



Adventures in Music 2011



Our Music Our Language

FEATURING YOUR STUDENTS' PAINTINGS!

Do your students enjoy listening to music? Do they enjoy expressing themselves through art? How about creating a work of art inspired by a musical composition? If so, this opportunity is for your students and you!

Our Music, Our Language: The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra is pleased to present another season of ***Adventures in Music***. In the 2010-2011 season we will explore the diverse world of music and language. Students will discover the expression of this relationship through poetry and song, and other forms such as improvised language and sign language.

Artwork Submissions: We have selected a well known composition by Felix Mendelssohn, entitled *Nocturne*, from his work based on Shakespeare's play *Midsummer Night's Dream* with which to feature student artwork. During the performance, student artwork, inspired by this composition, will be projected on a screen behind the orchestra. *Nocturne* is 3:30 minutes. Approximately 35-40 images will be shown throughout the live performance. It is our hope that students will be inspired by *Nocturne* and will create their own personal visual response to the music.

The Classroom and the Creative Process: We have designed a unit plan that honours the creative process and integrates the repertoire with the Visual Arts curriculum framework. The unit plan offers a rich and valuable learning experience for your students, regardless of whether or not the images become part of the actual WSO performance. We invite you to share the music with your students and journey together through the process of creating visual responses – and then share the results with us!

Criteria:

All submissions must observe the following criteria:

- A **maximum sheet size of 11 x 17** can be used.
- All media are accepted, but please consider options that best relate to *Nocturne* on paper. See **Media Exploration, Section #7**.
- Each submission **must** include the student's name, grade level and name of school.

Deadline:

- All submissions must be received by the WSO office Monday, **February 28, 2011 at 4:00pm**.
- Student art will not be returned unless arrangements are made by the teacher.
NOTE: *Please feel free to include this request with your submission, and arrangements will be made for the artwork to be picked up when your school attends the concert in February or March.*

Send submission to:

Amy Wolfe, Education and Outreach Coordinator
Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
1020-555 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1C3

LESSON PLAN - VISUALIZING

“Nocturne” by Felix Mendelssohn

1 – 3) Preliminary Exploration:

Intent: To enrich listening skills by exploring music through visualization, mark making, movement and language.

**Please note that the following lesson plan suggests the use of a Power Point presentation (see #6 A). A presentation of artwork ‘inspired by music’ and artwork inspired by “Nocturne” and A Midsummer Night’s Dream has been compiled for this purpose.*

Please contact Amy Wolfe, Education and Outreach Coordinator (949-3977 or awolfe@wso.mb.ca) to receive your copy.

***Teachers: Please DO NOT share the title of the music composition until Step #4 and the context for Mendelssohn’s *Nocturne* until Step #6A.**

1 A) Listen to Mendelssohn’s composition, *Nocturne*, as a visual artist.

- Teachers: Dim lights in the room. Set the tone for the mood and tempo of *Nocturne*; create a sensitive listening environment.
- Students: Listen with your eye’s closed. Listen with your “mind’s eye”. “Watch” the “movie” playing in your head while you are listening. Pay attention to how the music makes you feel.

1 B) Discuss: What did you hear? Together as a class, generate/brainstorm/collect descriptive words in response to the music. Honour all responses.

- What did you see in your mind’s eye? Where did the music take you?
- How did you feel listening to the music? Describe your feelings.
- What colours did you see? Warm, cool, vibrant, subdued? Describe the colours.
- Describe the movement or energy in the music. Did it change throughout the piece?
- What were you thinking about while you were listening?

2A) Listen with Mark Making: Students respond through mark making to the music. Use large paper and media such as wax crayons, oil pastels, vine charcoal or tempera paint.

2B) Discuss: What did you hear? What kind of marks did you make? Display mark making responses. Together as a class, view and discuss the visual characteristics of the marks made while listening to the music. Record language and ideas.

3A) Listen with Movement: Students respond physically with their bodies to the sounds they are hearing. (Teachers: Make sure students have room to establish their own personal space)

3B) Discuss: What did you hear? How did you move? Together as a class, discuss how you responded with your body to what you were hearing. What stories did you tell using body movement? Record language and ideas.

3C) Preliminary Reflection: Review the language you have collected from your preliminary exploration through listening, mark making and movement. Together, identify similar themes and ideas running through your collective experiences.

4) Introduce the Music:

- Share the title, **Nocturne**, discuss the definition of 'Nocturne'.

Nocturne in music: a musical composition that is inspired by, or evocative of, the night. Dreamy, pensive, lyrical in nature.

Nocturne in painting: depicts scenes evocative of night or subjects as they appear in a veil of light, in twilight, or in the absence of direct light. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nocturne>

5 - 6) Developing an Idea for Creative Expression:

Intent: To develop unique and individual ideas for a work of art in response to Mendelssohn's *Nocturne*.

Teachers: prepare your students with paper and pencils before 5A so they can move smoothly into 5B. Begin with visualization, then play Nocturne, finally, students record experiences and ideas.

5 A) Listen Again: 'Set the Stage' for *Nocturne* with a visualization:

Students in comfortable positions for individual listening and thinking. (e.g. Lay on floor or heads on desks etc) Quiet room, dim lights. Gently, begin the visualization.

"Relax. Slow down. Play attention to your breathing. Breathe in, and out, slowly. Calm down, slow down. Close your eyes. Imagine. Imagine it is evening. The sun has just set, the light is fading, dusk settles around us as we descend into darkness. You are lying on the grass, on your back, looking up at the sky watching the colours change from magenta to burgundy to deep purple to indigo blue. See yourself lying there on the grass, looking up at the nighttime sky. Stars are beginning to twinkle, fireflies are moving about, and nocturnal life is awakening. Feel the cool air on your face. Listen to the quiet evening sounds. Now, let the energy of the music take you away - what story is unfolding for you? What is happening in your mind's eye as you listen? Where are you traveling?" Play Nocturne.

5 B) Immediately following listening, and without discussion, record your experience and ideas on paper using words and sketches.

6 A) 'Nocturne' inspires Artists: Mendelssohn used musical sounds to express his ideas about nighttime or "nocturne". He had pictures in his head while he was writing this music. These pictures were inspired by a play written by William Shakespeare in 1598 titled, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The play is set in a forest that is full of magic and fairies, with scenes taking place at night while characters are sleeping and dreaming. In *Nocturne*, Mendelssohn was capturing the mystical, magical, nighttime energy with musical sounds. The pictures in his head helped him create the melodies in *Nocturne*.

Visual artists are also inspired by nighttime or nocturne, stories and music. They capture their creative impressions with colours, lines, shapes, textures, highlights and shadows.

Lets look at how several visual artists have creatively expressed their ideas about 'nocturnes'.

6B) Looking at and talking about Art: [View Nocturne PowerPoint](#)

Teachers: Learning to discuss and express ideas and opinions about a work of art develops observational skills and critical thinking skills. Take time to ask questions and wait for answers while viewing these images.

Questions to ask students to encourage deeper, more thoughtful looking and thinking.

- Choose two images to compare and contrast. What is similar? What is different?
- Describe the colours in the work of art. How do these colours make you feel? Why?
- How did the artist use light and shadow in the artwork? Compare to another work of art.
- What do you notice in this painting? What catches your attention?
- What surprises you in this painting? Why?
- Why do you think the artist was interested in painting this subject?
- What do you think this artist is communicating with this work of art?
- What kind of music do you 'hear' when you look at this painting?
- What do you think this artist feels about nighttime or nocturne?
- How do you feel about nighttime?
- What are you wondering about? What questions do you have?

6 C) Return to Idea Development: Listen to *Nocturne* while students continue to develop ideas for their visual impressions of Mendelssohn's *Nocturne*.

- What does Mendelssohn's *Nocturne* make you think of?
- Where does his music take you in your imagination?
- What new ideas do you have after looking at other artists' work inspired by nighttime or nocturne?
- How do you what to visually communicate Mendelssohn's music?
- What should a successful *Nocturne* inspired work of art include?
- Think about how you will express your ideas using line, shape, colour, texture, space, light and shadow.

7) Media Exploration:

It is important to explore a variety of media and media combinations to see what kinds of visual effects are possible and what media best communicates what your students wish to express. Explore media that encourages students to make immediate marks and discover what is possible. Encourage layering of "visual sounds". Combining and layering various media also enriches the visual effect. Ask the students what media (combination) they think best communicates nocturne. Consider giving them choices.

Suggested media to explore and layer:

- Wax crayons or oil pastel and watercolour resist
- Acrylic paint or tempera paint on coloured paper
- Water soluble markers, watercolour and chalk pastels
- Oil pastels on darker coloured paper.
- Watercolour with collaged shapes
- Reduction Printmaking

Suggested Reference Text for Media Exploration:

Teaching Art: A Complete guild for the Classroom by Rhian Brynjolson 2009

- Chapter 6: Drawing Media
- Chapter 12: Learning to Paint
- Chapter 13: Exploring Paint with Beginners
- Chapter 14: Watercolour
- Chapter 15: Collage and Mixed Media
- Chapter 16: Printmaking

8) Major Project:

Once media and composition have been established, students will complete their final creative expressions inspired by *Nocturne*.

9) Reflecting on Learning:

It is critical that students have an opportunity to reflect on their learning journey to identify and celebrate their process and growth. Displaying works of art and discussing progress and/or final projects, in a non-judgmental environment, is integral to learning. Consider beginning this class with the artwork on display. Focus the students' attention on the artwork while you play *Nocturne*. This is a wonderful way to celebrate their journey. Then, consider the following questions to stimulate reflection and deeper thinking.

- How did you feel and what were you thinking about while you were listening to *Nocturne*, and looking at your final artworks?
- What do you notice about these works of art?
- What stands out for you? Why?
- Everyone was listening to the same music. But not everyone felt the same about the music. There were different physical responses using mark making and movement, and different ideas about the music. As visual artists, have we expressed ourselves individually about the music? If so, identify these differences in the artwork and discuss. If you cannot identify differences, why is this? What is similar?
- Think about all the experiences you had during this learning journey. What did you like the best and why? What was challenging for you? What are you most proud of? What will you remember the most?
- What have you learned about yourself as an artist? Explain.
- Give your work of art a title, but not *Nocturne* or Nighttime.
- What would you like to explore next with music and art?

A Final Thought: Present your own visual concert!

- Digitally photograph your students' artwork
- Download the images into a PowerPoint program
- Insert a recording of Mendelssohn's *Nocturne* music into the PowerPoint
- Time the images so they can all be viewed by the end of the music
- Present at a special assembly – after attending the WSO's *Adventures in Music* concert!
- Share your musical adventures with your school!!