



Topeka Symphony Orchestra

February 15, 2017
School Day Concerts
Out of This World
Educational Resource Packet

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Welcome!

Welcome to the Topeka Symphony Orchestra's 2017 School Day Concert! We are delighted you will be joining us for this exciting adventure of music from outer space. The stars, planets, and heavens have long been a source of inspiration for poets, composers, and artists. The Greeks and Romans looked to the night sky to illustrate their mythologies, Shakespeare used the celestial bodies in countless metaphors, and, more recently, science fiction writers and movie-makers have looked to the vast universe around us for inspiration for their stories. Composers have created a soundtrack of space—scores that evoke expansiveness, mystery, and the remote reaches of the galaxies—to help us to imagine these other worlds beyond our own. Join us on a journey to Outer Space through music!

Kyle Wiley Pickett
Music Director and Conductor



Maestro Kyle Wiley Pickett is the conductor of the Topeka Symphony Orchestra and the Springfield Symphony in Missouri. He was previously conductor of the Juneau Symphony in Juneau, Alaska, and the North State Symphony in California. He has conducted orchestras, ballet, musical theatre, and opera throughout the West Coast, the Midwest, Mexico, and the Czech Republic. He splits his time between Topeka and Springfield, and is married with two sons.

INTRODUCTION

The Topeka Symphony will perform its annual School Day Concerts on February 15, 2017, at the Topeka Performing Arts Center. Our 2017 School Day Concerts are fun-filled programs of pieces about outer space.

We are fortunate to have the generous support of Kaw Valley Bank, Cox Communications, Security Benefit, Westar Energy Foundation, the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, and Federal Home Loan Bank. These sponsors allow the TSO to offer these concerts free of charge. Please let our sponsors know that you appreciate their support! You can reach them by mail at the following addresses:

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Attending the Concert

About 20 minutes prior to the concert, the Topeka Symphony Orchestra members begin to come on stage. They come early for several reasons. Wind players need to make sure their instruments are warmed with air by blowing into it. String players need to let their wooden instruments adjust to the stage temperature and then tune the strings. Percussion players need to set up all their equipment.

At concert time, the Concertmaster (the 1st chair violinist) walks out and is greeted by audience applause. This is also the cue to stop all talking in the audience. She or he bows and then leads the tuning of the Orchestra. The principal oboist plays the tuning note 'A' for all the sections. The Orchestra then tunes by section: brass and woodwinds, lower strings, then upper strings.

When tuning is complete, the Conductor comes on stage as the audience, again, greets him/her with applause.

If a musical selection is in several movements, the audience traditionally sits silently when the orchestra stops between sections. The audience applauds when the last movement is finished.

Each time the Conductor returns to the stage, it is appropriate to applaud. It is never appropriate to talk, clap, rattle papers or disturb others in any way during a musical performance.

When the program ends, the Conductor will have orchestra members stand to acknowledge the applause of the audience.

Concert Etiquette for Audiences

- Listen carefully
- Smile and show appreciation.
- Clap at correct times (watch for cues from an adult if you're not sure).
- Respond when the performer asks you to respond
- If you come late or must leave early, do so between pieces or movements.
- Stay still. Remember, your feet should stay off the chair seats and backs.
- Keep papers quiet.

Out of This World

What are we playing?

We are going to play **theme songs** from several **movies and television shows** about space as well as **classical music that has been used in space movies** but that wasn't written specifically for those films. We are also going to play selections from Gustav Holst's orchestral suite "The Planets," which in many ways is the "classical grandfather" to many of the pieces that have been written by composers recently to create soundtracks for movies and television shows about outer space. In the soundtracks of countless science fiction movies and television shows, we hear distinct echoes of "The Planets." It would be fun to play clips from "The Planets" and see if students think it reminds them of "Star Wars" or other movies or theme songs.

Gustav Holst: THE PLANETS: MARS, THE BRINGER OF WAR

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0bcRCCg01I>

Gustav Holst: THE PLANETS, JUPITER, THE BRINGER OF JOLITY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nz0b4STz1lo>

Why do movies have music?

Music can provide an **emotional background** to the visual elements of the movie. These next two YouTube links provide an amazing illustration for students of what **music does for movies**. They are both a short clip from the beginning of the original "Star Wars," in which Luke Skywalker looks wistfully out at the horizon and beyond, imagining a world much bigger than his uncle's farm. **The first clip is the scene without the music. The second is the scene with the music.** It is stunning to see how the music becomes such an important part of the story, letting us know how Luke feels and giving us a clue to what is going to come.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVaZaXstujk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyqxWU1QkrE>

How does this scene feel without music? How does it change once we hear the music? Is it confusing without the music? Would different music tell a different story?

Musical Themes in Movies

John Williams, who is one of the most prolific film composers of our age, wrote the soundtrack for “Star Wars” and many other films, including “Superman,” “E.T.,” “Jurassic Park,” “Harry Potter,” and many, many others. He used themes throughout the entire “Star Wars” saga to identify, highlight, and link ideas, characters, and emotions. These are called “**leitmotifs**,” and are used by composers as a **tool** to help their **story-telling**. Every time John Williams wants to draw our attention to a particular idea, person, or feeling, he comes back to the musical theme he wrote for those concepts.

It might be fun for students to hear the leitmotifs from “Star Wars” and try to identify them on their own.

Princess Leia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtkuZbcZORE>

The Force:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcZ9kQ1h-ZY>

Darth Vader:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bzWSJG93P8>

The Love Theme (Han and the Princess):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hg-sWWmIVY>

Additional Space Music Links:

Richard Strauss—ALSO SPRACH ZARTHUSTRA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfe8tCcHnKY>

Stu Phillips—BATTLESTAR GALACTICA THEME

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hrd767Xzfk>

John Williams—E.T. THEME

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O15x-B8PgeE>

Alexander Courage and Calvin Custer—STAR TREK THROUGH THE AGES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IyJ3uoDMsg>

Claude Debussy—CLAIR DE LUNE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvFH_6DNRCY

Want to know more about the Topeka Symphony? Check us out at:

Topeka Symphony Orchestra:

www.topekasymphony.org