

CARNEGIE HALL

Juilliard

Weill Music Institute

The Academy | Ensemble ACJW

A program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and the Weill Music Institute
in partnership with the New York City Department of Education

New Canaan Interactive Performance Script

Introductory Section

Play Shostakovich excerpt

Leah: Good morning! We're really excited to be here today, so thank you for being such great listeners already! That was a piece by a Russian man, Dmitri Shostakovich, written for four string players. The four of us are called a string quartet. A string quartet is made up of two violins, a viola, and a cello.

Caitlin: Hi, my name is Caitlin! I'm from Long Island, New York, and I've been playing the cello for about 22 years! A long time ago, I used to play the violin, but as soon as I saw the cello, I told my mom, "I want to play the bigger one!" As you can see, the cello is the largest instrument here, and it's my favorite because I'm able to play notes that have a very high pitch (*demonstrate*), and a very low pitch (*demonstrate*).

Leah: My name is Leah, and I'm from Houston, Texas. I play the viola... and I'm in the middle of the different instruments here –higher than Caitlin's cello, but lower than the two violins. When I was growing up, I played the violin, but after about eight years, I started doing something kind of strange when I practiced my violin! Each day at the very end of my practice-time, I started to play all of my pieces over again, but lower in pitch. Something that would have sounded like THIS on the violin (*demonstrate*) sounded like THIS (*demonstrate*) when I played it lower. And I just fell in love with that lower sound! Eventually, my mom "caught" me doing this, and told my violin teacher that really I wanted to play the viola, and that's how it all started. (*demonstrate*)

Angie: Hello. My name is Angie and I'm from all over, but I was originally born in Columbia, South Carolina. This is my instrument (*hold it up*), the violin. I've been playing the violin since I was four. When I was about three years old, I watched a TV program with my parents, and saw a very famous violinist named Itzhak Perlman play a concert. From then on, I begged my mother every day until I received the amazing "toy" that played such beautiful music. It was only later that I learned the beautiful music I heard on TV came with a lot of practice! (*demonstrate violin excerpt*)

Anna: Hi, my name is Anna. I'm from Baltimore, Maryland. I play the same instrument that Angie plays. You can see it's the same size. The violin can also be called a fiddle and can be played like this... (*demonstrate*). I've been playing the violin since I was three years old. I wanted to start when I was two, and I was jealous of my older sister who had one, but I was too little to hold one since they didn't make small enough instruments then, so I had to wait until I was big enough. Now, I play the violin professionally, and it has the highest voice in the quartet. I'm going to start on my highest note, and we'll see how low we can go!

Play C-major scale

Leah: We're going to play a little of this Shostakovich quartet again, and afterwards, we want to know how you think we all stay together! Do we have a guy up here, waving his arms and a stick around in front of us? Do we get one of our friends to come clap the beat really loudly for us? Watch

and listen while we play and see if you have any ideas about how we are able to play together. Here we go!

Play Shostakovich excerpt

Leah: How do you think we're able to play together? (*move bodies to answer question*)

Great, these are all true! We also move because we're feeling the beat of the music together.

Sometimes I wish I could actually dance while I'm playing music, so today, we're going to talk about music inspired by dancing.

Mozart Section

Anna: We're going to travel back 400 years to the time of kings and queens, emperors and fancy dances. So girls, just take a moment to imagine your selves wearing these huge dresses that were stiff and looked like this picture we have here. And boys, imagine yourselves in funny pants and boots and having to dance around these ladies' dresses. Do you think you would be dancing really quickly or rather slowly? Well, most of the dances were on the slow side, since they couldn't move too fast in their big dresses. Back then, there was a dance called the minuet. The minuet had a beat pattern of a slow 1! 2, 3; 1! 2, 3. The first beat is the most important and is the heaviest step in the dance. (*applause*) (*play violin melody of trio while clapping*) Great! Mozart loved the minuet, and included a minuet in all his quartets although these were intended for listening and not dancing. Listen for how the first beat is most important in this minuet by Mozart.

Play Mozart minuet

Beethoven Section

Angie: Now that we just heard a minuet by Mozart, we're going to fast forward 30 years and hear what another composer did with the minuet, and his name was Beethoven. Everyone, take a look at the clothes that you're wearing today. Do you think you'll be wearing the same kind of clothes 30 years from now? Raise your hands if you think the style of clothing will change. Raise your hands if you think it will stay the same. Right—just as the style of clothing changes over time, music also develops and changes. Beethoven eventually changed the minuet into what's called a scherzo. That word means... a joke. We're now going to play a scherzo by Beethoven, and listen for how it might be different from the minuet you heard before. Remember how the minuet was 1!,2,3; 1!, 2,3. This is also going to be in a three-beat pattern, but I want you to tell me if you feel the beat differently and why.

Play Beethoven scherzo

Did you feel that the scherzo we just played for you was similar to the minuet or different? Raise your hands for different. Why do you think it sounds different from the minuet? Did you actually feel 1,2,3 strongly?

Bartok Section

Angie: Both the minuet and scherzo had the beat pattern of 1,2,3. Next, we're going to hear a piece with a more complicated beat pattern. We're all going to use some words to help us learn it, but remember—when I do this, it means stop. (*say Pineapple, apple, pineapple and clap*) Now, let's try it faster, but try to keep it really really steady and together. Stop. Now this time, the musicians are going to join us. Ready? Pineapple, apple, pineapple.

Play Ruthanian Dance

Leah: Great job everyone, that was a piece called *Ruthanian Dance* by a Hungarian composer named Bartok. Unlike Mozart, who wrote for kings and queens, Bartok wrote folk music for peasants, or country folk. Now we're going to hear another piece that Bartok wrote—where in the world do you think this is from? Anna is going to give you a little clue. (*play*) Where in the world do you think that music like that comes from? This piece that Anna and Angie are going to play is called *The Arabian Dance*.

Play Arabian Dance

Tango Section

Caitlin: Now that we've just heard some peasant dances, and also more formal or fancy dances like the minuet—all from Europe—we are now going to travel back to the Americas—South America to be exact! Raise your hand if you've ever traveled to South America. How about the country Argentina? We're going to say Argentina all together, ready? Argentina! In Argentina, there is a dance that is very popular there and all around the world, to this very day. It's called the tango. The tango is a very passionate dance, with a lot of dramatic feelings expressed in it. You often hear this kind of rhythm in tangos (*play tango rhythm*). Tango music is very emotional because a lot of the time, it is about love. We're going to play a tango called *Por Una Cabeza*, but before we play it, we'd like you to help us tell the story behind this music. We're going to make a picture of it using your own ideas based on what you hear. So listen to this first part of the piece. I want you to focus on Anna, and think about the kind of character that could go along with the tune that she plays.

Play excerpt of beginning (mm. 1-8)

After listening to the music, who do you think could be the main character in this story? (*draw/write answers*) Now listen to this next part. Listen for what you think happens to the character in our story. Has the mood changed?

Play excerpt (mm. 17-24)

What was that music telling you about our story? What's happened? (*draw/write answers*) We have one more part to play before we play the whole piece. In this section, our main character has met a friend. Listen for which instrument plays the other character, and what they might be talking about.

Play excerpt (mm. 32-40)

Who was the other character and why? Based on the mood of the music, what could they be talking about? (*draw/write answers*) Great story everyone! Now we're going to play the whole tango, so listen for all the characters and different moods we imagined together in the music!

Play Por Una Cabeza

Piazzolla Section

Anna: So, Caitlin mentioned that the tango is very popular now, and I just wanted to show you that I am wearing my tango shoes today! The last piece we are going to play is called *Four for Tango* by an Argentine composer named Astor Piazzolla. This Piazzolla piece, like Mozart's minuet, was intended for listening and not for dancing. To make the music even more exciting and passionate, Piazzolla used a lot of special effects. Here are a few: slide, scrub, hit. It's fun to do these crazy things on our instruments. Now we will play a piece that's a longer story, with a lot of these special effects. You can think up your own story, and talk about it in your classes this week.

Play Piazzolla