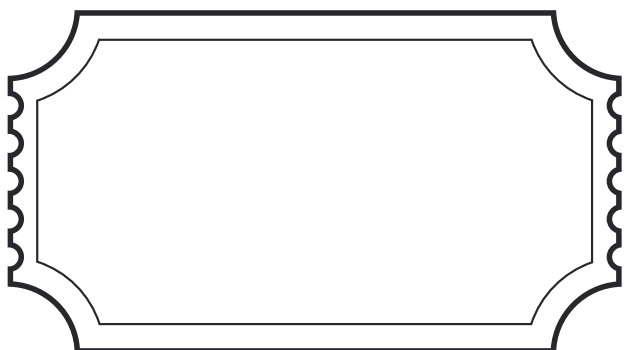
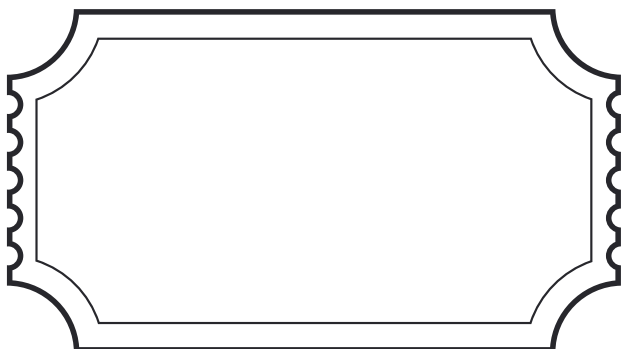
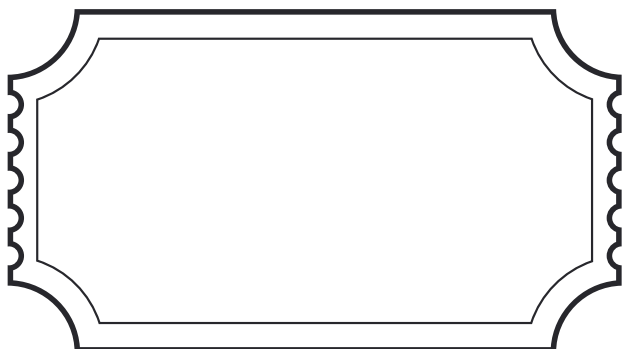
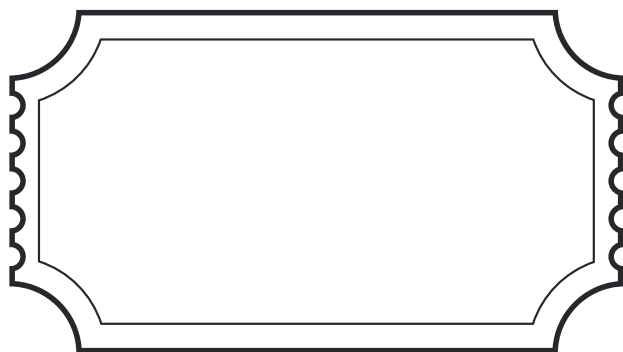
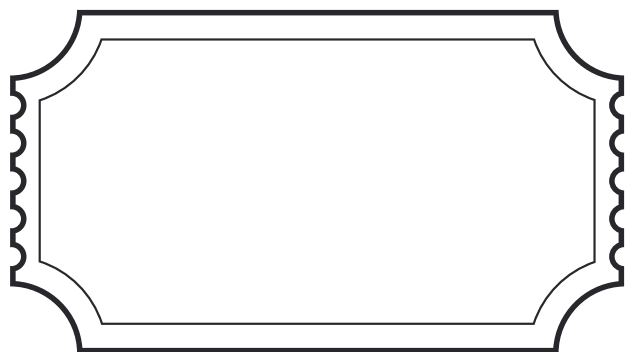
Carnvial of the Animals

INTRODUCTIONS AND ROYAL MARCH OF THE LION

INTRO







Ring Master: _____

Step right up and create some rhythms! Use your tickets to organize different rhythm patterns on the stage!

