



OTTAWA POPS ORCHESTRA  
ORCHESTRE POP D'OTTAWA

# THE MUSIC OF **STAR WARS**

## **Teachers' Preparation Guide**

**Grades 4 - 12**

**December 21, 2018  
12:30PM**





OTTAWA POPS ORCHESTRA  
ORCHESTRE POP D'OTTAWA

Ottawa Pops Orchestra

info@ottawapopsorchestra.ca

## President's Message

As President of the Board of Directors, I'm thrilled to welcome you to a new season with the Ottawa Pops Orchestra (OPO). Our second year in operations will be filled with magical music, family gatherings, and many nights to remember. Our four concerts this year are entitled *Trick or Toccata*, *The Music of Star Wars*, *Storytime at the Symphony*, and *Disney: Around the World*.

This year we're proud and excited to introduce two new initiatives to encourage young musicians to get involved in music. The first is the instalment of the Orchestral Development Bursary, which is awarded to young musicians in the orchestra who demonstrate excellence and aims to support those musicians as they gain experience and confidence performing in an orchestra.

The second initiative involves you – teachers and students alike. We're happy to be able to open our dress rehearsals to local schools this year so students can experience what a real orchestra does, as well as listen to the concert. We hope to inspire the next generation of orchestral musicians through music and our unique interactive experiences.

In this guide you will receive information about OPO, as well as background information about what a pops orchestra is, and how it differs from a regular orchestra. There will be program notes and fun facts about each of the pieces in this matinee, as well as suggested listening activities. The activities are linked to the Ontario Curriculum for the Arts and are suitable for students in Grade 4-12. They can be easily adapted to suit your students depending on their previous skills and comfort level.

I hope you enjoy the show.

**Felicia Persaud**  
President of the Board  
Ottawa Pops Orchestra



**Looking for more information?** The Ottawa Pops Orchestra is on social media and can be reached by email at [info@ottawapopsorchestra.ca](mailto:info@ottawapopsorchestra.ca)



Ottawa Pops Orchestra



@ottawapops



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## About the Ottawa Pops Orchestra

The Ottawa Pops Orchestra (OPO) was founded in the spring of 2017 by a collective of young musicians. Our mission is to enrich and inspire the community by performing orchestral music that extends past the classical norm. Under the joint direction of Matthew Larkin and Jonathan Dagenais, the OPO strives to redefine the orchestral experience for today's audiences.

The OPO is committed to engage with the community and provide education opportunities to young musicians and students in the Ottawa-Gatineau Region. In the 2018-2019 season, we're proud to offer local schools the opportunity to come to student matinees to see the orchestra in action.

An orchestra is a large group of musicians that all work together while directed by a conductor. They play a wide variety of instruments that are grouped into four sections: woodwinds, brass, strings, and percussion. Orchestras can come in many different sizes; the Ottawa Pops Orchestra is a medium sized orchestra with approximately 60 musicians.

Something that makes the Ottawa Pops Orchestra special is the kind of music we play and how we perform it. We like to perform music from popular culture, which is why we include "pops" in our name! Pops shows do include some classical music, but also includes a lot of film scores, video game soundtracks, Broadway shows and much more. Pops orchestras get to have a lot of creativity in the types of music they get to play. Here is a picture of us performing music from Harry Potter last spring – not many orchestras get to have as much fun with creative lighting! That's one of the ways that we stand out from other orchestras.





## About the Production

*The Music of Star Wars* celebrates the musical legacy of John Williams and his contributions to one of the most enduring film franchises of all time. Taking music directly from the films' soundtracks, the show has minimal lighting effects to showcase the incredible music even more. At the student matinee, we will perform a condensed version of the show we have prepared for the rest of the concert series, making it a unique performance just for you.

## Link to the Ontario Curriculum

The Ontario Curriculum, Grade 1-8: The Arts, 2009, The Ontario Curriculum, Grade 9-10: The Arts, 2010, and The Ontario Curriculum, Grade 11-12: The Arts, 2010, all share the same three core expectations of students studying music. Those expectations are:

1. **Creating and Performing:** apply the creative process to create and perform music for a variety of purposes, using the elements and techniques of music;
2. **Reflecting, Responding, and Analysing:** apply the critical analysis process to communicate their feelings, ideas, and understandings in response to a variety of music and musical experiences;
3. **Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts / Foundations:** demonstrate an understanding of a variety of musical genres and styles from the past and present, and their sociocultural and historical contexts.

The Ottawa Pops Orchestra's goal in opening our dress rehearsal to schools is to provide an opportunity for musicians to model ways that the arts extend out to the Ottawa-Gatineau community. By seeing a live performance by a local arts organization, students will be able to connect musical concepts to their community and world around them. They may also feel inspired to learn or practice an instrument and may enjoy performing these same pieces in class to reflect their experiences after the concert.

The Teachers' Guide is designed to give students an understanding of the history of each piece they're listening to. By encouraging students to connect the performances with the intended narratives of the music, students will be able to engage in **The Critical Analysis Process**. Listening activities are provided that can guide students into a deeper understanding of the music being presented by connecting what they are hearing with the musical elements they learn in class.



## How to Write a Film Score

John Williams, Michael Giacchino, and other film composers use similar techniques when composing.

### Watching the Film:

The first step is always to watch the film! Both Williams and Giacchino have a method of watching the final cut, by marking out exact time cues, what emotions they feel are needed in each scene, and descriptions of the characters onscreen. After watching the movie once, they both have a good idea of what kind of music is needed for each scene, and they can begin planning their compositions.

### Getting Started:

Now it's time to write. Neither composer writes their music for a full orchestra right off the bat, but rather for piano. This makes it easier for them to test out melodies and harmonies, and helps speed up the writing process. It takes a long time to create a score for a film – most soundtracks take about a year! John Williams has said that he averages about 2 minutes of music every day – and that's after a full day's work. The concert you'll see is 60 minutes long, so that means that it probably took about 180 days to write. That's almost 6 months!

### From Piano to Orchestra:

After writing the soundtrack for piano and transferring all those melodies onto paper or into a computer program, it's time for orchestration. This means splitting the piano part apart to suit a full orchestra, deciding when it's time for the trumpets or the strings to have the melody, and how to include effects from percussion. The composer needs to consider not only what instruments sound best together, but also what each tone colour typically symbolizes. For example, trombones usually sound dark or evil, so they typically play music for villains. Clarinets can sound melancholic or nostalgic, so they often have solos during quiet, sombre moments.

### Recording:

It's time to distribute the parts to the recording musicians and start rehearsals! For something as high profile as Star Wars, all the musicians' contracts are typed with code names so there can be no leaks.

For some musicians, they don't realize they're doing a Star Wars film until the first rehearsal!

The composer will usually be at rehearsals, adjusting the pieces and giving advice to the musicians. With our two composers, they both conduct the orchestra themselves during rehearsals and recordings.

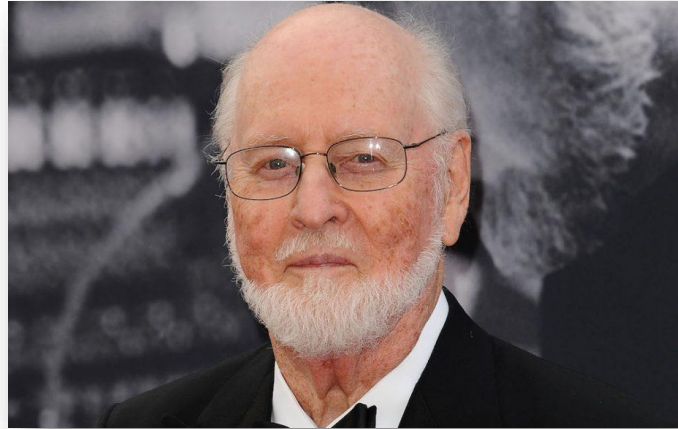
### Putting it all Together:

Finally, the recordings are done, and the music can be synched to the film. If the composer has done well, the movie will be more emotional and exciting with the addition of the soundtrack!



## The Composers

**John Williams** is one of the most famous film composers alive, having written music not only for Star Wars, but also Harry Potter, Indiana Jones, Jaws, ET, and countless other films. He conducts the Boston Pops Orchestra frequently as well as other major orchestras around the world, and has written more classical music in the forms of symphonies and concerti.



**Michael Giacchino** only wrote the music for one Star Wars film: Rogue One, in 2016. While most of the music being performed in the Student Matinee is by John Williams, there are a few pieces from Rogue One. While he only wrote on Star Wars film, he did compose for Star Trek, Planet of the Apes, and The Incredibles, to name a few. To make his composition for Rogue One even more impressive, he wrote the whole score in four and a half weeks, when most composers will have a year to do a project like that!





## Explore the Music: Imperial March

Two of the most famous themes from the Star Wars saga are *Imperial March*, and the *Main Theme*. In this section, we've broken down *Imperial March* to show how the Musical Elements make it so powerful, as well as show ways that the theme evolves throughout the series to enhance the narrative. We've also created a worksheet for *Main Theme* so students can explore that theme as well. All images of the score are from Frank Lehman's incredible anthology, which can be found here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xJ0jj-mLfOPUCtcAm\\_HDGIkFwvHL5gbX/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xJ0jj-mLfOPUCtcAm_HDGIkFwvHL5gbX/view)

### What is a *leitmotif*?

A *leitmotif* is a melody that is related to a character, theme, or emotion. They were first used by 19<sup>th</sup> century opera composer Richard Wagner, who used them in his huge operas that would last for hours! They helped the audience keep track of all the characters and events that were going on. You may recognize his *Ride of the Valkyries* – that melody, or motif, represents a group of warrior women called the Valkyries, and you can hear it in the opera every time they are acting onstage. Even now, *Ride of the Valkyries* has become synonymous with battle, glory, and valour, and it's played over and over in other film scores.

### What does that have to do with *Star Wars*?

John Williams is the king of using leitmotifs in film scores, and he uses them like crazy in the *Star Wars* saga! That's why the soundtrack is so memorable. We bet that you could sing a few melodies from *Star Wars* without even trying right now!

One of the most famous leitmotifs in *Star Wars* is *The Imperial March*, which represents Darth Vader. Listen to it now so you remember what it sounds like: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bzWSJG93P8>

Every time you see Darth Vader onscreen, there's a pretty good chance you'll hear this melody!







### But what makes this leitmotif work so well?

Let's look at *The Musical Elements* to find out.

1. **Tempo:** The tempo, or speed, of *Imperial March* is, just like it says in the title, a march. Try walking around the classroom in time – it's probably pretty comfortable to march to this music! Since marches are traditionally used in a military context, the tempo alone makes us think of armies and war.
2. **Meter:** The meter supports the militaristic feeling of the piece. Can you figure out what the meter of the piece is? Why is it so easy to walk to?
3. **Pitch:** Listen to the very first notes of the piece. Are they low or high? What about the melody? Typically the melody is the highest pitch of a piece, which helps it stand out. Is that the case here?
4. **Melody:** The melody of *Imperial March* is instantly recognizable! Notice how the melody has two separate ideas that share the same rhythm as each other. They also have the same repeated notes at the beginning, and end with the same three notes.
5. **Harmony:** Can you hear if *Imperial March* is in a major or minor key? Why do you think the composer chose that kind of harmony?
6. **Dynamics:** *Imperial March* is loud! That makes it sound powerful and angry, just like Darth Vader.
7. **Timbre:** Timbre is tricky to notice, but the easiest way is to think of the types of instruments that are playing. Trumpets play the melody for most of the piece because they are bright, bold sounding instruments that grab your attention really easily. What other instruments can you hear? What do they make you think of?
8. **Texture:** Texture describes how many types of instruments are playing at once. It can be easier to think of texture as layers of music. The first layer is the triplet pattern that you hear at the very beginning. The next layer is the melody, played by the trumpets. Then, when the melody repeats, there's another layer added to support the melody. Listen carefully and see if you can hear all of these layers!
9. **Form:** The form describes the "big picture" of the piece. Usually pieces like this will have a loud section, and soft section, and then the same loud section again. This is called an A-B-A form. See if you can hear when the sections change. If you listen carefully, can you even hear the little transitions between sections?
10. **Mood:** This is one of the most important elements to consider for film music. The soundtrack can enhance or destroy the mood of the scene. In this case, what do you think the mood of *Imperial March* is? What musical elements support the mood?



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## About the Conductor:

Jonathan Dagenais holds a Masters degree in Conducting from McGill University and a Bachelor's degree in Composition from the Université de Montréal. He conducts many ensembles in the Montreal area, including the Orchestre à Vents Non Identifié (OVNI), the McGill Wind Orchestra, the Montreal Pop Symphony Orchestra (OSPM), the Cercle Philharmonique de Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, and the Orchestre de jeux vidéo - OJV (Montreal Video Game Orchestra). Mr. Dagenais is regularly selected to adjudicate and/or give clinics at more than 20 North American music contests and festivals. Moreover, he is the artistic director of the Quebec MusicFest since 2017. Every year, he is hired by Canadian summer music camps to conduct orchestras, bands and chamber music groups. He has been a guest conductor for many Canadian honour bands and, most notably, Jonathan was appointed as the conductor of the National Youth Band of Canada (NYB) for the 2013 edition in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, it being the most prestigious honor band in the country. He is also the appointed conductor/clinician/educator for the company Twigg Musique in Quebec and a Yamaha Canada Master Educational Artist. Mr. Dagenais is a guest teacher at McGill University.

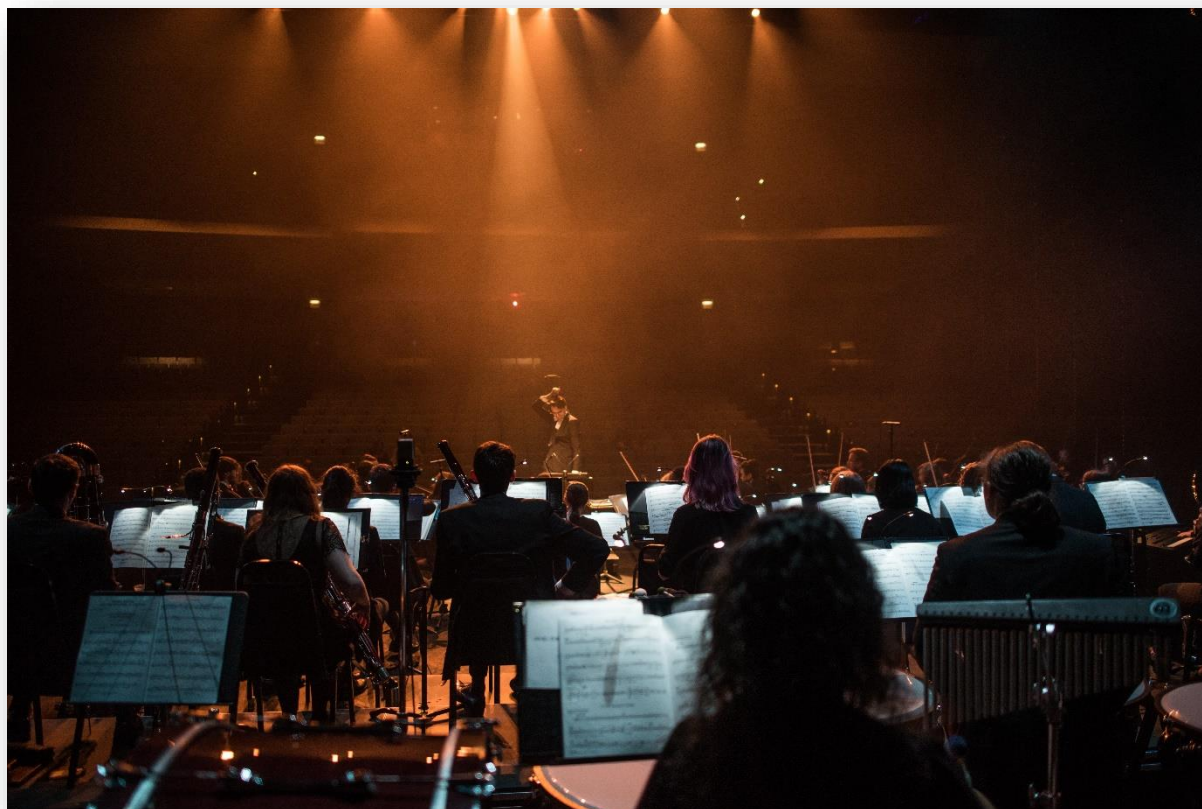




## Before You Arrive

We know that many students will be watching a live orchestra for the first time at one of these rehearsals, and we also know that not everyone has the opportunity to see an orchestra perform on a regular basis. Here is some information to give students before their arrival so they will know what to expect:

- Orchestras can be both very quiet and very loud and this can change very quickly, so be aware that there may be dramatic changes
- You should be as quiet as possible while the orchestra is playing and when the conductor is speaking so the orchestra can rehearse well. It is okay to ask questions to your teacher, but please be discreet.
- The theatre is often dark when the orchestra is playing, but the lights will turn back on at the end of the performance. The lights may change a bit during the performance – this is our first time performing the music and there might be a few small problems we need to fix!
- There is no dress code beyond what you would normally wear at school. The musicians will be dressed up like they would for a regular concert, but we don't expect our audience to dress up as well.
- If it's okay with your teacher to have your phone out, then you are welcome to take pictures and videos, just keep your sound and flash off so you don't disturb the musicians or the people around you.





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## The Sections of the Orchestra

There are four main sections, or types of instruments, in an orchestra.

The first section is the **string section**, which sit at the very front of the orchestra. They are the violins, violas, cellos, and double basses. They make a sound by dragging a bow made of horse hair across the strings of their instrument. They can also play *pizzicato* which is when they pluck the strings with their fingers. When the strings vibrate, they make a sound!



Next is the **woodwind section**, which sits in the middle of the orchestra. These include the flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons. Their instruments all work slightly differently from each other because they all use a different number of reeds (or none for the flute!), but they are related because their sound depends on the air they blow into their instrument. When the vibrating air travels through the instrument, it makes a sound.







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The third section of the orchestra is the **brass section**, made of trumpets, trombones, tubas, and French horns. They sit in different places depending on what the conductor wants, but they're usually at the back or off to the sides because they're so loud! That's also why there aren't very many of them compared to the string players – brass instruments can be extremely loud, so you don't need very many to have a powerful sound.



Finally, the **percussion section** is at the very back of the orchestra. They have many different instruments to play like the snare drums, timpani, xylophone, chimes, and sometimes they even get to play weird instruments like a slide whistle or garbage cans! Although it's rare, sometimes we have a piece that requires a piano or a harp, and those instruments as count as percussion.

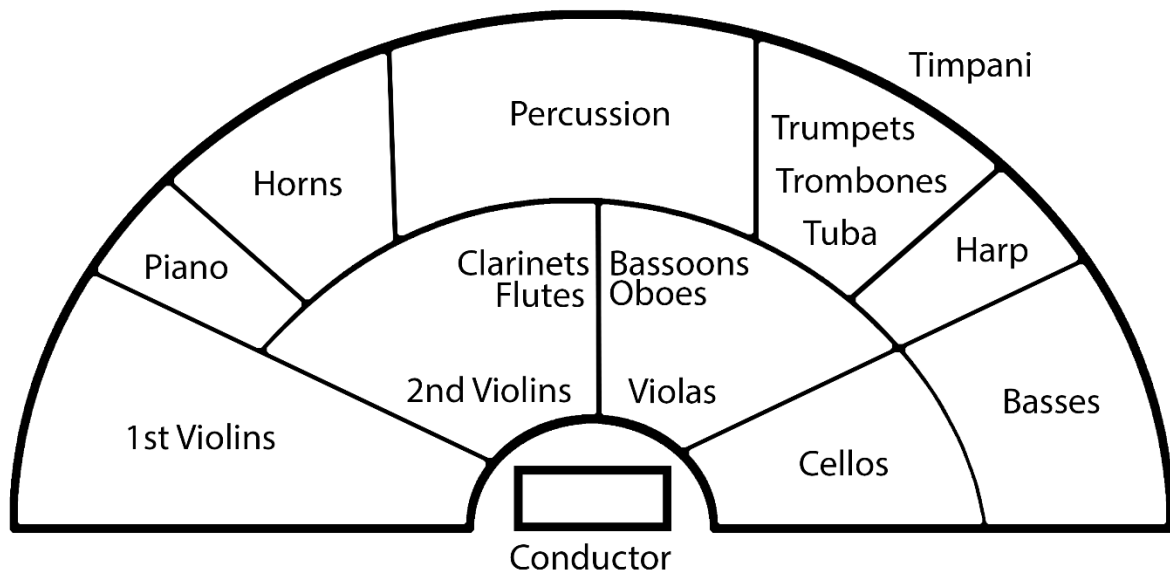


The **conductor** also has a very important role in the orchestra. It might not look like they're doing much, but they keep the orchestra playing together, correct mistakes from the performers, and inspire them to put as much emotion as they can into a piece. They are the leader of the orchestra!





This is how the orchestra is organized onstage. Everyone has a specific seat so they can see the conductor and the audience can hear them well.



### But what about saxophones?

Many students in concert band may be wondering why there are no saxophones in an orchestra! This is because saxophones are still a pretty new instrument – most orchestral music had already been written by the time they were invented, and newer composers were often nervous about including such a strange timbre in their compositions. They are sometimes included in an orchestra, when the composer is looking for a specific musical quality or style.

In *The Music of Star Wars*, there is actually one piece with a saxophone in it! See if you can notice which one it is...



## The Musical Elements

1. Tempo
  - a. Is the piece slow or fast? Sometimes composers use Italian words to describe the *tempo* of a piece. Some common terms are
    - i. Allegro – fast
    - ii. Andante – somewhat slow, like a walking pace
    - iii. Adagio - slow
  - b. Can you identify the tempo of the piece you are listening to?
2. Meter
  - a. Time signatures affect the *meter* of the piece. When reading music, this affects how many beats are in a bar. Most composers will use 3 beats or 4 beats per bar.
  - b. Can you hear the meter? Try clapping or dancing with the beat and see if you can notice it.
3. Pitch
  - a. Some instruments can play very high notes, and some can play very low notes. Some instruments can only play in the middle register.
  - b. Can you identify the instruments with the highest and lowest registers in the orchestra?
4. Melody
  - a. The melody is the main tune in a piece of music. Sometimes it's easy to identify, and sometimes the composer will try to hide it or change it to make a piece more interesting.
  - b. Can you hear the melody in the piece you are listening to? Which instrument(s) is playing it?
5. Dynamics
  - a. *Dynamics* refers to how loud or soft a sound is. Musicians also use Italian words to describe their dynamics. Common terms are:
    - i. *Fortissimo* – very loud
    - ii. *Forte* – loud
    - iii. *Mezzo-forte* – sort of loud
    - iv. *Mezzo-piano* – sort of quiet
    - v. *Piano* – quiet
    - vi. *Pianissimo* – very quiet
  - b. Dynamics are the easiest for a musician to change the mood of the music they're performing. Can you identify a moment in one of the pieces in the concert that uses dynamics for emotion?
6. Timbre
  - a. Each instrument sounds slightly different from each other. The *type* of sound they have is called the *timbre*. It's how you can tell the difference between a female voice and a male voice, or between a flute and a cello.
  - b. Can you identify instruments based on their *timbre*? Which is your favourite?
  - c. Sometimes composers will use a specific timbre to create a special effect. For example, sometimes a flute can sound like birds chirping, or a double bass can sound like an angry growl.



- d. Do you hear any special effects in some of these pieces? Which one is your favourite?
- 7. Texture
  - a. Texture, or *harmony*, describes how a piece uses many instruments at the same time. Each instrument plays a different role, but they all work together to make the piece better.
  - b. For example, sometimes the *melody* will be in the violins, while the winds are playing the accompaniment (or harmony).
- 8. Form
  - a. The *form* of the piece describes how a piece is organized or structured. Just like how a story has a beginning, middle, and end, so do most musical pieces. With film music, traditional forms like symphonies or concertos aren't used, but each piece does typically have a *shape*. Can you hear how melodies develop and change, or where the *climax* of the piece is? If you listen carefully, can you guess when the piece is going to end? These are all part of the *form* of the piece.
- 9. Mood
  - a. Composers can use all the musical elements together to create a *mood* for the piece.
  - b. Describe how a piece makes you feel. Is it happy, sad, angry, excited, scary, or something else?
  - c. Name musical elements in the piece that make you feel a specific mood. Is an angry piece loud or soft? Is a sad piece slow or fast? See if you can hear how the composer uses the elements of music together to make a mood.





## Musicians

### **Violin I**

Blythe Allers  
Simcha Pollock  
Alexandre Bigeau  
Vanda Paszko  
Sonia Hellenbrand  
Avery Morris

### **Violin II**

Tamiris Paes Souza  
Lauren Aubrey  
Charlotte Morin Laframboise  
Lyndsay Tran  
Christine Yu  
Regan Aubrey  
Gabriel Karam

### **Viola**

Josiah Baarbé  
Tim Côté  
Rachel Ostic  
Rebecca Nadler

### **Cello**

Sarah Parsons  
Lyndon Kirkley  
Kitty Chan  
Vinci Chen  
Elisabeth Parsons  
Niah Vardy

### **Bass**

Ben du Toit  
Anais Maasland  
Marc Candeliere  
Emily Hsueh

### **Flute**

Pierre Foret  
Serena Reuten  
Erica Jomphe

### **Oboe**

Vic Houle  
Jade Butlin-Woo

### **Clarinet**

Lindsay Allan  
Felicia Persaud  
Kathryn Anderson

### **Bassoon**

Max Ostic  
Michele di Franco  
Gabe Azzie

### **Horn**

Noah Hawryluck  
Joanny Charlebois-Ethier  
Joseph Trzcinski  
Joanna Currie  
Sebastien Mirault  
Anne Marie Robinson

### **Trumpet**

Nicole Stanson  
Alexandre Newbury  
Ajo Elias  
Malcom Horava

### **Trombone**

Denis Rousseau  
Clinton Holden  
Cedric Doyle  
Eric Prodger  
Naomi Pullen

### **Tuba**

Paul Norris

### **Percussion**

Patrick Lynch  
Félix Rouleau-Simard  
Lucas Anderson  
Lindsay Gow-Kateb  
Brydone Charlton

### **Harp**

Peter Stuyt

### **Piano**

Michael Ku



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**Our most sincere thanks go to the following people who worked on this guide.**

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**The Music of Star Wars:**

**Date:** December 21, 12:30 PM

**Location:** Meridian Theatres at CentrepoinTE, Ben Franklin Place – 101 CentrepoinTE Drive

**Running Time:** Approximately 60 minutes; this matinee has no intermission