

Disruptor CONDUCTOR

Watch Party Guide





INTRODUCTION

The CBC documentary *Disruptor Conductor* follows Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser and his ambition to make orchestral music for everyone. The documentary spans a year, and focuses on four concerts specifically designed to welcome those who may not have felt included in a traditional setting. From Symphony Nova Scotia presenting a concert that fused orchestral music with the world of drag, to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's first-ever Relaxed Performance, this documentary celebrates inclusion, diversity, and the power of music in our lives.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We invite you to watch *Disruptor Conductor* and then use the questions in this guide to spark discussions with your friends and family.

You can watch the documentary here:

<https://www.cbc.ca/cbcdocspov/episodes/disruptor-conductor>

For the tech-savvy among you, we encourage you to go one step further and host your own watch party online. After the documentary, meet your friends and family online to discuss the questions. You don't have to answer them all, and you can always ask your own!

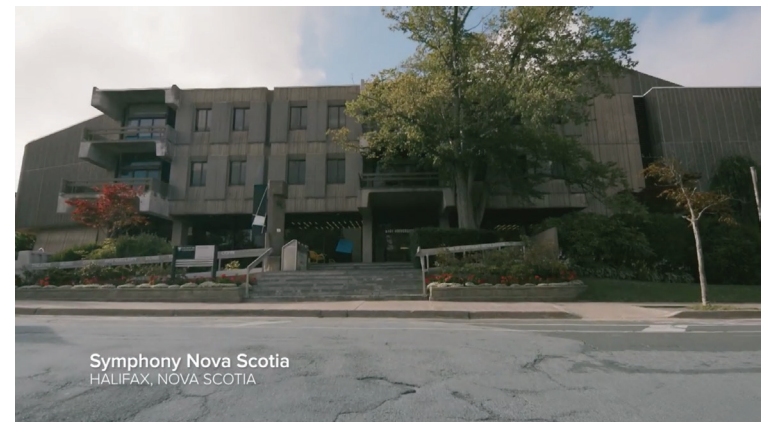
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- Cover image by Jag Gundu (Pg. 1)
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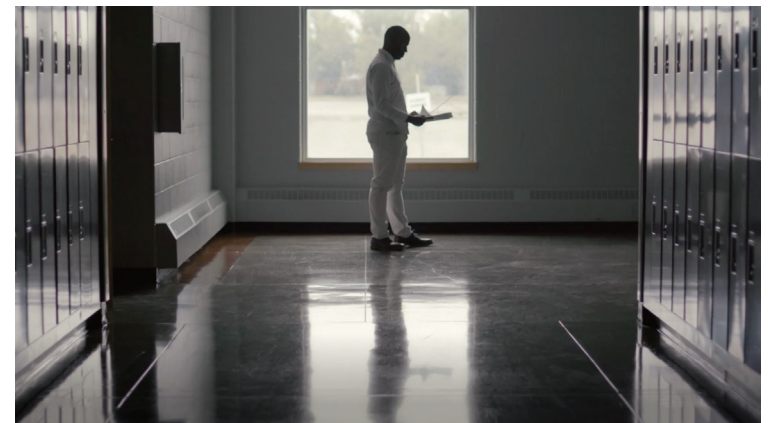
ORCHESTRAL MUSIC IN CANADA

1. When did you first hear a Canadian orchestra? What do you remember?
2. What should orchestras do outside of the concert hall to interact with and reflect their communities?
3. What is the most impactful event you have recently seen an orchestra present? What worked well?
4. What was the most memorable concert you have attended in the past few years? What made it special?
5. What was the most memorable concert you've attended in your whole life? Going into it, did you expect it to be special? Why or why not?



MUSIC EDUCATION IN CANADA

1. Did you receive music lessons as a child? What was the teacher like? Was it a positive or negative experience?
2. How does your music education affect your experience of music as an adult?
3. How much priority should music education be given in the school system?
4. If you could go back in time, which instrument would you learn?
5. On a scale of 1–10, how much do you regret quitting music lessons?



CONDUCTING

1. When you hear the word “conductor,” who pops into your mind?
2. What does a conductor actually do?
3. What is the path to becoming a conductor?
4. What transferable skills do you have in your life that would help you, if you ever decided to become a conductor?
5. How do you feel about speaking in front of large groups? Why is this such a major fear for many people?
6. Discuss leadership and power as you imagine they pertain to orchestral music. What are the intrinsic difficulties presented by the context in which orchestral musicians work, particularly as it pertains to collaboration and decision making?



FEMALE & POC CONDUCTORS

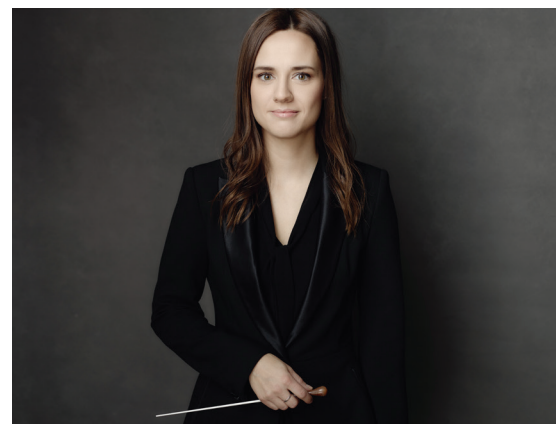
1. Can you name a female conductor?
2. Can you name a few works by a female composer?
3. How many people of colour have you ever seen conducting orchestras?
4. What obstacles have women, people of colour, and other communities historically encountered on their path to the podium?
5. Where would women encounter obstacles in the modern-day music industry?
6. Lately, a number of #metoo incidents featuring high-profile men in the music industry have rocked the orchestral-music world. How do you think this affects the current generation of female-identifying musicians?



Mélodie Léonard, Music Director, Sudbury Symphony Orchestra



Janna Sailor, Founder and Artistic Director of Allegra Chamber Orchestra



Dina Gilbert, Directrice musicale, Orchestre symphonique de l'Estuaire and Music Director, Kamloops Symphony Orchestra

PRISON CONCERTS

1. If you had once been confined to a Federal Prison, do you think that would make you more or less likely to attend an orchestral concert?
2. How do you use music to alter your mood? Share a few of your “happy” and “sad” pieces with the group.
3. If you are feeling down, are you more likely to play “down music” to reflect what you feel or “up music” to boost yourself?
4. Why is it important that the residents of the correctional facility were given an opportunity to conduct the musicians?
5. Do you believe that performances like these have a lasting impact on the people who hear them? Why or why not? If not, what sorts of experiences do you think might create a lasting impact?



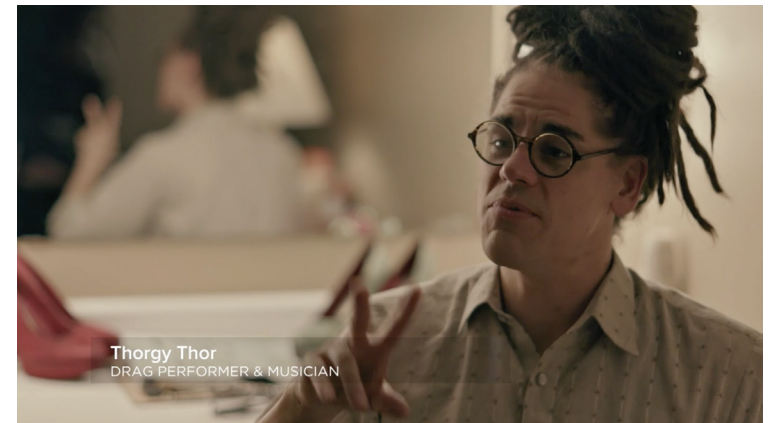
SPECTRUM CONCERTS

1. Do you think the decision to create concerts for very specific segments of society is a good one? What are the potential benefits/drawbacks?
2. Daniel spoke about the need to bring down barriers; for children on the spectrum, COVID-19 aside, what barriers exist to their participation in mass gatherings?
3. Why is Daniel so passionate about inclusion?
4. Are there people in your own life who are on the spectrum? What accommodations have been made for them in school or work?
5. What other groups in Canadian society do you think could partner well with the TSO to create unique, vibrant musical experiences?



DRAG & THORGY

1. The combination of drag and orchestral music seems contradictory. From what you know of drag culture and orchestral culture, describe ways in which they seem to conflict?
2. What risks did Symphony Nova Scotia incur in producing this first-time concert?
3. What surprised you most about Shane Galligan (Thorgy Thor)?
4. In what way is the Thorgy concert a coming-full-circle in Daniel's life? What might a similar coming-full-circle look like in your life?
5. What unlikely collaborations would you like to see at your next concert?



DANIEL BARTHOLOMEW-POYSER

1. What most surprised you about Daniel?
2. What three words would you use to describe him, as he is presented in the documentary?
3. In what ways does Daniel both support and defy the traditional conductor stereotype?
4. What part of his journey most surprised you?
5. Did his journey change your perception of orchestral conductors? How so?
6. Who were the people who had the biggest influence on his life?
7. If you were to have a documentary made about your life, on what aspect would the producers focus?

