

EDUCATIONAL  
CONCERT SERIES

DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
STUDENT MINI-GUIDE

Virtual Educational Concert Series:  
**WHAT IS A CONCERTO?**



**FACEBOOK LIVE WATCH PARTY: FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH, 2020 AT 2:00PM**  
AVAILABLE TO STREAM ANY TIME ON YOUTUBE AND DSO REPLAY

The concerto has been a popular form of musical composition for hundreds of years! As music has changed, so has the concerto. *What is a Concerto?* explores the evolution of the concerto through different musical eras and across different instruments. The lessons and activities in this guide provide a brief overview of what you'll hear in the concert and equip you to listen at your best!

Students can use the activities in this mini-guide to prepare for viewing the DSO's accompanying "virtual" ECS performance, a compilation of previously recorded pieces curated for educational purposes during the shutdown. The concert will air on Facebook Live and DSO.org and be publicly available after on YouTube and the DSO's streaming service, DSO Replay.

## Virtual Educational Concert Series: WHAT IS A CONCERTO?

### Concert Program

Simone Young, *conductor*

Carlos Miguel Prieto, *conductor*

Andrey Boreyko, *conductor*

Franz Joseph Haydn  
(1732-1809)

Concerto for Two Horns in E-flat Major

III. Rondeau: Allegretto

Karl Pituch, *horn*

Johanna Yarbrough, *horn*

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 77

III. Allegro giocoso - Poco più presto

Christian Tetzlaff, *violin*

Gabriel Prokofiev  
(b. 1975)

Saxophone Concerto

IV. Allegro meccanico

Branford Marsalis, *alto saxophone*



# DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LEONARD SLATKIN, Music Director Laureate

*Music Directorship endowed by the Kresge Foundation*

JEFF TYZIK  
Principal Pops Conductor

TERENCE BLANCHARD  
Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb  
Jazz Creative Director Chair

NEEME JÄRVI  
Music Director Emeritus

## FIRST VIOLIN

Kimberly Kaloyanides  
Kennedy  
INTERIM CONCERTMASTER  
*Katherine Tuck Chair*  
Hai-Xin Wu  
INTERIM ASSOCIATE  
CONCERTMASTER  
*Schwartz Shapero Family  
Chair*  
Jennifer Wey Fang  
ASSISTANT CONCERTMASTER  
*Walker L. Cisler/Detroit  
Edison Foundation Chair*  
Marguerite Deslippe\*  
Laurie Goldman\*  
Rachel Harding Klaus\*  
Eun Park Lee\*  
Adrienne Rönmark\*  
Laura Soto\*  
Greg Staples\*  
Jiamin Wang\*  
Mingzhao Zhou\*  
Yoonshin Song~  
CONCERTMASTER

## SECOND VIOLIN

Adam Stepniewski  
ACTING PRINCIPAL  
*The Devereaux Family Chair*  
Will Haapaniemi\*  
*David and Valerie  
McCammon Chair*  
Hae Jeong Heidi Han\*  
*David and Valerie  
McCammon Chair*  
Sheryl Hwangbo\*  
Sujin Lim\*  
Hong-Yi Mo\*  
Alexandros Sakarellos\*  
*Drs. Doris Tong  
and Teck Soo Chair*  
Joseph Striplin\*  
Marian Tanau\*  
Jing Zhang\*  
Open, PRINCIPAL

## VIOLA

Eric Nowlin, PRINCIPAL  
*Julie and Ed Levy, Jr. Chair*  
James VanValkenburg  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Caroline Coade  
Glenn Mellow  
Hang Su  
Shanda Lowery-Sachs  
Hart Hollman  
Han Zheng  
Mike Chen

## CELLO

Wei Yu, PRINCIPAL  
*James C. Gordon Chair*  
Abraham Feder  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
*Dorothy and Herbert  
Graebner Chair*  
Robert Bergman\*  
Jeremy Crossmer\*  
David LeDoux\*  
Peter McCaffrey\*  
*Joanne Danto and  
Arnold Weingarden Chair*  
Haden McKay\*  
Una O'Riordan\*  
*Mary Ann and Robert Gorlin  
Chair*  
Paul Wingert\*  
*Victor and Gale Girolami  
Chair*

## BASS

Kevin Brown, PRINCIPAL  
*Van Dusen Family Chair*  
Stephen Molina  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Linton Bodwin  
Stephen Edwards  
Christopher Hamlen  
Nicholas Myers

## HARP

Patricia Masri-Fletcher  
PRINCIPAL  
*Winifred E. Polk Chair*

## FLUTE

Sharon Sparrow  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
*Bernard and Eleanor  
Robertson Chair*  
Amanda Blaikie  
*Morton and Brigitte Harris  
Chair*  
Jeffery Zook  
Open, PRINCIPAL  
*Women's Association for  
the DSO Chair*

## PICCOLO

Jeffery Zook

## OBOE

Alexander Kinmonth  
PRINCIPAL  
*Jack A. and Aviva Robinson  
Chair*  
Sarah Lewis  
*Maggie Miller Chair*  
Monica Fosnaugh  
Open, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

## ENGLISH HORN

Monica Fosnaugh  
*Shari and Craig Morgan  
Chair*

## CLARINET

Ralph Skiano  
PRINCIPAL  
*Robert B. Semple Chair*  
Jack Walters  
*PVS Chemicals Inc./Jim  
and Ann Nicholson Chair*  
Laurence Liberson  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Shannon Orme

## E-FLAT CLARINET

Laurence Liberson

## BASS CLARINET

Shannon Orme  
*Barbara Frankel and Ronald  
Michalak Chair*

## BASSOON

Robert Williams, PRINCIPAL  
Victoria King  
Michael Ke Ma  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Marcus Schoon

## CONTRABASSOON

Marcus Schoon

## HORN

Karl Pituch, PRINCIPAL  
Johanna Yarbrough  
Scott Strong  
Bryan Kennedy  
David Everson  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Mark Abbott

## TRUMPET

Hunter Eberly, PRINCIPAL  
*Lee and Floy Barthel Chair*  
Kevin Good  
Stephen Anderson  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
William Lucas  
Michael Gause  
*African-American Orchestra  
Fellow*

## TROMBONE

Kenneth Thompkins, PRINCIPAL  
David Binder  
Randall Hawes

## BASS TROMBONE

Randall Hawes

## TUBA

Dennis Nulty, PRINCIPAL

## PERCUSSION

Joseph Becker, PRINCIPAL  
*Ruth Roby and Alfred R.  
Glancy III Chair*  
Andrés Pichardo-Rosenthal  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
*William Cody Knicely Chair*  
James Ritchie

## TIMPANI

Jeremy Epp, PRINCIPAL  
*Richard and Mona Alonzo  
Chair*  
James Ritchie  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

## LIBRARIANS

Robert Stiles, PRINCIPAL  
Ethan Allen

## PERSONNEL MANAGERS

Heather Hart Rochon  
DIRECTOR OF ORCHESTRA  
PERSONNEL  
Patrick Peterson  
MANAGER OF ORCHESTRA  
PERSONNEL

## STAGE PERSONNEL

Dennis Rottell, STAGE MANAGER  
Ryan DeMarco  
DEPARTMENT HEAD  
Noel Keesee  
DEPARTMENT HEAD  
Steven Kemp  
DEPARTMENT HEAD  
Matthew Pons  
DEPARTMENT HEAD  
Michael Sarkissian  
DEPARTMENT HEAD

## LEGEND

\* These members may voluntarily revolve seating within the section on a regular basis

~ Leave of absence



# SECTION 1

## What is a Concerto?

A **concerto** (pronounced *con-cher-to*) is a genre of musical composition that features an orchestra and one or more solo instruments. There are two plural forms of “concerto”: “concerti” and “concertos.”

Concerti evolved into their present form around the middle of the 18th Century, during the Classical period of music. Just like the **symphony** (another popular genre of the Classical era), the concerto is written in multiple **movements**, with each movement named after its **tempo** (speed). However, while symphonies often have four movements (following a fast-slow-dance-fast pattern), concerti usually have three movements (following a fast-slow-fast) pattern.

Both the orchestra and the soloist play in every movement. Composers use this soloist/orchestra structure in a variety of ways to develop musical **themes**. The three main methods are:

**Alternation:** the soloist and orchestra playing back-and-forth to develop a theme

**Competition:** the soloist and orchestra “compete” to develop different themes

**Combination:** the soloist and orchestra play at the same time and develop a theme together

Composers typically use all three of these methods in some way in a concerto. Here is a way to picture how alternation, competition, and combination work:

- Picture two friends playing with a baseball. They start by throwing the ball back and forth in a game of catch. They’re working together, but only one friend at a time is tossing the ball. This is just like **alternation** in a concerto: the orchestra and soloist “toss” a theme back and forth to each other!

### ALTERNATION



- Then, they grab a second ball and both start pitching to see who can throw better. One friend pitches a fastball and one friend pitches a curveball, which move very differently. This is just like **competition** in a concerto: the orchestra and soloist are each “pitching” completely different themes and trying to see whose theme is better!

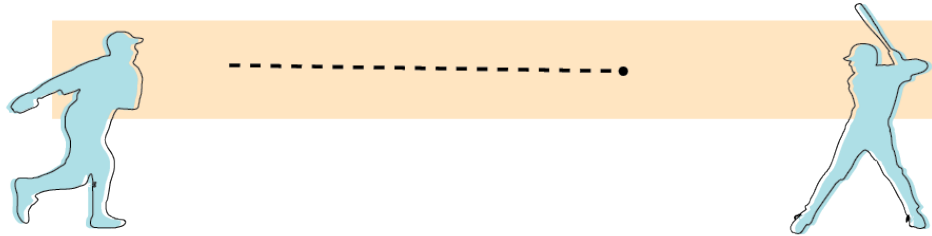
### COMPETITION



*Continued on the next page...*

- Finally, the two friends grab a baseball bat. One friend pitches while the other friend swings, and they want to see how far the batter can hit the ball. In order to hit the ball as far as possible, the pitcher must throw well and the batter must swing well. This is like **combination** in a concerto: the soloist and orchestra work together to develop a theme!

## COMBINATION



Composers can use these methods to develop themes in symphonies and other compositions as well, but they're particularly easy to pick out in concerti because of the soloist.

**Reflect:** *How do composers develop musical themes in a concerto?*

**Make Connections:** *Are there any other activities you can think of that use alternation, competition, and combination?*

**Note:** *Words in **bold** are defined in the Glossary on Page 12!*

# ACTIVITY 1

## Understanding Concerti

Sort the following traits into the Venn Diagram below. Which are only in a symphony, which are only in a concerto, and which are in both?

An orchestra

Usually four movements

Musical themes

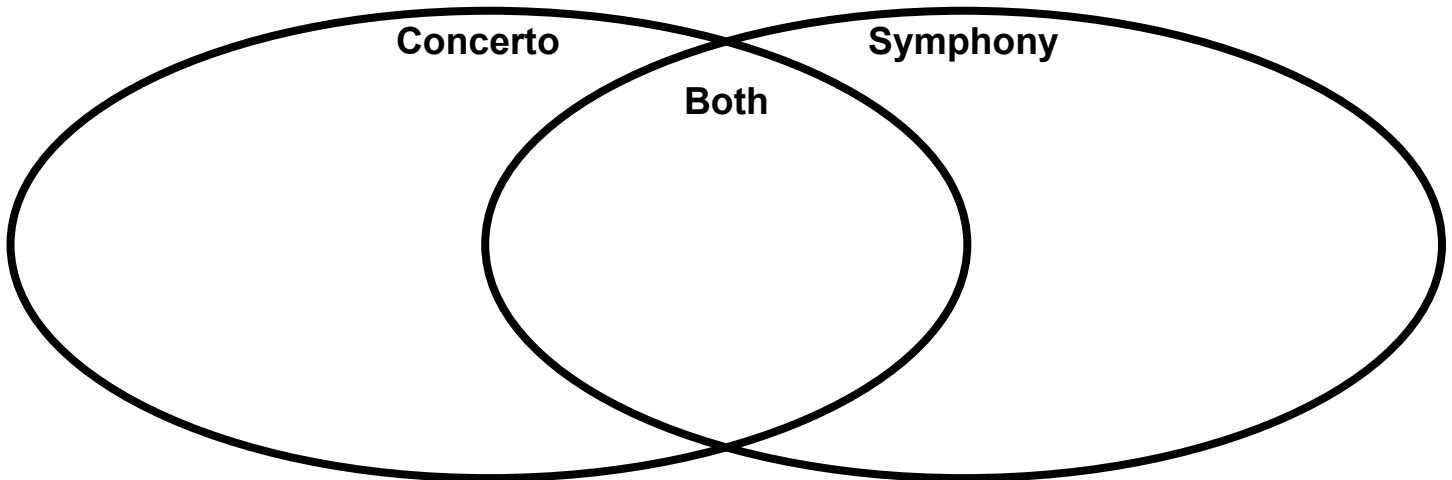
A "fast-slow-fast" pattern

Movements named after their tempos

One or more soloists

A "fast-slow-dance-fast" pattern

Usually three movements



Below are the titles (taken from each movement's tempo) for the Haydn and Brahms concerti appearing in the performance. Use context clues and what you've learned about concerti to try to match the Italian titles of each movement with their English meanings!

### Concerto for Two Horns in E-flat Major

Franz Joseph Haydn

- I. Allegro maestoso
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegretto

- "Slow, with expression"
- "Moderately fast"
- "Majestically fast"

### Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

Johannes Brahms

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro giocoso - Poco più presto

- "Joyfully fast, then a little bit faster"
- "Fast, but not too fast"
- "Slow, with expression"

**Challenge:** Gabriel Prokofiev is a present-day composer. Like many modern composers, he doesn't follow all the typical traits of a concerto and includes four movements instead of three. See if you can match his four movement titles to their English meanings!

### Saxophone Concerto

Gabriel Prokofiev

- I. Largo - Molto pesante (alla hip-hop)
- II. Scherzo
- III. Largo mesto
- IV. Allegro meccanico

- "Dance, with a joking quality"
- "Slow, with expression"
- "Slow and stately, then very heavy (like hip-hop)"
- "Slow, with sadness"

# SECTION 2

## The Virtuoso

Many concerti are very hard to play for the featured soloist. As a result, they are often performed by top-level musicians. A highly skilled musician is called a **virtuoso**.

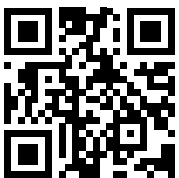
Several famous composers were also virtuoso performers. Many would compose concerti to explore just how difficult of a piece they could write and still manage to play! Some of the most popular concerti today are a result of virtuoso composers, such as Nicolò Paganini and Sergei Rachmaninoff.

**Make Connections:** *Can you think of anyone alive today who you would consider to be a virtuoso in music or another area?*

Nicolò Paganini (1782-1840) was a violin virtuoso and one of Europe's most famous musicians during his lifetime. He also composed extensively for the violin, including in the concerto form. His violin concerti are still famous today for their very high difficulty.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) was a piano virtuoso, composer, and conductor. Rachmaninoff had famously large hands that allowed him to make easy jumps between far-away keys on the piano. He often included such jumps in his piano music!

Below are videos of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra performing Paganini's Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major and Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody* isn't a true concerto (it only has one, continuous movement) but it features a piano soloist and orchestra and is based on the theme from Paganini's Caprice No. 24, a very fast and challenging piece often played by violin virtuosos!



**CHECK IT OUT:**

Nicolò Paganini  
Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major  
<https://bit.ly/3glxj7c>



**CHECK IT OUT:**

Sergei Rachmaninoff  
*Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*  
<https://bit.ly/3glxj7c>

**Reflect:** *What did you notice that was similar or different between the two pieces or performances?*

**Make Connections:** *Did you notice the soloists and orchestra using alternation, competition, or combination to develop their themes?*

**Fun Fact:**  
**Virtuosos Everywhere!**

Concerti don't always feature just one soloist! Many feature two or more, such as Philip Glass's *Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists and Orchestra* or Antonio Vivaldi's *Concerto for Three Violins in F Major*.

# ACTIVITY 2

## Becoming a Virtuoso

You don't become a virtuoso, a star athlete, or a world famous scientist overnight. Hard work matters much more than talent when it comes to being the best at something. The musicians in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra are all top-level performers, but any of them will tell you that they still practice for several hours every day! Much of that practice isn't even playing the fun parts of a piece of music; instead, it's dedicated to working on basic skills like **scales** and **tuning**.

**Pick an activity you enjoy doing. What sort of steps do you think you would have to take to become a virtuoso at it? The can be steps you could start now or steps you would take much later. Brainstorm them below!**

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Now pick a person who you think is a virtuoso or expert at something. Do some research on them and write down three things they did (or still do) to become a virtuoso. Are they similar in any way to the steps you brainstormed?**

**Virtuoso:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# SECTION 3

## Classical vs. Romantic

Franz Joseph Haydn and Johannes Brahms, two of the three composers whose music you'll hear in the concert, were very important composers in their lifetimes. Each was one of the key composers of their **musical era**, when a certain style of musical composition was most common.

Musical eras (also called "musical periods") aren't perfectly defined. Often, they overlapped with each other as groups of composers developed certain techniques and trends in their music. Some of these composers whose styles shifted over time are grouped with multiple musical eras.

For example, Ludwig van Beethoven, one of the most famous composers in history, is usually considered part of the late Classical Era as well as part of the early Romantic Era. His music shares many traits with other Classical Era composers, but his innovations also guided the development of early Romantic music.

### Franz Joseph Haydn and the Classical Era

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) was one of the most important composers of the Classical Era. Classical Era music is recognizable for its clear, simple forms and strong melodies. It's easy to hum along to many Classical Era pieces; you probably would recognize a few if you heard them!

Haydn himself was nicknamed the "Father of the Symphony" and the "Father of the String Quartet" for helping develop both genres of composition during his lifetime. Haydn strongly influenced all composers of symphonies and string quartets who followed him.

### Fast Facts: The Classical Era

**Timespan:** The mid-1700s until the early 1800s

**Preceded by:** Baroque Era

**Followed by:** Romantic Era

**Popular composition genres:** symphony, trio, string quartet, sonata, concerto, art song (for vocalist and piano), opera

**Some key composers:** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Franz Joseph Haydn, Antonio Salieri, Ludwig van Beethoven, Franz Schubert



Portrait of Joseph Haydn.  
Public Domain. [Source](#).



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.  
Public Domain. [Source](#).

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## Johannes Brahms and the Romantic Era

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) was a key composer in the late Romantic Era. Romantic Era music differs from earlier Classical Era music by its added complexity. Romantic Era composers tried to break down the structures of previous musical eras by experimenting with musical forms and the possibilities of melody and harmony.

As a result of all this experimentation, Romantic Era music is very diverse. Romantic composers used a huge variety of techniques and structures, so music by one Romantic composer might sound completely different from music by another! Instead of technique, Romantic music is tied together by how it expresses emotions and ideas.

Romantic composers drew on many new sources of inspiration, including emotions, nationalism, nature, mythology, and the supernatural. Romantic music could be either **programmatic** (music that tells a story) or **absolute** (pure music without a specific story). Brahms favored absolute music and often used structures in his music that were very similar to composers of the Classical Era. However, the emotions and ideas expressed through his music are strongly Romantic.

### Fast Facts:

#### The Romantic Era

**Timespan:** The early 1800s until the early 1900s

**Preceded by:** Classical Era

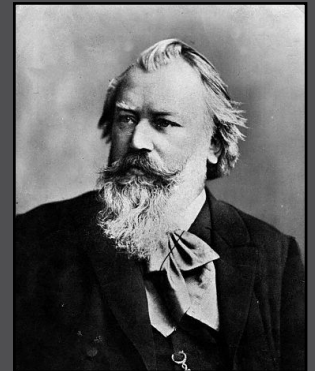
**Followed by:** Modernist Era

**Popular composition genres:** symphony, tone poem, étude, concerto, art song (for vocalist and piano), song cycle, opera, suite

**Some key composers:** (early) Ludwig van Beethoven, Franz Schubert, Hector Berlioz, Felix Mendelssohn; (late) Johannes Brahms, Richard Wagner, Antonin Dvořák, Richard Strauss



Hector Berlioz in 1845.  
Public Domain. [Source](#).



Portrait of Johannes Brahms.  
Public Domain. [Source](#).

**Reflect:** Which listed composers and genres are part of both the Classical and Romantic periods?

# ACTIVITY 3

## Compare and Contrast

Time to give your ears some exercise! **Give a listen to excerpts of the four pieces below. Then, write down your observations about how they are similar or different.** To help, you may want to research a little bit about each piece or composer to see what inspired them!

### Classical Era



**CHECK IT OUT:**  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Symphony No. 41 "Jupiter"  
(excerpt)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b65B8TVN05Y>

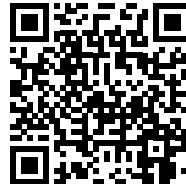


**CHECK IT OUT:**  
Franz Joseph Haydn  
Symphony No. 44 "Trauersinfonie,"  
Mov. IV Presto  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w97yo2jHv-I&t=1080s>

### Romantic Era



**CHECK IT OUT:**  
Hector Berlioz  
*Symphonie Fantastique*,  
Mov. IV Marche au supplice  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b65B8TVN05Y>



**CHECK IT OUT:**  
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
*1812 Overture*  
(excerpt)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4MFx1ry6uY>

### Question 1

In what ways are the two Classical Era pieces like each other?

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### Question 2

In what ways are the two Romantic Era pieces like each other?

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### Question 3

In what ways are the Classical Era pieces similar or different from the Romantic Era pieces?

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Once you have written down some observations of your own, head to Page 10 to compare your answers with some answers we came up with!

# ACTIVITY 3

## Possible Answers

### Question 1

- Both pieces maintain a strict form and solid tempo.
- The harmonies aren't very dense, and the melody is easy to pick out.
- The melodies sit mainly in the strings.
- Despite the nicknames "Jupiter" and "Trauer" (mourning), neither composer designated a specific theme to each piece.
- "Jupiter" sounds lighter and happier than "Trauer," which sounds darker and more intense.
- The orchestra seems slightly bigger in "Trauer" than "Jupiter."

### Question 2

- Both pieces have dense harmonies and complex melodies.
- The melodies shift around the orchestra.
- Both pieces have very clear inspirations that come through in the work (Berlioz's terrifying dream and Russia's defense against Napoleon's military invasion).
- The pieces express clear emotion, though the emotions are different: terror in *Symphonie Fantastique* and triumph in *1812 Overture*.

### Question 3

- Both Romantic pieces, especially Berlioz's, focus more on free melodic development than on form/structure like the Classical pieces.
- The orchestras look very different: the Classical Era composers wrote for much smaller ensembles (especially the percussion section!).
- You can hum along to melodies in both the Classical and Romantic Era pieces, but the Classical pieces are lighter and easier to pick apart melodies from harmonies.

*These are only a few examples of similarities or differences you may have noticed. Did you notice anything that isn't on our list?*

### **Writing Extension:** Relating to Yourself

How did the music from each era make you feel? Was there one era you connected with more than another? In a five-sentence paragraph, explain which era or piece you connected with the most and why.

# GLOSSARY

## *Terms in order of use*

- Concerto:** A concert work for one or more soloists and an orchestra, usually in three movements following a “fast-slow-fast” pattern.
- Symphony:** A concert work for an orchestra, usually in four movements following a “fast-slow-dance-fast” pattern.
- Movement:** A distinct section of a piece of concert music following a specific structure, key, and/or tempo.
- Tempo:** The speed at which music is played. Usually, tempos are written in Italian.
- Musical Theme:** An easily recognizable musical phrase that a listener associates with a specific character, place, or idea.
- Alternation:** A method in a concerto where the soloist(s) and orchestra alternate a theme back and forth.
- Competition:** A method in a concerto where the soloist(s) and orchestra develop separate themes against one another.
- Combination:** A method in a concerto where the soloist(s) and orchestra develop a theme together.
- Virtuoso:** A person who is highly skilled in music or another art form.
- Scale:** A progression of musical notes in a certain musical key or mode. Example: the C Major scale.
- Tuning:** The process a musician uses to make sure the pitches on their instrument are correct.

## *Additional terms*

- Melody:** A sequence of musical notes that a listener can identify as a musical idea.
- Harmony:** Musical notes played at the same time to create chords. Harmonies can be pleasant or unpleasant to hear, depending on which notes are used.
- Rhythm:** The pattern of notes in music.