



STUDY GUIDE **COMPOSE YOURSELF!**

with Music Director Otto Tausk
& the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

GRADES K - 3

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The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1919, the Grammy and Juno-award winning Vancouver Symphony Orchestra is the third largest orchestra in Canada, the largest arts organization in Western Canada, and one of the few orchestras in the world to have its own music school.

Led by Music Director Otto Tausk since 2018, the VSO performs more than 150 concerts throughout Vancouver and the province of British Columbia each year, reaching over 270,000 people. The VSO has toured to the United States, China, Korea and across Canada. The orchestra presents passionate, high-quality performances of classical, popular and culturally diverse music, creating meaningful engagement with audiences of all ages and backgrounds.



Recent guest artists include Daniil Trifonov, Dawn Upshaw, James Ehnes, Adrienne Pieczonka, Gidon Kremer, Renée Fleming, Yefim Bronfman, Itzhak Perlman, Bernadette Peters, Tan Dun, and more. For the 2020-21 season the VSO has created the innovative streaming service **TheConcertHall.ca**, a virtual home for a virtual season, where more than forty performances will be released throughout the year.

Otto Tausk Conductor & Music Director

Dutch conductor Otto Tausk is the Music Director of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, now in his third season. He is also the newly announced Chief Conductor of recently formed Phion Orkest van Gelderland & Overijssel. Until spring 2018, Tausk was Music Director of the Opera Theatre and Tonhalle Sinfonieorchester St. Gallen. He appears as a guest with such orchestras as Concertgebouworkest, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Lahti Symphony Orchestra, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, Philharmonie Südwestfalen, Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre symphonique de Québec, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Mariinsky Orchestra, the orchestras of Perth, Tasmania, Auckland, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales, with whom he made his BBC Proms debut in August 2018. He is a hugely respected musical personality in his native Holland, working with all its major orchestras and composers.

In the 2020/21 season, Tausk continues guesting relationships with orchestras such as Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, Het Gelders Orkest, Norwegian Radio Orchestra and Turku Philharmonic Orchestra.

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In Vancouver, Tausk will lead an innovative reimagined season in response to COVID-19, showcasing the orchestra with a curated series of digital performances.

Born in Utrecht, Otto Tausk initially studied violin and then conducting with Jonas Aleksa. Between 2004 and 2006, Tausk was assistant conductor to Valery Gergiev with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, a period of study that had a profound impact on him. In 2011 Tausk was presented with the 'De Olifant' prize by the City of Haarlem. He received this prestigious award for his contribution to the Arts in the Netherlands, in particular his extensive work with Holland Symfonia serving as Music Director 2007 to 2012. In reflecting on their work together in The Netherlands, Valery Gergiev paid particular tribute to Tausk on this occasion.



Members of the Orchestra

First Violin

Nicholas Wright, *Concertmaster*
Timothy Steeves, *Associate Concertmaster*
David Lakirovich, *Assistant Concertmaster*
Jennie Press, *Second Assistant Concertmaster (On Leave)*
Jae-Won Bang
Mary Sokol Brown
Jenny Essers
Monica Pegis (On Leave)
Xue Feng Wei
Rebecca Whitling
Yi Zhou

Second Violin

Karen Gerbrecht, *Acting Principal*
Jeanette Bernal-Singh, *Acting Associate Principal*
Ashley Plaut, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Cassandra Bequary
Adrian Shu-On Chui
Daniel Norton (On Leave)
Ann Okagaito
Carina Vincenti

Viola

Andrew Brown, *Acting Principal*
Emilie Grimes, *Acting Associate Principal*
Katrina Chitty
Matthew Davies (On Leave)
Angela Schneider
Jacob van der Sloot

Cello

Henry Shapard, *Principal*
Janet Steinberg, *Associate Principal*
Zoltan Rozsnyai, *Assistant Principal*
Olivia Blander
Natasha Boyko
Charles Inkman
Luke Kim
Cristian Márkos

Bass

Dylan Palmer, *Principal*
Evan Hulbert, *Associate Principal*
Noah Reitman, *Assistant Principal*
Malcolm Armstrong
David Brown
JWarren Long

Flute

Christie Reside, *Principal*
Chris James, *Assistant Principal*
Rosanne Wieringa

Piccolo

Chris James

Oboe

Roger Cole, *Principal*
Beth Orson, *Assistant Principal*
Karin Walsh

English Horn

Beth Orson

Clarinet

Jeanette Jonquil, *Principal*
Michelle Goddard, *Acting Assistant Principal*

E-flat Clarinet

Michelle Goddard

Bass Clarinet

vacant

Bassoon

Julia Lockhart, *Principal*
Sophie Dansereau, *Assistant Principal*
Gwen Seaton

Contrabassoon

Sophie Dansereau

French Horn

Oliver de Clercq, *Acting Principal*
Andrew Mee, *Acting Associate Principal*
Vacant, *Assistant Principal*
Vacant
David Haskins

Trumpet

Larry Knopp, *Principal*
Marcus Goddard, *Associate Principal*
Vincent Vohradsky

Trombone

Brian Wendel, *Principal*
Andrew Poirier

Bass Trombone

Ilan Morgenstern (On Leave)

Tuba

Peder MacLellan, *Principal*

Timpani

Aaron McDonald, *Principal*

Percussion

Vern Griffiths, *Principal*
Michael Jarrett
Tony Phillips

Harp

vacant

Piano

vacant

Otto Tausk
Music Director

Andrew Crust
Associate Conductor

Bramwell Tovey
Music Director Emeritus

Kazuyoshi Akiyama
Conductor Laureate

Education Staff

Christin Reardon MacLellan, *Director, Education & Community Programs*

Yvanna Mycyk, *Education Programs Coordinator*

Erica Binder, *Student Education Assistant*

Emily Richardson, *Student Education Assistant & VSO SoM Assistant*

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Andrew Crust

VSO Assistant Conductor

Andrew Crust has developed a versatile international career as a conductor of orchestral, opera, ballet and pops programs. Currently serving as the Assistant Conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in Canada, Andrew conducts a large number of subscription, pops, educational and contemporary concerts with the VSO each season. In the 19/20 season Andrew will debut with the Bozeman and Lima Symphonies as a Music Director finalist and begin a relationship with the San Diego Symphony as Cover Conductor. Recent engagements include performances with the Winnipeg Symphony, Memphis Symphony, Hartford Symphony, and l'Orchestre de la Francophonie in Québec. Andrew is equally at ease in the pit, having conducted ballet with Ballet Memphis and the New Ballet Ensemble, and opera with Opera McGill, College Light Opera Company, Boulder Opera Company, and others. As a Pops conductor, Andrew has collaborated with such artists as Rufus Wainwright, Steven Page, Michael Bolton, Cirque de la Symphonie, and the United States Jazz Ambassadors, and will make his film debut conducting Casablanca with the Vancouver Symphony in the 19/20 season.

Andrew served as Assistant Conductor of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra from 2017-2019 where he conducted around forty concerts each season. He stepped in last minute for a successful subscription performance featuring Bernstein's Serenade with violinist Charles Yang. Andrew also served as Conductor of the Memphis Youth Symphony Program. As the Assistant Conductor of the Portland Symphony Orchestra in Maine from 2016-2018, he conducted a variety of concert series, helped coordinate the orchestra's extensive educational programs, and helped lead a program for concertgoers under 40 called "Symphony and Spirits".

Crust was the Assistant Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra of the USA (NYO-USA) in the summers of 2017 and 2018, assisting Michael Tilson Thomas on an Asian tour, as well as Giancarlo Guerrero, Marin Alsop and James Ross at Carnegie Hall and in a side-by-side performance with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He has also served as Cover Conductor of the Kansas City Symphony and Nashville Symphony, Assistant/Cover Conductor of the Boulder Philharmonic and Assistant Conductor of Opera McGill.

Abroad, he has led concerts with the Orchestra Giovanile Italiana in Italy, Hamburger Symphoniker at the Mendelssohn Festival in Germany, the Moravian Philharmonic in the Czech Republic, the Filharmonia "Mihail Jora" of Bacau, Romania, and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Chile in Santiago. In 2017 he was awarded first prize at the Accademia Chigiana by Daniele Gatti, receiving a scholarship and an invitation to guest conduct the Orchestra di Sanremo in Italy. He was a semi-finalist for the Nestlé/Salzburg Festival's Young Conductors Award competition and was selected by members of the Vienna Philharmonic as a winner of the Ansbacher Fellowship, with full access to all rehearsals and performances of the Salzburg Festival. Andrew is dedicated to exploring new ways of bringing the classical music experience into the 21st century through innovative programming and marketing, creating community-oriented and socially-sensitive concert experiences, and utilizing social media and unique venues. Andrew lives in Vancouver and enjoys making and consuming visual art during study breaks.



String Family

The four major instruments in the string family, the violin, the viola, the cello and the double bass, are built the same way. The instruments are made of many pieces of wood which are glued together. The body of the instrument is hollow, thus becoming a resonating box for the sound. Four strings made of animal gut, nylon, or steel are wrapped around pegs at one end of the instrument and attached to a tailpiece at the other. They are stretched tightly across a bridge to produce their assigned pitches.

The **violin** is the soprano voice in the string family. It is held under the chin, resting on the shoulder. The violin has a lovely tone that can be soft and expressive or exciting and brilliant.



The **viola** is the alto voice in the string family. Like the violin, it is held under the chin, resting on the shoulder. Unlike the violin, the viola is slightly larger and is tuned five notes lower. It has a richer and warmer tone quality than the violin but is not as brilliant.



The **cello** is the tenor voice in the string family. While shaped like a violin, the cello is much larger and is held between the player's knees. Because it can produce beautiful sounds from its lowest to its highest notes, it is a popular instrument.



The **double bass** is the largest and lowest instrument of the string family. The double bass has sloping shoulders, instead of rounded shoulders like the other string instruments. This allows the player to have more room to move his or her arms, hands, and fingers in front of the instrument. Because of its size, the player stands or sits on a high stool to play the double bass.



Woodwind Family

The three branches of the woodwind family have different sources of sound. Vibrations begin when air is blown across the top of an instrument, across a single reed, or across two reeds. Reeds are small pieces of cane. A single reed is clamped to a mouthpiece at the top of the instrument and vibrates against the mouthpiece when air is blown between the reed and the mouthpiece. Two reeds together are commonly known as a double reed. The double reed fits into a tube at the top of the instrument and vibrates when air is forced between the two reeds.

Originally made of wood, the **flute** is now made from silver or gold and is about 2 feet in length. It looks like a narrow tube with a row of holes covered by keys along one side. The player blows air across the small hole in the mouthpiece to produce a sound that can be either soft and delicate or bright and piercing.

The **oboe** is similar to the clarinet in many ways. Both are made from wood and have metal keys that can produce many notes rapidly. Unlike the clarinet, the oboe does not have a mouthpiece, but has two reeds tied together. By placing them between one's lips and blowing air through them, the reeds vibrate and produce a sound.

Made from wood, the **clarinet** produces a fluid sound when air is blown between a single reed and the mouthpiece. By pressing metal keys with the fingers of both hands, the player has the ability to play many different notes very quickly.

The **bassoon** is a large double reed instrument with a lower sound than the other woodwind instruments. Its double reed is attached to a small curved tube called a bocal which fits into the bassoon. When the player blows air between the reeds, the vibrating column of air inside the instrument travels over nine feet to the bottom of the instrument, then up to the top where the sound comes out.



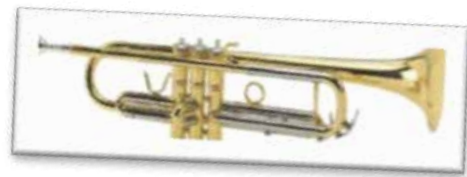
Brass Family

Brass family instruments produce their unique sound by the player buzzing his/her lips while blowing air through a cup- or funnel-shaped mouthpiece. To produce higher or lower pitches, the player adjusts the opening between his/her lips. The mouthpiece connects to a length of brass tubing ending in a bell. The shorter the tubing length, the smaller the instrument, and the higher the sound; the longer the tubing length, the larger the instrument, and the lower the sound. The brass family can trace its ancestry back to herald trumpets, hunting horns, and military bugles. The main instruments of the brass family include the trumpet, horn, trombone, and tuba.

The **french horn** consists of about 12 feet of narrow tubing wound into a circle. The player obtains different notes on the horn with a clear mellow sound by pressing valves with the left hand and by moving the right hand inside of the bell.



The **trumpet** is the highest sounding member of the brass family. The brilliant tone of the trumpet travels through about 6½ feet of tubing bent into an oblong shape. The player presses the three valves in various combinations with the fingers of the right hand to obtain various pitches.



The mouthpiece of the **trombone** is larger than that of the trumpet and gives the instrument a more mellow sound. Instead of valves, the trombone has a slide which changes the length of its approximately 9 feet of tubing to reach different pitches.



Made of about 16 feet of tubing, the **tuba** is the lowest sounding member of the brass family. The tuba has three to five valves and is held upright in the player's lap.



Percussion Family

Percussion instruments are the loud instruments in the back of the orchestra that produce sound when they are struck with another object, usually a drumstick or mallet. There are two types of percussion instruments: definite-pitch instruments make pitches just like the other instruments of the orchestra, while indefinite-pitch instruments make neutral rhythmic sounds.

The **bass drum**, snare drum, and triangle are indefinite-pitch instruments that are hit with a drumstick or a beater.



The **marimba** and xylophone are definite-pitch instruments that are played with yarn-covered or rubber mallets.



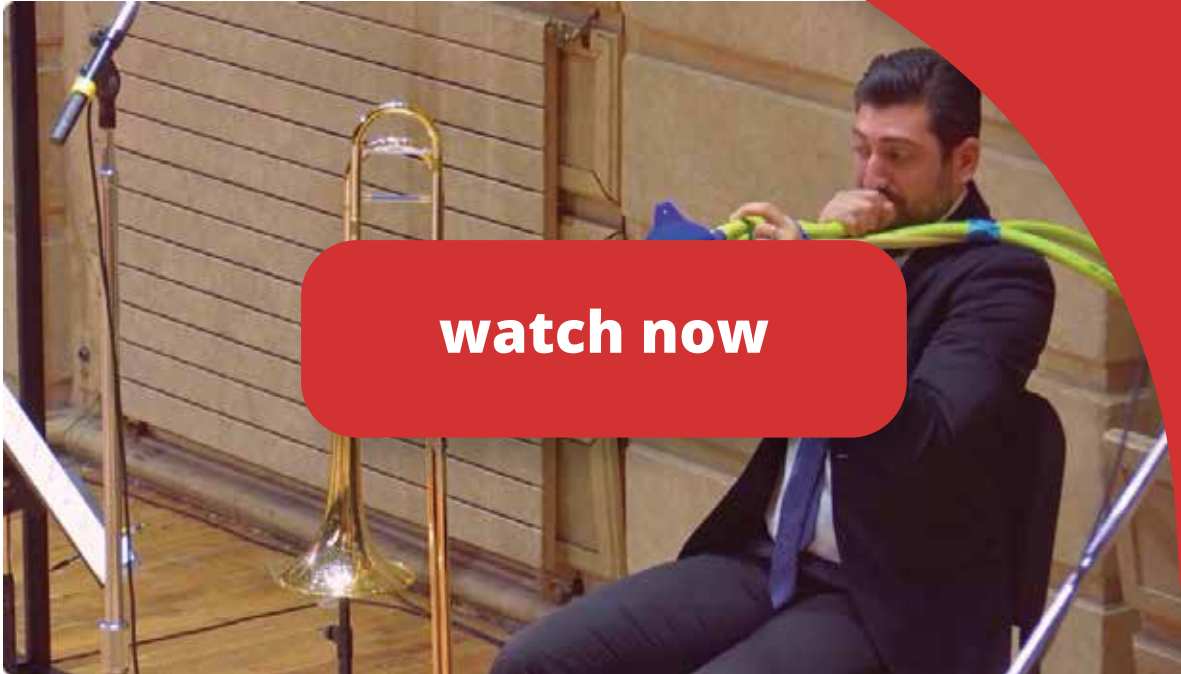
The **timpani** are the most visible instruments in the percussion family, because they are placed on a platform at the back of the stage, in the centre. Timpani are usually played in sets of four, with each drum a different size and pitch. The player uses a pedal to tighten or loosen the skin on the top of the drum to change the pitch.



The tambourine and **cymbals** are also indefinite-pitch instruments, but they do not require a beater to play. The tambourine is struck with the player's right hand, while the cymbals are crashed together.



Teacher Tool Kit



About Compose Yourself!

The activities and resources in this guide are intended to accompany a viewing of the complete 45-minute performance of “Compose Yourself!”, available on **TheConcertHall.ca**. Note that these activities are intended to be completed after watching the concert.

Leading American orchestras, instrumentalists and wind ensembles around the world have performed the music of Chicago-based composer James M. Stephenson, both to critical acclaim and the delight of audiences. The composer is largely self-taught, making his voice truly individual and his life’s work all the more remarkable.

Jim Stephenson’s popular work “Compose Yourself!” (aka Once upon a Symphony) was composed in 2002 for the Naples Philharmonic. It is a 50-minute showcase for symphony orchestra, designed to introduce young audiences to the wonders of the orchestra. Additionally, and uniquely, it engages the audience in the compositional process, resulting in a unique world premiere created each and every performance.

The interactive, educational and entertaining show is designed to introduce the musical instruments and families to children of all ages. It has been performed over 350 times nationally and internationally. Original music that incorporates bottles, hoses, and just plain fun has resulted in thousands of young people laughing and loving the experience of hearing an orchestra, sometimes for the first time.

Activity 1

Curious Ears

Overview

Students will prepare to listen critically to musical components, as a primer for watching the "Compose Yourself!" concert video. Afterwards, students will expand on their preparatory word bank, drawing examples from their experience of watching the "Compose Yourself!" concert video.

Activity 1A

Before you begin the concert video, lead a discussion about sound, including musical sounds and non-musical, and brainstorm words that can be used to describe sound. Are there different types of sound?

- Different sources of sound?
- Different uses of sound?
- How do different sounds make you feel?
- What are some jobs that different sounds do?

Create a list of words that can be used to describe different sounds. Keep track of your list of sound words to use in a later lesson. Challenge the class to come up with 25 words!

Sample List

- Loud
- Shrill
- Slow
- Fluttering
- Heavy
- Bright

Activity 1B

1) After watching the concert video, revisit the describing words from Activity 1. Did you learn or think of any new terms from the video? How can we add to or elaborate on the terms we already have?

2) Ask students to picture an instrument, then using only 3 words, describe either the instrument itself or the sound it makes. The rest of the class must guess which instrument is being described. In pairs or in small groups, have students take turns acting out the different instruments in a game of charades. Try the same game again, imitating instrument sounds instead of acting them.

3) Discuss: what elements of the instrument are easier to show with motions, and which ones with words and sounds?

Activity 2

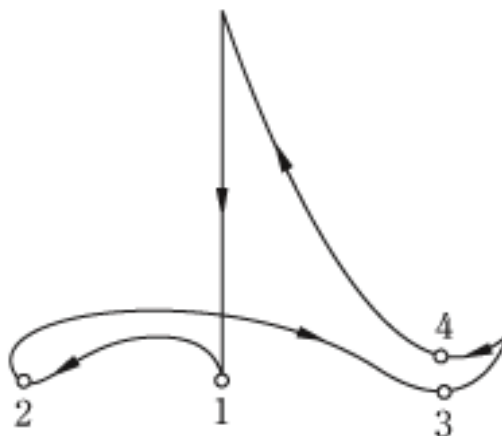
Become a Conductor!

Overview

Students will explore the basic elements of conducting, including how conductors demonstrate beat and emotion.

Activity

- 1) Ask students if they remember what the role of a conductor is in the orchestra. Explain that the conductor is responsible for showing the beat and for communicating things like dynamics and emotion, just by using their gestures.
- 2) Re-watch the finale from "Compose Yourself!" [44:55]. As you do so, have the class stand and move their bodies to the different emotions demonstrated in the music. When they see the conductor, notice what the conductor is doing!
- 3) With the class still standing, demonstrate and teach a simple 4/4 conducting pattern (see diagram below). You may choose to begin with asking the students to simply move their hand up and down in time, then adding the motion in slowly. In 4/4, you begin by moving your hand downwards to the floor, to your left, then to your right, and then upwards to the ceiling.
- 4) Once the class has mastered this pattern, re-watch the finale. This time, students will conduct along AND demonstrate emotion using their gestures. How would you conduct the last big note?



Conducting 4/4 time

Activity 3

Make a Music Monster!

Materials

- Paper and drawing materials

Overview

Students will use the terms they have collected to create a musical monster!

Activity

1) Revisit the terms that you have collected over the last two activities. Then, ask students to each select an instrument that they heard in the video, and three words from the class list to describe it. This first step can be a journaling activity that takes place while the first part of the concert plays in the background, for students' reference.

- What would a creature with these characteristics look like?
- How would your creature get around?
- Is your creature soft or scaly?
- How does your creature make sounds?

Share with the class the following anecdote: VSO Music Director Otto Tausk uses coloured pencils in his sheet music to write colour-coded instructions for different instruments. For example, if the word "softer" is written with a brown colour, it means the brass instruments need to be softer.

- What colour do you associate with your chosen instrument?

2) Now, they will draw a 'musical monster' using their describing words and drawing inspiration from the instrument that they chose. Be creative!



Thank you!

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