

The Florida Orchestra Youth Concerts:

# Our American Music

A Resource Guide for Teachers

Wesley Chapel – October 28, 2015 | 10:30 am & 12 pm

River Ridge – November 18, 2015 | 10:30 am & 12 pm

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## Welcome!

We are delighted to have you and your students join The Florida Orchestra for *Our American Music!* When we think of classical, orchestral music, composers like Beethoven, Mozart, and Brahms are often the first to come to mind. These German composers from hundreds of years ago are definitely some of the greats! But what about music that was written across the Atlantic in our own nation? The beauty of orchestral music is that it is not confined to any one time period or place. In *Our American Music*, we'll take a listen to some of the most celebrated American composers and explore what their music has to say about our great country.

Thank you for bringing your students and for giving them the opportunity to experience a live orchestral concert. Please take some time to prepare your students using this guide; the more they know, the more they'll enjoy this concert!

Musically,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Danielle Rossbach'.

Danielle Rossbach

Community Engagement Manager

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## Concert Program – Our American Music

Liberty Fanfare . . . . .	John Williams (b. 1932)
Symphonette No. 2. . . . . II. Pavane: Allegretto	Morton Gould (1913 -1996)
Javelin. . . . .	Michael Torke (b. 1961)
Grand Canyon Suite: On the Trail. . . . .	Ferde Grofé (1893-1881)
Symphony No. 2, Op. 30. . . . . III. Allegro con brio	Howard Hanson (1896-1981)

## About the Conductor – Stuart Malina

In addition to overseeing The Florida Orchestra’s two Coffee Concert series and serving as the orchestra’s principal guest conductor, Tony award winner Stuart Malina has served as the music director and conductor of the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra since 2000. He was previously music director of the Greensboro Symphony Orchestra and associate conductor of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra. He has performed with the orchestras of Hong Kong, Naples, New Mexico, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, and Detroit, the Chautauqua Institution Orchestra, as well as the Sarasota Music Festival and Eastern Music Festival, where he conducted the world premiere of Billy Joel’s *Symphonic Fantasies for Piano and Orchestra*. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2007, conducting the New York Pops in an all-Gershwin tribute.


An accomplished pianist, Malina has impressive credits as soloist and chamber musician. Recent activities include performances for the Market Square Concert series and collaborating with the Fry Street Quartet, the Enzo Quartet, the Dorian Wind Quintet, and oboist Gerard Reuter. As a composer and arranger, Malina has created dozens of orchestral works.

On Broadway, he won a Tony award for orchestration with Billy Joel for the musical *Movin’ Out* and has served as associate conductor of the national touring company of *West Side Story* and conductor of the Charleston production of *Porgy and Bess*.



# Preparing for the Concert

## Listening Study

- Play excerpts from the concert repertoire for classroom listening. Throughout the study guide, you may click on these icons to hear  music clips:
- You may consider having your students keep a listening journal, noting what instruments they hear, what musical concepts are evident, how the music makes them feel, etc.
- Challenge students to remember the different pieces and identify them by their titles after several hearings. *When music has become familiar through recordings, it becomes even more thrilling to hear it live, played by a large symphony orchestra.*

## Instrument Study

- Begin discussion of the different orchestral instruments with one that your students already play, or perhaps would like to play.
- Invite them to share what they know about that instrument: *To what family does it belong (brass, woodwinds, percussion, strings)? How does it make its sound?*
- Encourage students to watch and listen for their favorite instrument at the concert and see where the respective player(s) sit.



# The Composers and Works

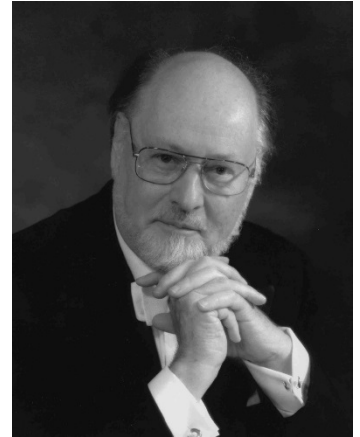
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## John Williams (b. 1932)



Liberty Fanfare (1986)

**About John Williams:** Born in 1932 just outside of New York City, Williams grew up listening to a lot of jazz: his father was a jazz percussionist. After studying composition and piano at UCLA and The Juilliard School, Williams worked as a jazz pianist in studios throughout New York City. During the 1960s, he wrote music for many television programs and won two Emmy awards for his work. (Did you know he wrote the NBC theme?). While Williams is also a conductor, he is known as perhaps the most well-renowned writer of music for the screen. He has written scores for *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones*, *Schindler's List*, and *Harry Potter*, just to name a few.




**About the Music:** To celebrate the centennial, or 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, of the Statue of Liberty, John Williams was commissioned to composed a fanfare for July 4, 1986. The piece opens with a brassy fanfare including sentimental ringing of chimes. This first section was written to stand alone as the theme for the ABC 4<sup>th</sup> of July broadcasts. The piece continues in a very patriotic manner with the full orchestra with interspersed brass calls, ending with celebratory cymbal crashes.

### Activity Idea:

- Explain the definition of a fanfare: a short ceremonial tune or flourish played on brass instruments, typically to introduce something or someone important.
- Ask your students to share where they have experienced a patriotic fanfare, and what sorts of musical instruments and elements make it patriotic.
- Have your students listen to John William's Liberty Fanfare, thinking about the specific musical choices Williams made to give the piece a patriotic flare. After listening, discuss the instruments, and what they convey (Trumpet call, chimes as bells, drums and flute reminiscing revolutionary fife and drum).
- While listening again, have students write or draw how the piece makes them feel about America.

## Morton Gould (1913 -1996)

 Symphonette No. 2 (1938)  
II. Pavane: Allegretto

**About Gould:** Morton Gould was born in Richmond, New York in 1913, to working-class, immigrant parents. He was a child prodigy: by the age of six, he was composing; by sixteen, he'd presented a concert in New York City; and by twenty-one, he was conducting radio orchestras. Throughout his lifetime, Gould conducted all of the major American orchestras, and continued composing, winning a Grammy and Pulitzer Prize for his music. He was equally comfortable with big band charts, orchestral pops, traditional classical works, avant-garde, and popular music. These influences can be heard in what is quite a large repertory of works, including two Broadway musicals, three ballets, and several Hollywood film scores.



**About the Music:** This jazzy movement from a short symphony, or “symphonette,” is in ABA form and begins with a muted trumpet solo over a slow, bouncy bassoon. The flute interjects fluidly and later adds its own melody. In the middle ‘B’ section, the oboe and bassoon play over the strings. The trumpet is added, and then more brass to reach the climax of the movement. The opening trumpet tune returns, led by the flute. We then hear a brassy section which leads to the single muted trumpet’s melody, signaling the end of the piece.

**Think about it:** What makes this movement sound jazzy? What instruments are present? What sorts of ornamentation and rhythm add to the feel?

For interactive online games teaching about jazz, visit [PBS LearningMedia site](#).



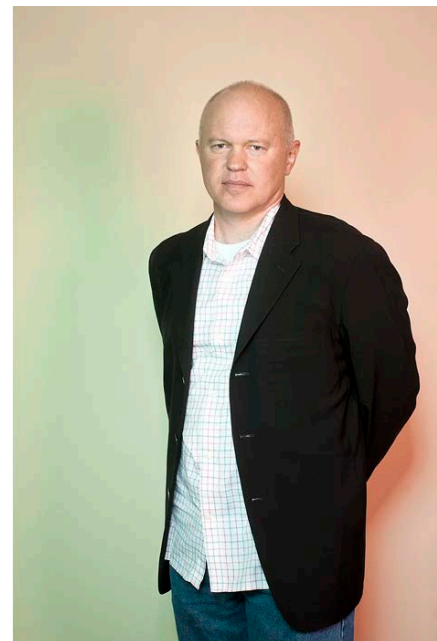
## Michael Torke (b. 1961)



**About Torke:** Composer Michael Torke (TOR-kee) is known for his inventive compositions and cheerful, lively music. He was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and moved to the East coast to study at the Eastman School of Music and Yale University. He is known as a “post-minimal” composer, taking ideas from minimalist music like a steady pulse and repetition. A synesthete (someone with synesthesia), Michael Torke has written many pieces of music to describe colors including *Bright Blue Music* and *Ecstatic Orange*. Torke also likes to incorporate popular genres, such as rock and pop, into his music. In addition to writing for symphony orchestras, Torke writes works for ballet and has two upcoming pieces for the Milwaukee Ballet.

**About the Music:** Javelin was commissioned for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta in honor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As Michael was creating the piece, he wanted it to virtuosically showcase the orchestra, use triads throughout the score, and be thematic. What emerged was a piece that, as Torke put it, “evoke[d] the generally uplifting, sometime courageous, yet playful spirit” of the Olympics.

Olympic athlete throwing the javelin



Composer Michael Torke

## Ferde Grofé (1892-1972)


### Grand Canyon Suite: On the Trail (1931)

**About the Composer:** Grofé, like Williams, had a lot to do with jazz. Unlike Williams who learned jazz from those before him, Grofé helped to develop the genre of big band music through his compositional style, or the way he wrote music. Grofé played viola with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the early 1900s but was also active with the jazz legend Paul Whiteman's orchestra. He arranged Whiteman's greatest hits, helping to establish the golden age of jazz in the 1920s. One of Grofé's most famous arrangements is George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, which was first performed with Paul Whiteman's orchestra.

**About the Music:** Ferde Grofé wrote his own original works in addition to his arrangements of other people's music. The piece for which he became most famous is his Grand Canyon Suite, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, "On the Trail," became a jazz standard. Grofé was inspired by his visit to the Grand Canyon to write this music, and it paints a very vivid picture of cowboy and a burro walking down into the canyon. The music opens dramatically, and we hear a virtuosic violin cadenza, or solo for violin. From there, the oboe plays the main theme in 6/8, a sort of melody with a "clip-clop" rhythm, over the strings and percussion:



  
Clip - clop Clip - clop Clip - clop on the trail Clip - clop Clip - clop Clip - clop on the trail

  
Clip - clop on the trail Clip - clop on the trail, on the trail, on the trail, on the trail, on the trail.


This rhythmic melody serves as the A section in what is essentially a basic rondo form. Other sections include references to a donkey braying (B), a calm waterfall with flutes, horns, and murmuring strings (C), and a music box playing inside a cabin (D).

### Activity:

- Break up the above rhythm and have students learn each measure by clapping and/or saying the rhythm. Divide the students into teams, giving each team the 8 measures above as individual pieces. As students listen to the piece, have a competition to see which team can most quickly arrange the measures in the correct order.



## Howard Hanson (1896-1981)

 Symphony No. 2, Op. 30, “Romantic” (1930)  
III. Allegro con brio

**About Hanson:** Although you may not have heard much of Howard Hanson’s music, he was one of the first composers to gain reputation as a truly American composer. Born in Wahoo, Nebraska to Swedish parents, Hanson studied music with his mother, at Luther College, and later at the Institute for Musical Arts (which would become the Juilliard School) and Northwestern University. After graduating, Hanson began teaching at the College of the Pacific in California, while continuing to write music. In 1921, he was the first recipient of the Prix de Rome for *The California Forest Play* and *Before the Dawn*, a prestigious prize allowing him to study in Italy. When he returned to the states in 1924, he was sought after to lead the Eastman School of Music. Hanson made his career at Eastman, where he directed the school for 40 years and continued to compose, winning many awards including the Pulitzer Prize for his *Symphony No. 4*.

**About the Music:** In a program note for the recording of Howard Hanson’s “Romantic” Symphony with Gerard Schwartz and the Seattle Symphony, Hanson wrote, “Much contemporary music seems to me to be showing a tendency to become entirely too cerebral. I do not believe that music is primarily a matter of the intellect, but rather a manifestation of the emotions. I have, therefore, aimed in this Symphony to create a work that was young in spirit, lyrical and romantic in temperament, and simple and direct in expression.” In a time when music was atonal and experimental, Hanson continued writing in a very romantic, lyrical style. Simply put, Hanson’s music touches the heart rather than the brain.



## At the Concert

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- Make sure to use the restrooms before the concert. Ushers are available for guidance to the nearest restrooms in the lobby.
- Please note that no flash photography is allowed at the concert. Also, cell phones, alarms on your watch, or anything else that makes noise should be turned to silent. *The musicians focus on the music and playing their instruments because they want the audience to have their full attention and their best playing—in return, you should give your full attention to the orchestra.*
- Upon entering the hall, please speak quietly. When the lights dim, all whispering should stop. The concertmaster – the first violinist – is about to enter to tune the orchestra, and the conductor will follow shortly behind him or her.
- Listen quietly and carefully. Use your eyes to watch the conductor and how the musicians make music together. Try to figure out what the conductor is trying to tell the musicians with his hands and his gestures.
- Applaud! When the concertmaster or conductor enters the stage, after each piece, and at the end of the concert, the audience claps to say “thank you” for the performance. The conductor bows and/or invites the musicians to stand up and turn towards the audiences to say “you’re welcome” and “thank you for listening.” If you really like what you heard, you can shout “BRAVO!,” which means “GREAT JOB!” in Italian!
- After the concert, talk to others about it. *What did you like? What was exciting? How did the music make you feel?* Everyone has different feelings about a piece of music—you won’t always like the same things or feel the same way as others who heard the performance, which is part of what makes it so fun!

We’d love to hear from you! Please send any reflections or thank you notes to the address below:

## Contact Information

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For questions about this program or other Florida Orchestra events, please contact

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