



**St. Louis Symphony
Orchestra**

Stéphane Denève, Music Director



Teacher Guide

Education Concert Music Without Boundaries

Wed, Feb 25, 9:30am & 11:00am

Thu, Feb 26, 9:30am & 11:00am

Samuel Hollister, conductor

SLSO education programs
are presented by



HEARST *foundations*



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Concert Overview

What does home sound like to you? Journey through music from around the world – each culture adding its own rhythm, style, and instruments. Along the way, we'll explore new sounds, recognize familiar ones, and celebrate how music connects us all.

Objectives

Students will:

- Develop respect for and understanding of various musical traditions from cultures present in our St. Louis community.
- Understand that music is a human activity: in every culture, humans create music that has unique sounds, for diverse purposes, and to express varied things.
- Be empowered to explore and share the music that is part of their own families, communities, and cultures.

Repertoire

Rafael Hernández Marín, arr. Pépé Gonzalez

Carlos Simon

Reena Esmail

Farshid Etniko, arr. Amy Greenhalgh

Yaoxing Chen

Liu Tian Hua, arr. Amy Greenhalgh

Traditional, arr. Christian Woeher

Bedřich Smetana

[El cumbanchero](#)

[Motherboxx Connection](#)

[Ram Tori Maya](#)

[Nightmare in Heaven](#) (Please note that the title of this piece will be updated for the concert.)

[Zhan Ma Ben Teng \(The Galloping Battle Horses\)](#)

[Beautiful Night](#)

"Uzmite moj život" ("Hold My Life")

[Vltava \(The Moldau\)](#)

Contact Information

The SLSO Education Team is available to answer questions or provide additional suggestions for learning activities.

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For questions about education concert ticketing or invoices, please contact the SLSO Box Office at 314-534-1700 or email educationtickets@slso.org.

Planning Your Visit

Information for planning your field trip to the SLSO is available on the [Planning Your Field Trip](#) webpage.

Arrival and Dismissal

To ensure a successful trip for everyone, it is important that all drivers follow the Education Concert Arrival and Dismissal Procedures found on the [Planning Your Field Trip](#) webpage. Please clearly communicate the expectations laid out in this document with anyone transporting children to the concert.

Accessibility

Submit an [Accommodations and Accessibility Form](#) at least two weeks before the performance to communicate any special needs your students have.

SLSO Education Concerts are inclusive of people with sensory differences. Additional resources are available to anyone who will benefit from them:

- Walk your students through their concert experience with an Education Concert Experience Guide found on the [Planning Your Field Trip](#) webpage.
- Get familiar with orchestral instruments before your Field Trip with [Instrument Playground Online](#).
- If you need additional support for a student while at the concert, please visit the Guest Services Desk in the lobby.

For a full list of available accommodations, please see our [Planning Your Field Trip](#) webpage.

What does home sound like to you?

Description: Students are ethnomusicologists as they search for music in their homes and communities. They'll collect musical examples, analyze them using writing prompts or create videos, and share them with their classmates.

Objectives

Students will:

- Seek out music in their own communities.
- Understand that music has diverse sounds, contexts, and purposes.
- Share the music that is part of their families, communities, and cultures with their classmates.

Standards

Missouri Music Learning Standards

- MU:Re7A.4-8, MU:Re7B.4-8
- MU:Cn11A.4-8

Illinois Music Learning Standards

- MU:Re7.1.4-8
- MU:Cn11.1.4-8

Materials

- "Home Sounds Like..." worksheet (see below) for each student.

Procedures

- Introduce the role of *ethnomusicologist*. *Ethnomusicologists* are people who study music in cultures all over the world. They travel to different places and learn as much as they can about the music of the people that live in that place. They learn to play instruments and they talk to people who create music in order to understand a culture's music. They research the sound of the music, how and why it is created, who plays what role in its creation and performance, what context it is used in, and what it can tell us about the culture that created it.
- In this lesson, the students are going to be ethnomusicologists. They are going to go in search of music that sounds like "home." Home can mean many things. It can be where you live or where your relatives live; it could be your neighborhood or your church or your school; it could be the soccer field or the park where you spend a lot of time. It is a place where you feel that you belong.
- Students should look and listen for music in those places that feel like home. And when they find something that sounds like "home," they will describe it like an ethnomusicologist using the following prompts:
 - Name the music.
 - Context: Where and when do you hear it?
 - Sound: What does the music sound like?
 - Purpose: What else is happening? What are people doing or how do you think they're feeling?
 - Explain why it sounds like "home" to you.
- Discuss some examples with the students. At first, supply all the answers to the prompts. Then encourage students to supply some possible answers. As you do this, you could project an image of the worksheet for students to see.

- Maybe you hear kids at the park or on the school playground jumping rope or playing a clapping game with a song. (Use your own example, or here's one you can use):
 - Name the music you found. *A jump rope song*
 - Describe the music's context: Where and when do you hear it? *A group of kids sang it on the school playground at recess.*
 - Describe the music. What does it sound like? *The kids chant the song, so it doesn't really have a melody. But it has a steady beat. The words of the song were about Cinderella kissing a snake.*
 - Describe the music's purpose. What is happening along with the music? What else are people doing or how do you think it makes them feel? *The kids holding the rope and the kids waiting their turn sang the song while one kid jumped. The sound of the rope hitting the ground was the steady beat for the song. The song has silly lyrics that seemed to make the kids happy. The song ends with the kids counting how many times the jumper jumps before they mess up.*
 - Why does it sound like "home" to you? *The jump rope song sounds like home because I hear music like this a lot on the school playground and in my neighborhood when kids are playing together.*
- Maybe someone in your family plays an instrument.
- Maybe there's a certain song or album or style of music that your family listens to frequently at home or in the car.
- Maybe you hear music at church, at a concert, or at a party.
- Explain details of assignment
 - Distribute the "Home Sounds Like..." worksheets. Point out that the boxes on the worksheet are asking the questions you just talked about with the examples. There's a place to draw a picture if they think a picture would help to describe the music they find. Instruct students to take the worksheets, find some music in their community, and – like an ethnomusicologist – try to understand it and explain it.
 - If resources allow, students can capture a short video of the music they find and talk about it on camera using the writing prompts on the worksheet.
- Once students have completed their worksheets and/or videos, take time in class to allow students to share the music they found with each other, either by reading their worksheets to the class or by viewing each other's videos. Encourage respectful listening as students hear their classmates' presentations.

Assessment

Use the following rubric:

- Student completed the worksheet and/or video, describing
 - Sound: What the music sounds like. (1 point)
 - Context: Where and when it was heard. (1 point)
 - Purpose: What else was happening with the music. (1 point)
 - Why it sounds like home. (1 point).
- Student listened respectfully to classmates' presentations. (1 point)

Name _____

HOME SOUNDS LIKE...

Name the music:

Context: Where and when do you hear it?

Picture

Sound: What does the music sound like?

Purpose: What else is happening? What are people doing or how do you think they are feeling?

Why does it sound like home to you?

Europe to America: The Orchestra Travels Across the Ocean



In 1764, French fur trader Pierre Laclède Liguest, after having received a land grant from the King of France, selected the site of modern-day St. Louis to set up a fur trading post. With assistance from his 13-year-old stepson, Auguste Chouteau, he constructed a village that they named St. Louis for King Louis IX of France. Most of the early settlers in St. Louis were French, but in 1803 France sold St. Louis to the United States of America as part of the Louisiana Purchase. People from Western Europe continued to migrate to the U.S. bringing their musical traditions with them across the Atlantic Ocean. One such tradition was the orchestra. Every time we hear the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, or any American orchestra, we are experiencing first-hand the impact Western European immigrants had on our country.



Pierre Laclède Liguest

The **St. Louis Symphony Orchestra** is the second oldest professional orchestra in the United States! It was founded in 1880.

Reflection Question

- If you were moving to a new country, what would you bring with you? What musical traditions do you or your family have that you would want to continue in your new home?

Comparing Two Pieces of Orchestral Music

Let's compare two pieces of orchestra music, **Bedřich Smetana's *Vltava (The Moldau)*** and **Carlos Simon's *Motherboxx Connection***.

About the Composers and the Music



Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884) was a Czech composer from what is now the Czech Republic. He is known as one of the first composers to create a musical style that showed pride in Czech history, landscapes, and culture.

Vltava (The Moldau), composed in 1874 by Bedřich Smetana, is part of a larger work called *Má vlast* ("My Homeland"). Smetana uses music to paint a picture of the Vltava River flowing through the countryside. You can hear the river starting as small streams, growing wider and stronger, and passing forests, villages, and castles.



Carlos Simon (born 1986) is an American composer from Georgia. His music often tells stories about history, identity, and community.

Motherboxx Connection, composed in 2015 by Carlos Simon, is inspired by a magical device from the Black Kirby comics called the Motherboxx, which can create energy, heal, and connect people. Simon was inspired by the powerful Black heroes in these stories. In the music, he uses fast rhythms, bold sounds, and sudden changes to make the piece feel exciting—almost

like you're stepping right into a superhero adventure.

Listening Activity: Compare and Contrast

Have students work alone or in pairs to make a Venn diagram comparing the two pieces. Depending on the age of the students, you may only want to listen to a small excerpt of each piece. Provide some simple questions to get students thinking as they listen to both pieces. Sample questions might include:

- What instruments or musical sounds do you hear in each piece?
- How do the composers use rhythm, melody, and dynamics (loud/soft) to create a mood?
- How do both pieces tell a story using music?
- How does the music from the 1800s (*Vltava*) sound different from the modern music of 2015 (*Motherboxx Connection*)?
- Which piece feels more peaceful? Which feels more energetic or powerful?

Reflection Question

- Which piece did you enjoy more? Why?

El Cumbanchero: Music of Puerto Rico

Today in St. Louis the Latin American population is one of the largest ethnic groups. People from **Latin America** come from countries in the Caribbean, South America, and Central America.



Puerto Rico is a group of islands in the Caribbean with a culture shaped by many peoples. The Taíno were the first known inhabitants. Then when Spanish explorer Christopher Columbus arrived in 1493, Spain took control of the islands, bringing Spanish settlers and enslaved people from Africa to the islands. Over many years, Taíno, African, and Spanish traditions blended to create the Puerto Rican identity of today.

In 1898, after the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico was taken over by the United States. Today Puerto Rico is a territory of the U.S. and people born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens. However, they still lack some of the basic rights that other U.S. citizens have, such as voting for the president.



Rafael Hernández Marín (1892–1965) was a Puerto Rican musician and songwriter whose music became an important part of Puerto Rican culture. Born in the city of Aguadilla, he learned music by playing in local bands. He played many instruments including the violin, trombone, euphonium, guitar, and piano.

As a young man, he joined a U.S. Army band that traveled to France during World War I and helped introduce jazz to European audiences. Later, he worked and wrote music in the U.S., Cuba, Mexico, and Puerto Rico, creating popular songs in

many different styles, including the well-known piece ***El Cumbanchero***. This piece became so popular that President John F. Kennedy called him “Mr. Cumbanchero.”

Reflection Question

Cumbanchero is a Spanish word that loosely translates to “party animal”. Listen to [Marín’s original composition](#). How would you describe the music?

Ram Tori Maya: Hindustani Music

Indian Americans are the largest foreign-born population in the St. Louis region and the second largest immigrant group in the U.S.



“**Ram Tori Maya**” was composed by Indian American composer **Reena Esmail** and it comes from the Hindustani tradition of northern India. Indian classical music has two main traditions: **Hindustani** (from northern India) and **Carnatic** (from southern India). “**Ram Tori Maya**” is a **bhajan**, which is a devotional song that can be spiritual or about important ideas in the world. Sung in **Hindi**, the song shares a message about following your heart and dedicating yourself to something you love.

Music from both the Hindustani and Carnatic traditions is built on a raag and a taal.

A **raag** is the melodic pattern of a piece. It’s a special set of notes that creates a certain mood or feeling. Learn to sing “**Ram Tori Maya**” with the music and pronunciation guide available on [Carnegie Hall’s website](#).

A **taal** (“clap” in Sanskrit) is a rhythmic pattern, made up of a repeating set of beats. It’s most often played on the tabla. The **tabla** is a pair of hand-played drums from northern India. They have been used for hundreds of years in Hindustani music and are an important part of India’s musical history and traditions. Learn to clap the [Taal](#) in “**Ram Tori Maya**”.



Tabla

An Indian classical style of dance called kathak can be performed along with “**Ram Tori Maya**”. Explore Carnegie Hall’s [Kathak Dance Instruction Video](#).

Sevdalinka: Music of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Today, there are more Bosnians per capita in St. Louis than anywhere else outside of Bosnia.



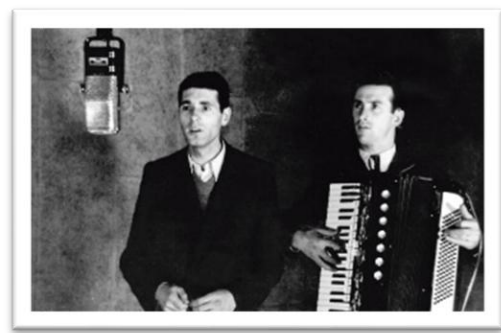
Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country in Southeastern Europe on the Balkan Peninsula. In the mid-1990s, the former Yugoslavia was torn apart by war. Many Bosnians were forced to flee. The Bosnian refugees who came to the United States brought with them their culture and traditions, including Sevdah music.

Sevdalinka or **Sevdah** is a genre of traditional folk music unique to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The songs are emotional and melancholy. They are often about longing for a person, place, or time. Sevdah music is characterized by a slow tempo, the use of minor second intervals, and minor modes.

Traditionally these songs were accompanied by a Turkish stringed instrument called a **saz**. But Sevdah can be accompanied by many different instruments including violin, clarinet, and **accordion**. At the Music Without Boundaries concert, “Uzmite moj život” (“Hold my Life”) will be performed on accordion.



A saz is an instrument with 4 strings that originated in Turkey.

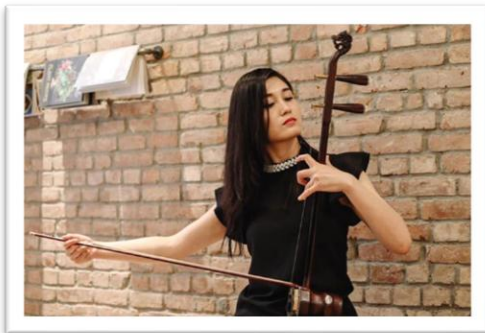


A sevdah performance with an accordion at a radio station in Sarajevo in the 1950s.

Watch this short [video](#) to learn more about the tradition of Sevdah music in Bosnia. And learn more about Bosnian culture with videos and lessons from [Classic 107.3's Musical Ancestries: Bosnia](#).

The Erhu and the Modern Chinese Orchestra

People from **China** and other countries in Asia make up the fastest growing immigrant population in the St. Louis region. Many people from China come to St. Louis for its world-class universities and professional opportunities.



The **erhu** is a bowed Chinese instrument with two strings. It can be traced back to the Tang dynasty (618-907) and today is used in both traditional and contemporary Chinese music. It has two strings that stretch over a long, thin, wooden neck. Its hexagon- or octagon-shaped resonator box is covered in python skin and rests on the player's lap. The erhu is one of a dozen different string instruments used in the **modern Chinese orchestra**.

The modern Chinese orchestra performs Chinese art music. It brings together musical influences from all over Asia as well as Europe. Many pieces that are played by the Chinese orchestra are based on Chinese folk and traditional songs. Like a Western classical orchestra, the Chinese orchestra is led by a conductor. The orchestra's musicians read music from a score and perform at concerts. The Chinese orchestra is made up of four instrument families: plucked strings, bowed strings, woodwinds, and percussion. Most of its instruments are unique to Asia, but the Chinese orchestra can also include cello, double bass, and Western percussion instruments.

Watch this [short video](#) to learn more about the modern Chinese orchestra. And see and hear the erhu in this [short video](#).



A Chinese orchestra

Instrument Families and Categories

Description: Every day we sort things, categorize them, and put them into groups. But there are often multiple ways to sort the same group of things. In this lesson, students categorize instruments in different ways as they encounter the diversity of instruments in the orchestra and around the world.

Objectives

Students will:

- Identify instruments by sight.
- Categorize instruments by orchestral family and by the *Hornbostel-Sachs* categories.
- Design their own system for categorizing instruments.

Standards

Missouri Music Learning Standards

- MU:Cn11A.1-8 – Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Illinois Music Learning Standards

- MU:Cn11.1.1-8 – Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Materials

- [Google slide deck](#)
- [Instrument cards](#) – print, cut, and laminate one set per group of up to four students.

Procedures

- Remove the non-orchestral instruments (with the blue watercolor background) from each deck of instrument cards so that you have decks that contain only the orchestral instruments (with the green watercolor background).
- Divide students into small groups, up to four students per group.
- Distribute a deck of instrument cards (orchestral instruments only) to each small group. Without giving any specific guidelines, ask students to sort the instruments into groups. Give them about 3-4 minutes to discuss in their small group and sort the instruments. If your students have prior knowledge of orchestral instrument families, they will likely sort the instruments into string, woodwind, brass, and percussion families.
- Once groups have sorted their cards, go around the room and ask students to share how they sorted the instruments. Ask them why they sorted them the way they did. If students had not previously learned about orchestral instrument families, introduce that concept now. Go through the decks together and sort the instruments into string, woodwinds, brass, and percussion families.
- Then ask the students to shuffle their decks and come up with a different way to sort the instruments. Give them 3-4 minutes to discuss and sort in their small groups. Then ask them to share how they sorted their instruments this time.

- Explain to students that the orchestral instrument families they've learned are only one way to sort instruments. And while it is a great way to sort the *instruments of the orchestra*, it is not the only way to sort instruments.
- Introduce the *Hornbostel-Sachs* categories of musical instruments. These are the categories that *ethnomusicologists* use when categorizing instruments. *Ethnomusicologists* are people who study music in cultures all over the world. Their system of categorization includes four main categories of instruments, according to what vibrates to create sound on the instrument:
 - *Aerophones*: instruments that produce sound when air vibrates
 - *Chordophones*: instruments that produce sound when a string vibrates
 - *Membranophones*: instruments that produce sound when a membrane or skin vibrates
 - *Idiophones*: instruments that produce sound when the body of the whole instrument vibrates
 - *There is a fifth category in the Hornbostel-Sachs system, Electrophones: instruments in which sound is generated by electrical means. This category has not been included here since it does not apply to traditional orchestral instruments.*
- Ask students to compare these categories to the instrument families. Help them see that aerophones include both brass and woodwind instruments. And percussion instruments include both membranophones and idiophones.
- With these category names displayed (using the Google slide deck or written on a white board), ask students to sort their instrument cards into these categories.

Extension

- Divide students into small groups again and distribute a deck of instrument cards (orchestral instruments only) to each small group.
- Review orchestral instrument families and the *Hornbostel-Sachs* categories.
- Use the Google slide deck to explore a few non-Western instruments (with the blue watercolor background). Observe the physical properties of the instruments and listen to how they sound. With each instrument you explore, ask students to find a Western orchestral instrument in their deck that has something in common with the new instrument and take time to discuss the similarities and differences they find. You don't need to explore all the instruments on the Google slide deck in one class period. You can return to this activity again and again.
- Once students have been introduced to a few non-Western instruments, distribute the rest of the instrument decks (the non-orchestral instruments with blue watercolor backgrounds), and have students add these instrument cards to their orchestral instruments deck.
- Now that the students have a bigger deck to work with, ask students first to sort the instrument cards according to the *Hornbostel-Sachs*

Another way to sort instruments!

In China, instruments are traditionally categorized by the main material that they're made of:

Metal
Silk (strings)
Gourds
Leather or animal hides
Stone
Bamboo
Clay or earth
Wood

categories, and then to find different ways to sort their instruments and share their ideas with the class.

- Even after this activity has been completed, continue to explore the instruments in the Google slide deck and discuss different ways to categorize them. As other instruments come up in the music you use in class or in conversations with students, add those instruments to their decks by writing them on blank cards.

Assessment

Use the following rubric:

- Student engaged with classmates and with the materials as they sorted the instrument cards. (1 point)
- Student sought creative solutions when asked to sort instrument cards. (1 point)
- Student correctly sorted instrument cards into orchestral instrument families. (1 point)
- Student identified what vibrates to create sound on various instruments, and therefore correctly sorted instrument cards into *Hornbostel-Sachs* categories. (1 point)
- Student demonstrated curiosity and respect when exploring instruments from other cultures. (1 point)

Continue exploring in the SLSO Learning Lab!

In the [Learning Lab Activity Gallery](#) you will find:

An [Orchestra Seating Chart](#), where students can discover where each instrument family is situated on stage at the concert

The [Instrument Playground Online](#), where you'll hear from SLSO musicians about their amazing instruments

The [Stand Up Symphony](#) lesson plan, where young students can create musician paper dolls to arrange on an orchestra seating chart

For Parents – SLSO Concerts for Kids & Concerts for Teens

Concerts for Kids and Concerts for Teens offer a mix of fun thematic orchestral music to engage and entertain children of all ages and their families. These short concerts are one-of-a-kind live musical experiences where you'll create magical memories together.

Visit slo.org/family or call 314-534-1700 for more information.

All concerts are performed at Powell Hall at the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center.



Music Without Boundaries

Sun, Mar 1, 3:00pm

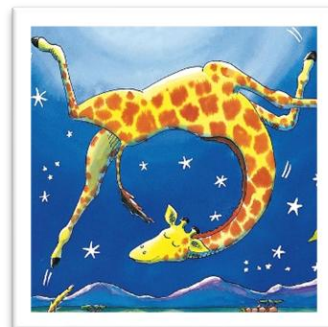
What does home sound like to you? Music Without Boundaries invites you to discover new sounds and celebrate the ways music connects us all. *Most enjoyed by ages 6 and up.*



Cinematic Symphony

Sun, Apr 26, 3:00pm

The SLSO brings your favorite movie scores to life, revealing the art of creating heart-pounding moments in this concert designed for teens. *Most enjoyed by ages 12 and up.*



Giraffes Can't Dance

Sat, May 16, 10:15am and 12:00pm

Learn and grow with Gerald the Giraffe as he finds music that inspires him in this interactive performance perfect for little listeners with big imaginations. *Most enjoyed by ages 3-6.*